



A LETTER FROM A BROKENHEARTED

I have things to say, a lot actually but I also have nothing to say. I act like I am fine but deep down I know that I am not good enough for him.

I know that in people's eyes I will always be the girl that took him from that woman. I will always be the girl who he supposedly had an affair with.

To him I will always be the girl that he chose because he couldn't have the woman he loved. The girl that he had to choose because the choice to choose whom he loved was taken out from his hands. I fear his heart and feelings; I fear that they are still holding on onto what he couldn't have. I fear that the eyes that look at me every day reflects the love he has for the other woman, the love that he won't have for me. Deep down I am terribly scared but I act like I am fine.

Today I have reached my breaking point. I stand in the middle of the room, every memory of bad things that he has done to me flashing in my eyes. I see everything, and the pain is still fresh as if it was yesterday. My adrenalin pumps up and my breathing becomes heavy and my heart rate accelerate. My brain clicks that something is wrong with my heart and it goes on panic mode, my body tries to react but the reaction of my body clashes with the reaction of my brain and my eye sight becomes blurry, so I locate the bed with my hands and sit down.

Sitting down, with my eyes closed, I try to control my breathing.

IN, OUT, IN AND OUT!

My mind, heart and body feel like three separate entities. The pain keeps on slicing through my heart literally. It's like a stabbing pain that comes and goes like a wind. The pain does not subside, my eyes start to sting and tears roll onto my face. Once again he has managed to make me cry.

I cry hard until I can cry no more. My emotions are starting to overwhelm me. I sit on my bed and stare at the wall. My emotions are coming like waves and tears begin to drop again and there at that moment the pain slicing in my heart comes back with more power and I scream very loud as I fall on the floor. I scream until my head hurts. After a while I bury my head in my hands. I hear a voice in my head, it is shouting and fighting to dominate. It gets stronger and stronger and it is telling me to end it. It is telling

me to put an end to the pain I feel. I am numb and have been sitting here next to my bed for some time now. How can he do this to me? What wrong have I done except to love him? The worst feeling is that I can't even bring myself to hate him. Maybe if I did I would feel better and my heart would heal. you are a fool Alu! the signs were always there but you chose to ignore them. There is only one way this can end. End it! Just end it and you will feel no pain.

“end it! end it!” I manage to say in between my tears.

I look around the room and spot a bottle of aspirin.

“this is it; I am ending it”

The bottle is still full, so I toss them one by one in my mouth until I can take no more.

My phone is vibrating in my pocket but I don't care. I don't care who is calling. When I cannot take anymore I lie down besides my bed and close my eyes slowly.

“this pain will disappear. Very soon I won’t feel this pain anymore. I am being courageous and ending it.”

You see its working, angels are even calling my name, I hear my name being called.

“Alu! Alu! What have you done! Oh my God!.”-
Thili.

CHAPTER 2 NB:18+

My name is Aluwani Mudau, before you judge me for almost taking my life, allow me to tell you what happened. My side of the story, where it all began!

The hardest thing in life is losing someone you love, what's more painful is when you realise that what you thought was love was all a lie. Giving love and have it not returned is painful, the worst is when someone awakens your love and plays with your heart. I really wanted to end it. I was craving for an escape that will release me from the pain that I was feeling. I loved, smiled, cried and was hurt and broken by the one man I gave my all to. It took a heart break from the one man that I love for me to get the courage to do this. How do I forget him when I am swept up in a storm of emotions I cannot comprehend or even resist? I know many are saying it's my fault and that I was too blind to see it or I probably ignored the red flags when it all began. Yes, I might have seen it coming but I was helplessly in love. Right now put yourself in my shoes and be the judge. It all began four years ago, when I fell helplessly in love with a handsome man.

Three years ago.....

You remember how when we were growing up, we would make up stories of how we want to see ourselves all grown? “I'll date a tall handsome guy, with money and he will marry me and we will have four kids?”. Some body shoot me because all that talk was just our young selves promising us the impossible. Some say you have to kiss almost all the frogs before you find your prince charming. Well I say it's bullshit! Why do we have to kiss all this frogs first before finding the one? All the guys I've been with were not prince charming nor my Romeo. I can't even remember how it felt to be with them, it's like I've been single since I could remember. It's all a blur, guess they were not so perfect. The last guy I dated, was a disaster, the guy was all talk and no action. During our sexual encounter, I was so excited thinking I was going to lose my v-card. The bastard came before he could even

penetrate. “It has never happened to me before; I think I wanted you so much that’s why”, that’s the lame excuse that Mr two minutes’ noodles gave me. He even asked how good it was after. “like, man what the hell, you didn't even make me wet!” Hah! Imagine what we women have to go through, he even had the guts to fall asleep after all that he put me through. After that night when I left for home I took a long shower and only got out when the hot water was finished. The bastard even had nerves telling me how good it was. “I enjoyed myself, you still owe me, damn you are so sexy and hairy” he said all confident. That was never happening, ever again! After that I avoided him every Chance I got. It became easier now that I moved to Gauteng for school full time, so he eventually silently got the message and moved on.

I am 20 years old doing my second year in public relations at Tshwane University of Technology. Being in University means freedom, you become your own boss and an adult. I live alone in a

school resident outside campus. It is not that big but it is comfortable. It accommodates my bed and small Kitchen appliances, the showers are outside the corridors and as far as I am concerned everyone is happy to be away from nagging parents.

I Met Thili (Thilivhali) last year during my first year at the park when I was out and about roaming the streets of Pretoria. Just like any confident man he approached me with confidence and I was smitten a little. But as a woman who respects herself I wasn't going to fall for a total stranger. He tried to get my attention and talk to me but I made it impossible. The second time I came across him was at a store in town. He saw me inside the store and asked me to meet him at the stores door. I agreed for the sake of it and after I was done in the shop I used the back door that leads to Pretorius street instead of the one at church street.

As fate would have it, I met him for the third time when I was walking to the taxi station. That day he accompanied me to the station without asking. He stood next to the taxi window waiting for the taxi to get full. when I refused to give him my numbers he insisted that he was going to follow me to where I was going. I panicked and gave him my numbers so that he can just go away because everyone was looking at me starting to whisper amongst each other. Even though I gave him my numbers I was not planning to answer his calls but when I did I couldn't help but fall in love with him. I fell for him very hard within few weeks we were a couple. He stole my heart by his persistence and confidence. He is tall, dark in complexion, muscular and has a V-shaped torso. Now who would say no to that! He works as a finance officer. He is 29 but looks younger than his age.

I made him wait for the cookie but eventually I gave it to him, oh and let me say it! he takes me places with his D. I set a silent prayer to myself in my room. I am so nervous, yep he will be here in 19 minutes. I know we've had sex a lot but it will be the first time we do it in my small room and I haven't seen him for a long time. He normally travels to provinces with work.

It's a little bit warm so I have my tiny in house dress on and sandals, my hair is up in a ponytail. He isn't what I actually envisioned as my type few years back, I was always into the tall and light bad boys and I remember I told myself not to get involved with a Venda man ever again after the 2 minutes saga. but I guess I couldn't help falling in love with him. I just love the way he asked me out, he was so confident and was not willing to give up, I mean the guy wanted to pay a taxi fare just to accompany me to the campus. I hear a knock when I'm still checking my face on the mirror for the hundredth time. I smooth my dress and open the door.

“Hi, is it safe to enter your home?” He says with a smirk on his face.

“come in” I say gesturing him inside while closing the door behind.

He sits on the edge of the bed. “Your home has only one chair, but it's beautiful” he looks around the room.

“Yeah it's campus life you know; I am used to it now” I say sitting down on the edge of the bed making sure I leave a distance between us.

“So do you want anything to drink?” I say shyly.

“Yoh, is that how you welcome your man, when he visits after not seeing him for a long time? I thought you were going to hug me and kiss me” he says reaching out his hand to me with a smile.

“Come here, you know it's been a month since we've been this close”, he drags me to sit on his lap.

He smells so good; the smell is masculine. He looks straight into my eyes with his dark brown

eyes. He is smiling at me, he looks more handsome and sexy when he is smiling. I look down to his mouth and damn, it's inviting. I would like his lips to kiss me, on my lips, neck, Breast, and on my...as if he reads minds, his lips start to brush against mine, I look into his eyes and I see that he is waiting for my approval, so I close the remaining distance and kiss him closing my eyes. I don't know if it's because it's been long since I've been kissed but his lips against mine feels right and perfect, I get butterflies in my stomach. My head becomes light. He is kissing me soft and slow. I stifle a moan in between because the kiss is traveling all the way to my core. He stops kissing me and looks into my eyes,” now that's the welcome that I want,” he says, his lips brushing against mine.

He rubs my thighs with his hands and I don't want him to stop “now get me that drink, I am thirsty”, he says squeezing my ass. I can't believe this, who could want a drink after that heated moment? I can be your drink daddy, you can

drink me in any way you want, I can't help but think in my head. I want him to continue kissing me, and do more than that. I want him to put me up against the wall and do me right. I stand and go to prepare the damn drinks. He bends and start to remove his shoes and I can't help but notice how strong his hands look, he has toned muscles, I imagine myself holding on to his arms while he has me up against the wall while I wrap my legs around his waist, his kissable lips kissing me and..., oh the thoughts are making my friend down there wet, down girl, behave!

“So how was work?” He recently got back. He spent the whole of last month in Cape town helping out the other colleagues and auditors. I did miss him but I still get shy around him.

“Well it wasn't that bad just lot of work, since we are preparing for the next financial year”, he says as I hand him his drink and sit next to him leaving some space in between.

We sit and talk and laugh for an hour. This man knows how to make me laugh and right now I just want him naked in my bed.

“you are so beautiful; I can’t get enough of you. I’m the luckiest man in the world”, he says looking at me seriously.

I almost choke on my drink at the sudden affection and seriousness that he is showing me. I stand up collecting his glass and mine to put them away. As I come back to sit he grabs my hand and sits me on his lap.

“You do things to me that I cannot explain” I can't help but just blush as he looks at me his hands caressing my thighs softly, ok he is going to make me melt with all his sweet talking.

I don't even have a proper response for this, so I just kiss him, passionately. I feel his arms snaking my waist and I caress his chest which is covered by his formal sky blue shirt. He responds by caressing my back moving his hand up and down my back under my dress and shifts

me so that I sit facing him and my legs are apart. I stifle a moan as he grabs my ass and gives it a squeeze. I start to work on the bottoms of his shirt, and what I find behind is always wow! He has six pack, I can't help but thank my self for dating him again, I rub my palms against his chest slowly feeling him going down to his stomach. My temperature is high and my heart is skipping so many beats. I finally get his shirt off, he takes the Hem of my dress and lifts it to take it off, and just like that I'm left with only my underwear. He leans back and takes me in for a moment, his eyes glinting with sparkles, he bites his lower lip and leans in to whisper in my ears.

“You are my new obsession; you are so damn sexy. I thought of you all the time when I was in cape town” He kisses my neck and licks his way to my nipples.

“Oh, my G.....d”, the sensation is incredible, I want him right now.

He is at my neck again, kissing, nibbling and licking. His mouth attacks my nipples as he licks and sucks them blowing some air to give it some tingling sensation. I cannot keep still as the pleasure is building up.

I start to remove his belt, and he stands with me in his arms and puts me on the bed, while he stands in front of me. He removes his trousers and underwear looking down at me. He gives me a smile and slowly falls on top of me kissing me and licking everywhere he can get his tongue.

His body against mine is making my head spin, I think I'm drunk in love. He is hot and breathing heavy on top of me. He removes my panties and tosses them on the floor, he slides his hand down to my core and starts to rub my clit. He looks into my eyes with a smug on his face. "Do you like this?" He says softly while driving me crazy with his fingers.

"Oh Thili!" I can't feel my mouth or mind; it's being driven crazy by this Venda man whom I

have met a year ago in a park. I rub his manhood with my hand and he groans. He is hard as steel and huge, this man's D still makes me feel for my vagina. I grab his D and give him few pumps as he groans with his eyes closed. He is suddenly close to my face, looking into my eyes, he slowly pushes inside of me inch by inch slowly driving me crazy as I look into his eyes. I feel a radiating heat and he slips all in. A tear falls from my right eye and he leans in to kiss it with a sexy smile. He is in, my muscles contrast around him, and he groans.

“Fuck! this is my heaven, my paradise. And you are mine, my perfect fit. No one eats here besides me” He says in between his strokes. He moves slowly hitting the right spots. I literally feel the pulse at my ears popping. He is looking at me as he moves in a rhythmic pace. He is increasing the speed of the strokes.

This feels good, if I had known how good we were together I would have jumped at the chance

of being his girlfriend the first day I met him. He is perfect, I watch as his chest rises and falls with every breath he takes as he is thrusting hard now. As I am enjoying the motion he grabs me and takes us to the floor, he sits me on top and before I know it he is pushing in again. He is now deep inside of me, it takes me some few seconds to adjust to this deep penetration but I finally do. Now the pressure is on me, I need to perform. Somebody help. I start to panic. I Need some grease for my waist. I think he feels me tensing because he gives me a smirk and kisses my neck to put me at ease. He Caresses my back and licks his lower lip.

“Come on baby girl, it’s your moment, go crazy with me, this is for you, feel the pleasure” he whispers in my ear.

The vibration of his lips against my ear sends electricity down to my core and my muscles clench around him. He lays down on his back dragging a pillow from the bed to support his

head. I lift myself a little bit up but I feel pleasure as he thrust up with his waist before I make my way down to him, He closes his eyes in ecstasy as he groans. I remember reading a Facebook post on how to ride your man, I start to copy the strategy as I thank all the woman who mastered the women on top position, you are all my heroes because “this shit ain’t that easy!”.

The post said something about moving as if you are writing the word ‘CUCUMBER’, I start with the letter ‘C’ twirling and doing the up and down motion in the process, nice and slowly. I move to the next letter, and oh it feels good, it’s hitting the right spots inside of me. He is making sounds which are giving me enthusiasm. He starts to move with me, meeting me grind for grind and thrust for thrust. I stifle a moan.

“Ah, Alu, oh....fuck....” he groans.”

I continue with the strategy touching myself and looking in his eyes in the process. As I move I slowly put my thumb inside my mouth looking

into his eyes, I softly bite into it and take it out licking it slowly. He swallows and flips me over and my back is on the floor and he is on top taking control. He is driving me crazy with each and every stroke.

My sight becomes blurry, and my head loses all senses of reasoning and I forget myself as my head starts to spin, everything becomes a blur and all I feel is this heat washing over my body like a wave. I close my eyes as my muscles squeeze him tight, and milk him dry. I think I just went to paradise for a second. Few seconds after we recover, he lifts me to bed and I lie on top of his chest with my eyes closed as he stares into the ceiling. That was awesome, I have never come like that, never ever. With myself yes, but not as good as this. I kiss his chest and rub it listening to his heart beat.

CHAPTER 3

As always I have to rush to the shower, because I am late, this time I am not to blame. I blame the fine man that couldn't let go of me yesterday. What he did to me yesterday is still playing in my mind, "he did me good!". He left at around 5am because he had to rush home and freshen up before going to work. Although it was hard letting him go this morning, I know I'll spend more time with him. Tomorrow it's Friday so after my lectures, I am going straight to his place to spend the weekend.

On my way to class I can't help but smile, I am smiling at everything and everyone.

"It's only a good dick that can make a woman smile for no reason" Tumi immediately burst my bubble.

"Shut up! you drama queen" I say annoyed.

Tumi is a drama queen. If it was last year before we met, I would have been reluctant to say that out loud because I wouldn't know how to behave around a gay guy. Well this one here is one of the kind, the only thing that gives away his gayness is his dirty mouth. The guy has a dirty mouth! He drinks like there is no tomorrow. It's funny because when I met him he was drunk; I can write a whole book about how we met. It was at a fresher's ball and he couldn't even walk properly. I just saw a handsome hunk who approached me and whispered in my ears "please play along I'll make it worth your while" and immediately kissed me. Just like any other first year student hypnotised by a handsome guy I went with the flow. I later found out that it was a guy's bet. After winning the bet, he offered to buy me some drinks but I refused so he had plenty to drink with the money from the bet. He drank to a point where he lost his friends, so he was left stranded. So like a good Samaritan woman that I

was I took him in for the night. When we got to the room he all of a sudden looked too good. The plan was for him to sleep on the floor and leave the following morning as early as possible, I did not want any temptation. The following morning when I woke up he was sleeping besides me in my bed. I couldn't help but marvel and stare at him in amazement as I lie besides him. I was looking at this handsome creature laying so peacefully in a strangers bed. My thoughts were interrupted by his erection which poked my leg. He immediately woke up as I was still busy ogling him with lusty eyes. "I'M GAY!" he shouts with panic written all over his eyes.

I was lost for words, so I immediately got out of bed and went to the shower embarrassed that there was a piece of me who wanted him. At that moment I couldn't help but wonder why a handsome guy like him can be gay, I kept on thinking about the kiss last night. The kiss felt straight, wait a minute how does a gay kiss feels like? The drama didn't end there, when I came

back from the shower, he was already awake standing at my stove frying eggs. To my surprise I was ordered to sit down and eat because apparently I was too thin for his liking. He started talking about how I was the first person he told about being gay and how it all started. I couldn't help but love him, or "his food", so we have been friends ever since. He is very honest and kind, although many people miss judge him because they can't accept who he is. Tumi is very handsome, he is every woman's dream.

Everywhere I go with him I see woman ready to throw themselves at him, sometimes they hate on me to their disappointment he is GAY and some think they can change him. Most guys at campus can't really understand why he can be gay when he can get any woman he wants. I think that's what made him draw close to me, the fact that when everyone else is judging him, I see nothing wrong with a man who is attracted to other man. I love him just the way he is.

"So how many rounds did you get?" He pouts with a sly smile.

"The hell, I wasn't counting!" I say a little louder. This bitch is going to draw unnecessary attention to me.

"So you did get some, I want all the details come on spill right now!" He says all excited.

"You are making me shy, and I am late for class." I say batting his hand away from my shoulders.

"When have you ever not been late? I swear the time God must be against you. Ok run, I also have some few classes but after that it's me and you, we need to talk about what has been in between your legs or any other hole in your body." He says winking at me with a smug. He kisses my cheek and runs to class.

I have been trying to avoid Tumi the whole day. I dodged all the ways I know he loves to use. I haven't set eyes on him ever since I saw him in the morning. I make my way to my room to take

a little nap. I'll decide what I will eat later when I wake up. I run up the stairs to get to my room but my victory of avoiding him is short-lived when I find him leaning against my door.

"I brought some cold drink, it will go down well with all your juicy details" he says holding up the 2 litre bottle.

"No wonder you are doing Journalism, you love news" I say defeated.

"News is my business honey" he says cheekily taking the keys to my room to unlock.

"Ok, I'll tell you but only if you cook for me." I say entering.

Tumi is a great cook, whenever I go to his place I always bring myself a container to collect left overs because I get tired of my sloppy cooking. The thing I know how to cook best is pap and eggs.

He cooks as we chat about my day, yesterday and what has been “in between my legs”, He finally sits still after he is finished dishing up.

“Why do you look serious all of a sudden?” I say starting to be concerned because he is always bubbly.

“When have you spoken to Tshego?” he says with his eyebrow raised.

“it was on Monday, she said she was writing this whole week so I promised to see her next week to give her time to focus. Why what are you not telling me?” I ask curious.

“I just heard people talking in class that she and that bastard of a boyfriend had a nasty fight yesterday. The guys were talking about it and said it was bad. Apparently Tshego found him shagging some other girl and she freaked out and threatened to leave him that’s where the fight broke out.” He says eating in between his story.

“I think we should go see her to see if she is okay” I say concerned.

Tshego is our friend, she comes from Makapane in Haman kraal. Well she's the source of our strength, that girl can find humour in any bad situation. We met at orientation week during our first year and we just clicked, we have been friends since then. As she was my friend I introduced her to Tumi and they also clicked. Tshego is the type of person that jells with everyone, I don't know how she does it but she can relate to everyone.

After washing plates, we make our way to Tshego's place. She lives around the area next to spar.

I come back at around 10 pm. When we got there we found her sleeping, like the cook he is Tumi offered to cook as she explained to us what happened. According to Tshego she caught Matimba with a girl whom she was suspecting they were having an affair. She then tried to break the relationship off but the guy couldn't hear none of that. She said although she didn't

believe him the guy even threatened to take his life and hers is he left him. We then advised her to leave the guy and get a restraining order as he is unstable.

Friday came Quick. I prepared my bag to spend the weekend at bae's place. Before he comes to fetch me I call Tshego and Tumi to tell them I am spending my weekend at bae's. Although Tumi is disappointed he promises me that he will not get that drunk and that he will take Tshego along to lighten up her mood.

The drive to bae's place is long because of the traffic, but we make it before 6pm. He lives in centurion and his place is homely although small. It has a small kitchen and a living area. He offers to take us out as he knows that Kitchen and I don't mix. So we go eat out to eat and come back late. We spend the whole of Saturday indoors in bed naked, sexing and talking. He has been the one doing everything, making breakfast

and all. I am not even allowed to lift a finger, “Talk about being pampered”. Sunday morning, he gets a call from his friend in midrand who needs help with his car so he has to run but promises to come back in an hour.

As I wait for him I decide to clean his flat.

There’s not much to clean though so I start with the kitchen, sitting area, bathroom and head to the bedroom. I remove the sheets that he laid on the bed yesterday. As I am busy removing the sheets I touch the side of the bed on the base and hear a click sound. Surprised as to what made the sound, the side of the base opens and it’s a drawer. Wow, how did I miss this? “Curiosity killed a cat” being a human being and curious I start to inspect what is inside. In it I see, a red lace panty and bra, a bathing cloth, two pairs of high heeled shoes and a weave. Tears start to well my eyes. I grab the weave to see if I am seeing properly and as soon as I lift the weave a pack of condom comes to my view.

I freeze and a lot of things come into my mind and I simultaneously look at the weave and the condoms. The weave is short and wavy, in a dark brown colour.

A lump forms in my neck and I feel a cold chill which travels all the way to my stomach and I immediately run to the toilet to let it all out. After some few minutes I stand up and head into the bedroom. I take the wig from the floor and put it where I found it and start packing my stuff. The only explanation for me is that he is cheating. All those items points to cheating. How can he do this to me? I will not stay for this. Someone once told me that when a man shows you who he is believe him. I take out my phone and call for an Uber to take me to the nearest taxi rank. I leave his place, leaving behind the drawer open for him to see why I left. He is cheating and broke my heart.

I am also coming with you guys.

"What?" They all say in unison.

Why is everyone looking at me like this?

"Are you sure? you know that we are going to drink right?"

"Yes I know" I say.

When I got to the Taxi station earlier, I called Tumi to tell him that my battery was about to die and that I'd be at my place in an hour and switched off my phone.

When I arrived I found him and Tshego already waiting for me.

I haven't told them what happened because I still haven't recovered from the shock myself. I feel betrayed by the man I love. Although I know that Tumi is dying to ask me why I came back today and not tomorrow morning, I know he won't ask me, he will let me be. My body feels heavy and I feel sick. My stomach is tied up in knots and I haven't eaten anything after the muesli that I took in the morning, and I vomited it anyways.

Well heart break is new to me so at this point my body is in shock of this new foreign feeling that I suddenly feel. My body is shaking and I feel cold. So I just want to be near people so that I can shake this feeling off. Maybe alcohol will do, I'll just have to learn drinking today. I leave my phone switched off in the locker.

We get to the club/ shisa-nyama, and the place is packed. The place is fancy for a local outing spot, with nice tables and sorts. We take our seats and Tumi asks what we would like to have.

“Savannah” Tshego says.

“I'll have the same” I say unsure of my choice.

Tumi is staring at me with disbelief, but I don't back down, I want to drink.

Tshego gives me a smile. “it's nice, you will enjoy it. Are you okay babe?” she says as Tumi makes his way to the bar.

“Yes I am just tired” I say flatly.

“oh I see, Thili never gave you enough sleep” she says with a naughty smile winking at me.

I smile and immediately Tumi returns with our alcohol.

I take a sip and it tastes a little bit sweet like sugary apple juice and a little bit dry afterwards. I like the taste in my mouth.

It is not bitter, so I start drinking it like water. But nothing is happening. Why am I not getting drunk? My mission is to get drunk. I finish the whole bottle and after some few minutes I start to get a buzz.

My whole body starts to feel warm and relaxed and I feel like one giant moving being. I am starting to notice everything in my surroundings, and it is starting to get exciting. Everyone is happy and chatting while some are dancing. My head feels so light.

“He is cheating on me!” I say out loud as Tumi places another round of alcohol on the table.

They all gasp in amazement.

“babe, are you sure it’s not the alcohol that is talking?” Tumi asks looking concerned.

“I found a women’s underwear, shoes, a weave and condoms, so am I imagining things?” I ask starting to get emotional.

“Oh come here, you” Tshego says giving me a cuddle.

I calm down, drink more and talk more; within minutes our conversations have become significantly louder.

Everyone at the bar is now my friend, I chat and laugh with everyone I see. Drinks are just flowing for free. People who drink are very generous they offer to buy you anything!

I hear a song and start to scream and hit the dance floor. I have forgotten everything; my mind is free of all thoughts. I am shaking my waist as I dance to particular by Major Lazer. If I was sober I wouldn’t have the guts to hit the

dance floor but now I just feel like I am the new Nicky Minaj and I am killing it on the dance floor.

The dancing does not cease until I am super pressed and have to run to the toilets. In the toilets I tell myself to forget about him forever. “I am forgetting about you Thili!” I say to myself repeatedly and start to smile. “I can find myself another man, maybe I should try a Zulu man. I have always wanted a Zulu man.” I say to myself. I am immediately jolted back to life by a knock at the door.

“We are leaving, are you sleeping in there?” Tumi says with a concerned tone from the other side of the door.

“We are leaving already?” I ask surprised that we have to leave early.

All of a sudden I think that everything is being done in fast forward mode.

I am so drunk that I can't even zip my pants so Tshego helps me out.

“wow, you freaky thing! I never knew you can be sensual while dancing” he says eyeing me with a smug on his face.

“All men at the place were looking at you, I am sure today you will be in someone’s dream” Tshego says as we try to get a taxi.

We drop Tshego at her place and I scream my good bye to her as she laughs at me. When we reach my room I cannot even unlock the door, so Tumi takes charge. I am all over the place standing up straight is mission impossible.

“Look at you, you poor thing. Come let me put you to bed” he says dragging me to bed.

“Please stay with me, I don’t want to be left alone” I say looking at him.

“What did that man do to you? look at you, you are a mess” he says with a sigh.

“He fucked up, he is ..., I don’t want to talk about it” I say.

“Ok, I’ll stay just don't rape me in my sleep, let me get you a bottle of water then you can sleep” He says as I laugh at his silly statement.

My eyes are dimming and I can't think anymore all I want to do is close my eyes and lie down. Everything goes black.

I wake up in the morning with a pounding headache, sick to my stomach. I am still wearing the clothes I had on yesterday but I am in my bed. How did I get here? Last night is a blur; I don't remember parts of it. My shirt has some unidentifiable spots which seem like they'll take forever to remove. I look around and spot Tumi next to me in a deep sleep. I decide not to disturb him and look for my phone under my pillow with a hand, seconds later I remember that it's in the locker. I try to lift my head but it's impossible, so I decide to just continue sleeping.

I am in a deep sleep when I hear a bang in my head, it's like I am being called. It fades then happens again. I am immediately woken by

Thili's voice, Tumi is awake too surprised at the commotion.

“BABY PLEASE OPEN THIS DOOR, I WILL NOT GO UNTIL YOU OPEN! ALU!” he shouts banging on the door.

Fearing to be the topic of the week I get off bed to open the door for him.

“Baby let me explain, I know you think there is something but it's not what you think it is!” he says trying to reach for my hand but his expression changes to anger when he spots Tumi in my bed behind me.

CHAPTER 4

I look at him and see his expression change into anger, if he was light in complexion he would be red by now.

“Why is he in your bed? Did he sleep here?” he says fuming with anger.

“You have no right to ask me that, by the way he is my friend and he can sleep here whenever he wants.” I say with a cheeky voice.

Fuming, he rushes to the bed and grabs Tumi by the throat, I fly in trying to push him off but he is stronger than me.

“What are you doing, leave him alone!! I am calling the police” I say in panic.

He is choking Tumi. Tumi tries to escape from his hold but he goes nowhere.

He is throwing insults at Tumi who is now helpless.

“STOP IT!” I scream at him as Tumi is becoming pale and he immediately let's go of him.

When he is free, Tumi jumps off the bed and runs out of my room barefoot, wearing his shorts and no shirt. I don't blame him, I would have also done the same thing because this man standing in front of me is in another level of anger, his anger is scaring even me. I don't get why he is angry because I am the one who is supposed to be angry.

He closes the door because on his mission to save his life Tumi left the door wide open.

"I know you are angry at me but don't you dare disrespect me like that" he says with a harsh tone pointing a finger at me.

"How did I disrespect you? because as far as I am concerned I just shared a bed with my Gay friend." I say with a surprised tone.

"he might be gay but he is still a guy, what do you think might happen if you were to arouse him? Do you think it will end there?" he says in a question.

“Not every man is a dog like you, some man can keep it in their pants!” I am angry. why is he here.

“I will let this go because I see you are angry at me and you are not yourself” he says looking exasperated.

“what you saw is not what you think. Those things were left by my house sitter. It was obvious that I cannot leave my house for a full month with a man or alone. So I told her not to go near my closet so the only place she could store her belongings were in that drawer. I only realised on Friday that she left her things but I called her and she did collect them.” He says.

“Why would a normal person forget her underwear at another person’s house and why didn’t I know that you hired a house sitter?” I say rolling my eyes.

“baby girl, it was the time that you were writing your tests I knew if I told you, you would have insisted that you will look after my place and that

would have been too much responsibilities for you.” He says.

“How were you going to travel from Centurion to Soshanguve every day?” he asks trying to make me see reasons.

Listening to him I start to question my choice of running away and thinking that he cheated. I start to feel guilty because all I saw was underwear condoms shoes and a weave. How did I conclude that he was cheating? Is it that I am so used to being disappointed? My instinct failed me on a higher level this time. I look at him and he tries to smile back but I don't return his smile.

“What now?” he asks his smile fading.

“I am still angry at you for the way you treated my friend!” I say with some attitude.

“oh you mean that lady man? he got what he deserves I should have choked him harder and I think you must stop being friends with him.” he says opening my fridge like he owns it.

“that’s never happening if you don’t like him you leave then” I say annoyed.

“okay fine, the lady man stays but tell him to stay away from your bed, now change the covers I am sleeping here tonight,” he says shoving my left over meat in his mouth, only if he knew that the Lady man is the one who cooked it.

“Babe please trust me, I am your man and I love you next time talk to me don’t just assume things. You have an over active imagination. I love only you and its only you I love” he says kissing my lips. Just like that everything is forgotten. I was so sure that he was cheating, my conscious told me so, I guess it was a false alarm. I change the covers and we sit and watch some movies on the laptop. I am lucky because most of my Monday lectures cancelled their class. Thili asked for leave and told them he was not feeling ok.

Latter in the evening he starts to search my cupboards for things to cook as I take a shower.

This man can cook better than me and he knows it and is always rubbing it in my face. He has prepared rice and chicken stew and some potato salad with some apple juice.

“wow, I never thought my small cupboard could have so much food” I say taking a plate from his hands.

“Haha! we all know the only thing you see when you check in your cardboard is eggs, no wonder you are skinny and look like a 17-year-old” he says as he chews on his food.

“Wow, then what did you see in that 17-year-old when you approached her?” I say with a smile on my face raising my eyebrow.

He returns my smile “when you are in love you don’t see the age, when I approached you I just prayed to God that at least you should be 18 years or above but otherwise if you were not I would have waited for you because I fell in love with you when I first saw you baby girl.” He says.

I smile, we eat as we continue to talk and latter we head to bed and cuddle.

Weeks go by and we fall in love more and more. I spend most of my weekends at his place and when I am not there we talk over the phone a lot. Tumi forgave me when I bought him a bottle of vodka and told him I paid for it with Thili's money. Although he was a little angry because he had to borrow a gown from other students in the building to cover up he said he was more scared for me because the man he saw was fuming in anger and looked ready to attack. After class he calls me and we arrange a get together. Tshego offered to bring some meat and snacks.

“Guys, I think I am going to break up with Matimba, He is cheating again” she says with a sad smile.

Tshego has been going through the most. Her boyfriend of one year is cheating like nobody's business. She has tried to leave him so many times but she always goes back. Her reason is

that she can't walk away from him because of stupid mistakes he makes. "people make mistakes!" she always says. The Guy once hit her and blamed it on alcohol, although we told her to leave she went back three days after.

"Yes my friend don't let him abuse you like this, You deserve someone who will love you the way you deserve." I say taking a sip of my apple juice.

"wait, didn't you say he once threatened you when you guys fought the other time?" Tumi asks with a concerned face.

"He did, but I think maybe he was bluffing" Tshego says unsure of her own statement.

"He won't kill himself or anyone, Tshego should just send him a message and delete his numbers and move on, she can also file for a restraining order if he harasses her, plus look at it this way, you won't get to see him in two days' time. you will be done writing your exams and going home for the long weekend" I say. Men need to know

that it is also easy and possible for us to walk away when we get fed up by the relationship.

After finishing her exams Tshego comes with her bags to my place and asks to sleep over as she will be leaving tomorrow on Thursday to Hamanskraal. She tells me that she is finally taking our advice of leaving Matimba as she now knows for sure that he is a serial cheater. She sends him an SmS, informing him of her choice to end their relationship and she switches her phone off.

In the morning I accompany her to catch a taxi and she promises to call me when she gets home. Tumi went to see one of his cousins in Johannesburg for the long weekend so I am left all alone. I decide to surprise Thili by spending the weekend. I pack my small bag and head to his place. I arrive by 3pm, at his place and under a flower pot next to his door I remove the spare key. He showed it to me the first time I came to his place and since then I never forgot. Today he

won't know what hit him. When I enter I inspect the place and it is clean, the fridge has no cooked food, so I head to the bedroom and place my bag in his closet. I check the cabinet under his bed and this time to my relief it is empty. I take a shower; the water is crashing over my back washing away all the tiredness. I want to surprise him, I brought my lingerie, I bought it last month when I was accompanying Tshego to buy one to surprise Matimba. so I figured why not. Only if our parents knew what we are up to at this so called universities! After an hour I am all dressed up in a sexy red number that has everything on display, it is backless and only has two strings, at my neck and the one that comes at my lower back, my ass is on display as it is a G-string. One pull on the two strings everything is off. I put on a gown on top. As I wait for him I order some takeout's. few minutes later the order arrives and I pay. I start to get worried because he knocks off at 04:00pm on normal days and at 5pm when it is busy at the office. Both those

times have passed, it's almost 7pm. I continue to watch soccer as I wait for him but I start to feel hungry so I decide to eat. As I am about to finish eating I hear him unlocking the door. I stand up and try to pose sexy, I arch my back and tilt my hip as I start to prepare myself to remove my gown. As I am about to untie the gown a female appears in the sitting area and she freezes as she sees me, she is now staring at me with her eyes wide and mouth open. I immediately stop untying my gown and wrap a protective hand around my waist.

“Who are you?” the amazed female says.

I continue to look at her surprised at what could she be doing here at this time, and who is she?

Thili comes into the sitting room and he halts in his steps surprised to see me. More shocked at my presence.

“Who is she?” the woman says looking at Thili for answers still surprised at my presence.

Thili immediately jumps in. “Naledi, this is my girlfriend Alu, I think you should leave we will talk some other time” he says, willing her to leave with his eyes.

I can't help but get that same unsettling feeling in my stomach, I all of a sudden feel nauseous.

They engage in a stare contest and eventually the woman “Naledi” backs down and leaves.

“Who is she?” I say after she leaves.

“Why didn't you tell me you were coming today; what time did you get here?” he says trying to change the subject.

“who is she?” I say starting to raise my voice.

“can you relax; she is just a friend” he says digging his fingers into my food as he settles on the couch.

“If she is a friend what was she doing at your place this time? I mean its late for a female friend to visit his guy friend” I say mad this time.

“stop overreacting, you should have told me you were coming. Next time when you come please tell me, so that we can avoid this Dr Phil chit chat” he says licking the sauce off his fingers unbothered by my anger.

I get angry at his statement. So I should tell him that I am coming so that he can tell his hoes not to come late and keep him company?

I don't know what is wrong with me, every time I want to react to my pain the only way my body allows is the weak way, with tears. I can't scream like the normal people do. Why can't I scream and curse? I also want to shout my hurt out and show him that I can be a mother fucking bitch but everything in me fails me. So I do what I always do best, I run away from the situation instead of facing it.

“Forgive me for wanting to surprise my man!” I say heading to the bedroom. First thing tomorrow morning I am taking my things and leaving. I don't even have strength to remove the

lingerie so I just remove my gown and get under the blankets. The blankets will separate me from the rest of the world, it will also get better if I fall into a dreamless dream, there is no pain there.

Few moments later I hear him enter the room, and after a few minutes he lifts the blankets and I feel air coming into contact with my bare skin.

“Mhh! You look sexy in this lacy thing, turn around let me see you!” he says in a whisper.

I keep quiet and close my eyes pretending to be asleep.

“Please baby, forget about her she is just a friend of mine. Don’t let her ruin our night” he says trying to soften me up.

I keep still with my eyes closed. What did he expect would happen when he brought a woman to his place at night? Maybe it’s his daily thing, maybe when I am busy saving myself for him he is busy sharing himself with every woman that comes his way. I get disgusted at the thought that he brings woman like that to his house late at

night. Maybe that underwear that I found in the drawer was hers. But she doesn't strike me like a woman who wears any underwear, this is the more reason I am mad. The fact that she looks like the easy type, the type that gives a man what he wants. A tear falls to my pillow as these thoughts keeps running in my mind.

I suddenly feel the heat of his breath on my neck and I silently will him not to touch me.

Dr Phil chit chat? I try to do something good for my man and I get this.

“You smell so good” he says caressing my open back and his hand moves to my lower back to my ass. I immediately pull the blankets to cover me.

“Leave me alone, I want to sleep. You are not getting any go get it from Dr Phil!” I close my eyes and listen if he will respond. I hear him sigh and few seconds later he settles at his side of the bed and I sleep.

CHAPTER 5

I wake up in the morning with a warmth unfurling in my belly which blooms and spreads between my thighs, accompanied by a throbbing in my clitoris. I dreamt him hugging me tight, and in that hug I could feel all of him against me. He smelt so good and I couldn't keep my hands off him. He looked me in the eyes and said "You will be mine for ever!" Before I could respond I woke up, Hot and wanting.

I feel a thumping throbbing pulse between my legs. I can feel the build-up of the wetness of my arousal, and all I want is pressure down there, I want to be filled. I immediately forget that I am angry at him and turn to look at him. How can I want him this much when I am furious at him?

He is sleeping peacefully and he is more handsome. His lashes are long and his nose a little big. He mumbles something inaudible but remains asleep. Seeing his handsome face this close makes me want him more. Putting my pride aside, I slip my hand inside his shorts and his big guy immediately comes to life at my touch. I hold it a little firmer and give it a little squeeze and a few pumps. He groans as his eyes springs opens and before he can say anything I kiss him. He accepts my kiss and we kiss passionately as I work his big guy with my hand. He groans and I feel tingles inside my opening and it is radiating into my clitoris. He breaks our kiss and looks at me with hungry eyes full of desire. He is breathless and so am I.

“So you are no longer mad at me?” he asks me.

“What! do you want me to stop? I can stop if you don’t want this” I say giving his big guy a pump, knowing he will never say no.

He groans “No don’t stop, I love this and you” he says joining our mouths to continue our kiss while peeling my sexy lingerie off.

“I am still angry” I say breaking our kiss.

He grabs me by my waist and puts me on top of him. “We can discuss that latter for now please finish what you have started.” He says caressing every part of my body.

He flips me and I am now on the bed and he is on top. The blankets are now crumpled on the other side of the bed.

He kisses my neck then my breast. He is slowly licking every skin of my body from my breast, neck and stomach. I feel it, the feeling starts deep in the pit of my stomach. It feels like the normal butterflies in my stomach, but much more intense this time. As he continues to lick his way into my abdomen slowly, the feeling spreads down to my clitoris.

The build up from my core is frustrating, I am having trouble thinking about anything other than my complete desire to be filled. I want him inside of me and I want him now. Before he could reach his destination down there I pull his head up and look inside his eyes with hot desire “Fuck me!” I say hot and wanting. Hearing myself say these words gives me tingles. He looks at me deep in my eyes and I see his desire blossoming even further. He kisses me hard groaning while he readies me with his fingers and before I know it he is pushing his way inside me.

My heartbeat gets irregular as I feel his big dick pushing inside of me agonisingly slow, it is exquisite torture. The strokes are getting deeper and faster, my body is no longer mine but his, he is in control. It’s like when I told him to fuck me, there was a switch that tripped. He pulls out and before I can complain I am standing and he gently pushes me to bend over in front of the bed, within seconds he grabs my hips and slides

in again. He is pounding hard while groaning. He uses one of his hand to rub my clitoris while the other is holding my waist. He is pounding roughly and harder and I am loving it. I feel a tingling heat that spreads throughout my body until my ears are burning. My toes curl and my body starts twisting in desire and right there I feel him tense and I let go as he does too, holding me tight. I am weak and he is heavy on me, so I fall on the bed with him on my back. I close my eyes for a while just to try and recover. He is breathing hard in my ears, although he is heavy I don't want him to move because I am loving the tingling sensation that his warm breath is producing.

“I think I went to heaven and came back” he says in a whisper. I start to laugh as he stands and carries me to the middle of the bed and wraps his hands around me. He kisses my face. “I cannot get enough of you, every time I am inside you I just feel all sorts of emotions.” He says holding me tight.

“You are just drunk in love” I say smiling, brushing my leg against his.

“No serious, I feel this peace that I never feel when I am with others, it’s like you are the missing piece of my life. Making love to you gives me pleasure” he says caressing my ass.

I smile but instead of me rejoicing inside I find his last statement disturbing.

I analyse his statement. “others” what does he mean by others? does he mean other woman? I can’t help but imagine what more meaning could be in his statement especially this one word.

“Are you having an affair with her?” I say hurriedly.

He tenses behind me “It’s not like that, please don’t ruin our moment she is not worth it” he says clearing his throat.

“I just need to know” I say trying to turn and look at him but I cannot because he holds on tighter to the point where I cannot move.

“She is my ex” he says with a sigh.

My heart sinks from hearing his words. A lot of things and questions comes into my mind. I suddenly feel sick and his hands don't bring me warmth anymore.

“it's not what you think, she came by because she said she wanted to talk to me. She said she was going through a tough time” he says.

“So she wanted you to comfort her? How do you think you were going to bring solutions to her problems?” I say angry. Finding some strength, I finally remove myself from his hold and walk to the bathroom and lock the door.

Why didn't I run at the first chance I got?

After the long shower that I take, when I get to the bedroom he is nowhere to be found. Good, because I don't think I can deal with him right now. I don't think I know this man anymore. First it was some female clothes, and now this.

My conscious still tells me that there is more to those Items than what he is admitting to. I put on my dress and head to the kitchen, he is nowhere to be found so I guess he went out. I make myself some muesli and watch Tv. My phone vibrates on the coffee table. Its Tshego.

“Hi babe” I respond as normal as I can. I don’t want to stress her with my problems.

“How are you?” she asks sounding better than before.

“I am living, so I guess I can say I am fine. How about you?” I say, really interested at hearing how she is coping after her break up. Break up are not fun and I know she loved Matimba even though he loved taking advantage of her.

“I am not sure how I feel. Matimba has been calling off the hook. He has been sending messages nonstop. I am starting to get scared” she says.

“don’t worry, he will eventually stop, he’s just trying to get your attention” I say.

“I am coming back tonight,” she says sounding scared.

“ok, things are complicated this side might comeback too. I don’t know this man anymore. It’s like he loves sticking it in any hole he comes across.” I say.

She chuckles.

“I am glad you find humour in my distress.” We talk for few more minutes and say our goodbyes latter on.

He comes back around 11am, with his gym bag. He takes a shower and afterwards settles next to me. If we were in normal talking terms we would have been fighting for the remote, because he loves watching soccer and I love watching movies. Today he settles for my movies, we sit in silence. His phone vibrates in his pocket but he ignores it and looks ahead. After a few seconds it rings again, I look at him and he ignores it. It vibrates again and this time he takes it out and

looks at it. He is now on his WhatsApp but I don't see who he is talking to. After focusing on his phone and typing a few times he stands up and tells me that he is going to meet his friend Danny for some few hours. "ok" that's all I manage to say. He grabs his car keys and leaves. Something tell me that he is lying about who he is going to meet, so I stand up to go and investigate. I remember he once told me about how his laptop is linked to all his social networks for when he is busy with it, so I just have to find it. I start searching in the bags but it's not there, few minutes later I remember the drawer under the bed. I find it and luckily I know the password. When I open the WhatsApp I see names the first on top is Danny. So he was right, I feel guilty for not trusting him. I look at the profile picture and it is interesting, It's a picture of stilettos. What a strange profile picture for a man. I open the conversation. Immediately the conversation grabs my attention.

There is something that feels off about the conversation. I see that person is typing.

“Did you manage to leave your place?” Danny types.

“Yes, it wasn’t that hard to get out. Where should I meet you?” Thili types.

“Let’s meet at Fridays, I am already here. Ill order the usual” Danny types

“Cool, give me few minutes” Thili types.

I get chills by just reading the conversation. I search on the internet for the nearest Fridays restaurant and I get an address in Midrand. I immediately request for an Uber and switch off his laptop and return it where I found it. I put on my jeans and a t-shirt, cap and sunglasses. My Uber arrives and in 15 minutes we are there. When I get there I immediately spot the restaurant, I move closer and I immediately spot something

that catches my eyes. It's the person that is sitting beside him. She is wearing a weave, It's short, curly and brown in colour. He is sitting beside her and as she talks she is busy brushing his shoulders. Why is she wearing the exact weave that he claimed was for his baby sitter? Or is it that I never got over that issues so now I am starting to piece things which are not related?

The lady gets close to his face and kisses him. It's the same lady that he came back with yesterday and he is kissing her. A cold wave washes over my body and I start to shake. I'm frozen on the spot, body shaking, pulse racing. I immediately feel sick and weak. Why did he save her number as Danny?

As I look at them all lovey dovey, many thoughts come into my mind. What love does he have for me if he can show the same affection for another? when a tear falls on my cheek that's when I realise that I am crying, in front of people. A sign of weakness. I rip my eyes away

from the painful sight, and turn blankly towards the walk way to make my escape before the whole world see my broken heart. I bump into a man pushing boxes and everything crumbles causing a commotion. My eyes dart all over the place and now everyone is looking at me, including him, without thinking I run without even apologising to the poor man. Next to Nandos I see someone exiting an uber and I go in after the woman exit.

“Driver please take me out of this place.” I say
“Where do you want to go ma’am?” taxi driver asks.

“I don’t know yet just drive don’t worry I will tell you” I say wiping my tears away. I see the driver looking at me through the rear view mirror with pity written all over his eyes.

I gave him my heart, he did me wrong the first time and I forgave him, now he is doing what he promised not to do. I ask the driver to leave me at the nearest taxi rank in Oliven. From there I travel to Pretoria CBD. I decide not to go back to my place because I know he will follow me there. He has been texting and calling nonstop. I decide to go to a guest house in Hatfield, its much cheaper. My body is still shaking and weak, I feel this pain which cannot be described but it slices through my heart. My tears are not ceasing and aren't making any difference of ceasing my pain. I check in when I get to the guest house and switch off my phone, I will face the rest of the world tomorrow.

CHAPTER 6

There is no amount of words that can capture how distinctly painful and powerful heart break can be. Yesterday I slept the whole day, I wanted to avoid any living thing on this earth. I am Heart broken, I feel betrayed yet I don't think I will ever get over him, because it is my first committed relationship. yesterday I cried my eyes until I couldn't cry no more. I tried to accept that he did not love me and that it was over.

I make my way into the campus residential area. The weather resembles my feelings. It is a cloudy Monday and the sky promises rain as the clouds are grey and heavy. At the gate I see students in groups gossiping. I think they want to start a protest or maybe there was a couple which was fighting over the weekend. After a few minutes' walk, I finally conclude that it has to do with a couple when I hear a girl say "I have always

heard that, that guy was not stable, that's why he did it, shame the poor girl!"

Shame the poor girl! I wonder what the guy did to her. Men are trash!

When I enter the building I can't help but get the feeling that everyone is looking at me with sad and sorry eyes. Maybe they see through me, maybe they see how broken my heart is. Is it that obvious that the whole world see's it? I see some pointing fingers my way and whispering but I finally make my way to my room. I feel this heavy burden on my soul, I think of Tumi and Tshego. Maybe those two might bring some light into my soul.

I even forgot that Tshego came back yesterday, she might have called so many times. I immediately switch on my phone and it is fully packed with voice messages, mostly are from Thili but I see two from Tshego. I press to listen.

“Alu, he is going to kill me, he has a gun, PLEASE HELP ME!” she says, more like scream in horror.

My sad heart is immediately goes into panic mode as I replay the voice message again. It was sent at around 12:45 am.

As I listen to the second voice mail it is similar to the first one but with more panic and fear. She was crying, I immediately run out of my room to get to Tshego. I need to save her; I just hope she is okay. From my place to hers it's a 15 minutes' walk. As I run I can't help but overthink, everyone was looking at me with sad eyes. Where they talking about her? I didn't get the whole story but I could see that whatever it was that happened it was big. When I get there I see an ambulance, police cars, some media houses cars and a yellow tape at the gate. My body is becoming weak as panic sets into me, why are there so many people? Journalist are standing at

a distance some with mics and cameras some with notebooks and pens.

“Police are investigating a case of murder after a body of a young woman was found in the backroom in Soshanguve block H. Although the details behind the death are still sketchy at the moment, it is believed that the death resulted from a lovers spat, more details to follow after we speak to the police captain” a reporter says.

Not believing what I heard the reporter say, I immediately slide under the yellow tape and run towards Tshego’s room. One policeman sees me and shouts for me to stop.

“HEY STOP, THIS IS A CRIME SCENE YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO INTERFERE!” he says but he is too late. I am already in and standing at Tshego’s door. She is lying on the floor in a pool of blood. I see a man covering her with a foil.

My mind takes leave and I feel numb, I feel empty inside as if I am torn apart. I hear her voice screaming asking for help sounding in my head repeatedly. My mind makes up all scenarios of him killing her, her being scared of him. I slowly sink to the floor, my breath slowly leaving my lungs. My ears can't hear anything; I just see people surrounding me and flashlights from cameras behind reflecting on the wall. All I feel is my paining heart, which pains beyond any pain imaginable. My head is heavy; my heart is in pain why her? I die a thousand times inside.

It's been Two months since we buried Tshego, her funeral was a very painful part of my life that will forever be painful. The death of a loved one is a painful thing. We all know that our time in this world is limited, and that eventually all of us will end up underneath the soil, but I never thought my friend would leave this earth the time she did. what makes it more painful and

hard to accept is the fact that someone decided to play God and take her life.

At first I tried to ignore it and act as if it's not true, for me it was just like a night mare dream were I would wake up and later realise that it was all just a dream. Reality stroke me when I saw the shiny foil covering her body in her room. I sat on the floor where I had collapsed and stared at the lifeless body which was lying on the floor in a pool of blood.

I remember looking at her coffin in the middle of the room where everyone was sitting and crying. Everything was just a blur all I could feel was an agonising pain. Her mother was broken as she was an only child. She cried at the funeral and after as she couldn't accept that her one girl child died at the hands of a man. I still blame myself for her death, I can't stop trying to imagine the difference I could have made if I had my phone on when she needed me. I Blame myself and I

don't think I will ever forgive myself for Tshego's death. I told her to leave that manipulative bastard. Only if I had told her to stay maybe they would have fixed their relationship and lived happily ever after. How do I forgive myself knowing that my advice killed my friend? I know Tumi blames himself too, because she also tried to reach out to him but he was too drunk to hear his phone when it rang. Tshego was found in her room in cold blood after being shot by Matimba. Matimba hanged himself in a nearby park the following day after realising that he was the first suspect for her murder. She was buried the following week in her hometown in Hamanskraal. Tumi found out when a contact called him to give him a tip of this big story in Soshanguve, only to find out later that the big story is about his friend. We couldn't contain our emotions at the funeral because we felt that we failed her a sister and a friend. We told her to leave him and now she is gone because of that.

We cried together and held each other up throughout.

Thili and I are now fine, but it took me a whole month to be able to forget what he did to me. He has been supportive throughout the funeral. He came over when he realised what had happened. We never really spoke about Danny/Naledi he just promised me that he sorted it out and I was busy focusing on my loss. I have been disconnecting from people a lot this days, I prefer my own company than the company of others but Tumi won't have it. He told me that was not a healthy sign, he comes by and we sit and talk about Tshego or just sit in silence and sleep the whole day. We did get counselling and it did help, my mother wanted me to come back home but I convinced her that I will be fine since we were almost done with the year and my sister Vule assured her that I was fine and coping when she came to visit me.

I have finished writing today, Thili convinced me that I should move in with him for the rest of the remaining week before I leave for the festive season. I didn't complain because I want to spend time with him, last year by this time he was in Durban. He left at around May, so we spent lots of time apart. This year he has only been away for few months. I had to lie to my sister that I am still writing. If she knew what I was up to, the whole Limpopo village would come to fetch me.

The rest of my Two weeks at Thili's place is wonderful and I am treated like a queen. On Friday of my last day he takes me out and buys me clothes. I will leave with my sister on Saturday. Thili will leave on the 17th of December as he has to go to work. He was sad when I left but I promised him that I will call him every day. He promised me that we will meet in Thoho-ya -Ndou when he comes back.

He comes from Louis Trichardt and I come from Makwarela.

CHAPTER 7

The drive to Limpopo is long and it is very hot but we are now few hours away, we have already passed the last toll gate.

My spirit starts to sink when I think about seeing my family members, the ones from my father's side. I know they see me as the reason behind every misfortune in the family. Being an unwanted child hurts like hell. Being a reminder of what people lost.

My mother had a rough pregnancy with me. She was mostly sick and hated by my aunts because according to them she failed the family by having

a female first born. When I was born, I became another disappointment because I came out a girl, to top it up my father had to die the very same day I was born rushing to the hospital to see me.

As if that was all, when I was 14 years old my cousin Thabelo from my Aunt's side tried to force himself on me during a family gathering. When I told my mother she was attacked and told that I was the one with a wild mind. She was threatened to a point where they told her to let it go. "They are just kids they were playing" that's what most of them said.

They blamed me for almost getting raped. My Aunt, Vho- Muofhe told me that it was my fault, that I was the one who came unto his 19-year-old son.

"If you think you can end my son's life like that you are mistaken, next time you must learn to shut your mouth and stop accusing people of things they did not do! No wonder my brother

died before he could set his eyes on you, it's like he knew that he gave birth to trouble!" she said.

I was traumatised, she went on to tell the rest of the family members that I wanted to set her son up for rape. It still pains me even today because, people still whisper amongst each other. During family gatherings they even point fingers asking if I was the one who almost destroyed my cousin's life with my lies.

"Are you okay? you seem so far away; you are not thinking about your friend are you? You know it's not your fault she died." my sister says turning the volume down.

"No, I am just thinking of all the drama I am going to face when I get home, you know what our aunts say about me right?" I say folding my leg on top of the seat.

"Yes, but you know that they are just bitter because they were eating dad's money. They used to milk him like an ATM, they are angry

because he did not include them in his will.” She says.

“How was he like?” I ask curious.

“He was like you, he always saw the good in people. He was soft too.” she says smiling at me.

“I always feel like a cursed child every time they are around us. you know they still think I lied about almost being raped. Do you blame me for dad’s death? I mean if I was not born he could have been here.” I say looking ahead.

“Don’t think like that, everything happens for a reason. I know that going home brings back all those hurtful memories especially of that jerk of a cousin, but he won’t come to our home. Mom made sure of it” she says thinking hard.

It’s like she can just kill him with her words, she is the one who came to my rescue when I was helpless. He had me pressed on the floor trying to split my thighs apart. Vule saved me, my sister fought him off. Although she kicked him in his junk, I know she wished she would have just

done far worse than that. My sister has been my protector ever since. Unlike me, she is tough, strong and takes no nonsense, I know that if we ever come across my cousin he is in danger.

We arrive at around 2pm and find my mother waiting for us, she has prepared a feast.

“My babies, you finally arrive, look at you two, no onda wee! (you are so skinny!) it’s a good thing that I have cooked. Come and eat” she says taking my small bag from me.

I love my mother so much, if I did not have her as a mother I would have fallen apart a long time ago. She is a woman of prayer and a strong woman. Growing up was tough for me because by then I was young, I couldn’t understand why my father’s sisters were so cold towards me, but mom kept me through. After an hour of eating and chatting with my mom and sister I go to my room and call Thili.

“Mufunwa wanga, oswika? (Love of my life have you arrived?” he asks when he picks up.

“yes, we have arrived and I already miss you” I say laying on the bed with my feet up.

“Haha! My place already feels empty without you. Baby girl I love you, you know that right?” he says all serious.

“Yeah right!” I say laughing.

“Don’t say that, I am serious, I love you, now what are you wearing?” he asks me.

I can’t help but blush at his question.

“I am wearing a short blue dress” I say with a smile, I know where this conversation is heading.

“what are you wearing inside the dress?” he asks again.

I chuckle “I am wearing a red lacy thong and no bra” I say.

“Oh wow, I like, red for danger! Now I want you to slide your hand under your dress and touch yourself. Is your hand in?” he asks.

I slide my hand under my dress and straight in down there.

“It’s in, and I am already wet” I say amazed at how fast my body responds to him.

“No wait I need to see this, drop the call let me video call you instead.” He says as I drop and we connect through video call.

“Open your legs wide, now use one finger to collect your wetness, start up at the top and rub your clitoris softly and gently. I want you to touch, rub and stroke it.” He says with a smug.

Our heated conversation is disturbed a few minutes later by my sister’s knock at the door, I thank the lord that she knocked. Thili almost burst into tears, but I can’t help but laugh at him. I promise him that we will continue later at night. Few minutes later we leave to go take a walk around the area.

We come back at around 6 pm and I can smell food from the gate. My sister makes a turn to greet the guy next door but I head into the house. As I enter the sitting room I see my Aunt, who is my father’s oldest sister sitting on the couch.

“Idani rini vhone, garaba, hee! danu vhone nau penya nivho penya. Tshelede dza Khaladzi anga dzikho shuma. (come, let me see you. Look at you! you are even glowing. My brother’s money is working.)” she says in a sarcastic tone.

“Onoto naka kani tshinwe tsho wela tshinweni? (why are you so beautiful, are you pregnant?)” She says looking at me again.

I don’t get why this woman comes here because when she is here nothing good ever comes out of her mouth. She is always searching for something to criticise and judge about me. She loves to pretend as if she cares about us but I know that she is only looking for gossip. I have to endure her sarcasm for a whole hour, then she finally leaves us in peace.

When I go to bed I call Thili but his phone is not answered so I retire to bed. In the morning I call him again but his phone is not answered again, I can’t help but feel the same feeling I felt when I found those clothes in the drawer. I get shivers

down my spine when I think of where he could be or what he could be doing. I brush the thoughts away and wait for him to get back to me. The whole day goes by and he doesn't call. I call him at night and this time his phone is off. My heart sinks and I cry myself to sleep.

The following day I get a phone call from the office where I had applied for an internship, I had an interview few weeks back. They tell me that I got the job and that I will start working on the 8Th of January. When I went for the interview I didn't think I would get the job because there were people who looked like they knew their story. Me on the other hand is young and have little knowledge of the industry and the only knowledge I have is from my school books, and I am not yet a graduate. I get excited and my mother and sister are both happy for me. I try Thili's phone to tell him the good news but it is still off again. So like a pro that I am I will pretend that everything is fine and forget about

him for now. I can't let my mother and sister see me sad.

Thili doesn't call me the whole December and his phone is off, so I just switched off all that part of my life to avoid being sad in front of my mother. So I bottle my pain in and put my best smile for the festive season. I sometimes wonder what might be happening, sometimes I find myself thinking the worst like maybe he is dead or maybe he is married and he went back to his wife and kids but all these thoughts drive me to a dark place which is very hard to escape. My mind is conflicted and my heart breaks every day when I think about him.

Today its new year eve and I decided to spend it at home watching movies. My sister said she is going out to dance and drink with her friends. My mother is asleep. I speak to Tumi every day and every time he is drinking, I swear this one needs a tap that dispenses alcohol. Tumi calls me

before midnight. “Hello love” he says. His background is noisy.

“Hi, alcohol will be the death of you” I jokingly say.

“Haha, death by alcohol. I just wanted to say happy new year now before I black out. Today I am super sloshed. So HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” he screams into my phone.

“You too darling, just be safe” I say.

“Where Is Vule? Are you all alone?” He asks.

“She went out, she said she is going to dance” I say.

“So you are home alone? you boring Magogo! you need to get out more and loosen up, stop acting like a pastor!” he says scolding me.

I roll my eyes “I don’t find going out fun, I just love my own company, by the way I am with mom but she is sleeping” I say in a low voice.

“Haha! listen to you, are you trying to convince yourself or me?” he laughs at me and ends the call.

After the countdown to the new year, I think of retiring to bed but before I can stand up Thili’s name flashes on the screen. I look at it Frozen, my heartbeat has accelerated. Without thinking I grab the phone and press answer. “Hey! Happy new year my love!” he says in a normal voice.

Just like that, no explanation of his whereabouts. I end the call without saying a word.

My heart accelerates and all the thoughts I have been harbouring comes back and I silently cry. After him disappearing on me for close to four weeks, he has the guts to come back and say happy new year? What is so happy about it? Where has he been? He is calling me but I ignore him and put my phone on silent.

After new year my new work place sends me an email to remind me of my first day at work. I have to find a place to stay in Pretoria. So I start

to google and make some few calls and within an hour I have found something around Hatfield. My mother is sad to see me leave but she is also excited that I have a job, before I leave she gives me her 2 minutes' lecture of how to behave and we leave.

CHAPTER 8

My first day at work was wonderful, it was exciting actually. Everyone at the office seem friendly although they were surprised to see a young woman working and not at school. I still attend but its part-time on Saturdays. We had to get internships for practical experience so that we can graduate next year. Tumi is doing his internship at a broadcasting company and he is

excited too. Thili has been begging to meet me since he came back from hiding, I have been refusing but today I finally agreed. If he knew where I was staying or working, he said he was going to come and make sure that all eyes are on him to get my attention. I agreed to meet him in a public space, I don't want to meet him anywhere private lest he tempts me and "dickmatise" me. I meet him at union building, I sit on top of my scarf on the grass and he sits next to me. We sit in silence for few seconds and he finally talks.

"I can explain!" he says, but I keep quite so he continues talking.

"I got mugged and my phone got broken, so it was off" He says showing me his cracked phone and a bruise on his hand.

"If it is still cracked, what did you call me with?" I ask.

"I bought a new phone" he digs in his pocket to remove it.

“When did you buy this new phone?” I ask harshly.

“I bought it a week after I got mugged” he says with embarrassment written all over his face.

“So after buying your phone it took you a whole three weeks to reach me? did you stop to think what I might have been going through? How do I even know that you are telling the truth?” I say wiping tears off my cheeks.

“It’s just that I got traumatised, and I was badly injured so I was also admitted, I didn’t want to stress you” he says brushing his face. “I didn’t even go home anymore, I was badly injured that is why I switched off my phone. I didn’t want to stress you.” he says.

I start to feel like a selfish person for not thinking that he was hurt, but it still doesn’t make sense why he decide to switch his phone off.

“I love you baby girl, now and always” he says.

“I love you too, but it’s just that you hurt me so much that I don’t even know when you are lying or telling the truth” I say picking at the grass.

“Believe me, I am telling the truth I was badly hurt, if you don’t believe me you can even check with the hospital where I was.” he says rolling his shirt sleeve showing me a stab wound on his left hand arm.

I believe him when I see the wound and scold myself for ever doubting him.

“Next time you disappear on me, I am moving on!” I say with a straight face.

We chat about my new job and my day until we get tired and lie on our backs on top of the scarf. I am looking up at the sky looking at the grey clouds. I am grateful that we have fixed our issues, it looks like it’s going to rain, I love rain. I feel his hand slip under my long floral dress. In panic of being in public I look around to see if there is anyone looking our way but everyone is concentration on their business.

“There are people” I say in horror but doing nothing to stop his hand from sliding further.

“So? let them watch. I am touching what belongs to me.” He says with a smug.

His hand travels all the way to my core and he brushes me gently through my silky panty. I missed him, but I won't tell him that so I just close my eyes with my head up and enjoy the moment.

“The last time we tried this over the phone but we were interrupted so let me finish the work that I started” he says leaning close to me as if he is whispering into my ears. I chuckle in response. While his other hand is caressing my thighs he is using the other hand to balance himself. He brushes his lips against my neck. “You smell good” he says and his lips vibrating against my neck causes a nice sensation.

He slips my panty to the side and his fingers are now rubbing gently at my clitoris. It feels quite good. He gently touches and strokes my vaginal

lips. I am now soaking wet. He slowly works his way inside me and starts to move his finger inside me using a come motion. I get goose bumps all over my body and I try to press myself deeper into his finger. The motion is building up some sensation inside me. I close my eyes and forget that I am at union building where everyone just walks around including tourists. I forget that anyone might be watching and I also forget that I was angry at this man for ghosting me for almost a month. I can feel myself start to throb and my breathing starts to fluctuate. He kisses me passionately and I forget where I am, I feel an overwhelming need to have him inside me. My hips want to grind on something, I want to be fucked, flipped over, and ridden hard. He breaks the kiss and looks at me with hungry eyes full of fire and desire. I feel a water drop hitting my face, but I don't focus on that.

“I want to flip you and make love to you right here! And I don't think I care if anyone is watching” he says.

I feel the echoing throb between my legs and clenching of my muscles wanting to pull something inside of me.

Before I can respond it starts raining, we immediately grab our stuff and run for cover under a tree. It is not making much difference but it is keeping us from getting too much wet. He grabs me and hugs me from behind and I feel his dick hard against my ass, its alive and wanting, just like my girl down there. I slip my hand behind my back and brush my hand over his dick through his jean. He groans and the sound make its way to the core. He holds me tight rubbing himself against me from behind as we wait for the rain to cease.

As I take a shower I can't help but think about my day at Union building. How hot and wanting I was, it was beyond my normal arousal. If it was not for the rain, I would be in jail for public indecency. After the rain got better we went to

Thili's car and we drove to my place, the few minute drive got me enough time to try and calm my girl down. I didn't want him to think that I am that easy after he ghosted me, so when we arrived at my place I gave him a peck on the lips and said "Call me when you get home" winked and closed my door. I can still see his shock even now. Even though he was injured I still needed to teach him a lesson. When I get into the kitchen I find Tumi busy on my stove.

"And then? Where did you fall from?" I say with my hands on my hips.

"Come on don't give me that bullshit! you know you like me being here especially when you don't know what you are going to have for supper. So right now I see myself as your guardian angel" he pouts and takes a sip of his wine.

I laugh, Tumi and I are inseparable, we promised each other that we will not open up a space for another best friend or ever separate in memory

of Tshego. I sit on the kitchen counter with a glass of apple juice.

“Today I was traumatised my friend, I had to go and cover a story of little Nakedi who went missing three weeks ago. The poor kid was found dead near Moretele park in Mamelodi.” He says stirring what’s inside the pot.

“Oh yes I saw you on the news, shame man! I feel for the mother, and you. Your job is not fun; I don’t wish to be you.” I say feeling sorry for him.

“It gets worse, I had to go to the poor woman and ask her how she felt after losing her child, I swear journalist are not supposed to have hearts. I think I need counselling” he says drinking his wine.

“Haha you don’t need counselling I think the alcohol has got you covered. Don’t wear that green shirt again it looks bad on camera.” I say with a smile.

Before he could answer, my phone rings and I answer.

“Hi baby girl” he says.

“Hello” I respond.

“Ohh just like that no baby or my love, wow I see that today you are in a mission.” He says sounding amused.

“What mission? I am not on any mission.” I say smiling.

Tumi looks at me and smile while continuing to cook.

“okay, its fine I won’t talk much, anyway I just wanted to say good night. I am with my little brother; Lucky he is going to sleep over.” he says.

I realise that I know all the names of his family members even the dead ones but I have never met or been introduced to any of them.

“Okay, so when are you going to introduce me to your family?” I shoot straight.

He pauses for a while and exhale. “baby girl it’s not that easy, you know meeting the family complicates things” he says.

“Why is it not easy, it’s not like you are still an 18year old boy, it’s even worse because you are a man. How will it complicate things?” I say looking at Tumi who pretends like he is not interested in my conversation.

“You only tell me about them, but I haven’t even met them, I mean you even spoke about the dead ones” I say.

Tumi laughs out loud, and I give him a death stare and he concentrates on his pots.

“Who, is that with you?” he asks loudly.

“We are still talking about you and me and when I will be introduced to your family.” I say spelling out each and every word.

“You are with the lady man aren’t you? He better not be sleeping there. I swear tell him I will deal

with him if he dares and sleeps there! This time he will end up in hospital” he says shouting.

“It’s my place, he can sleep if he wants to.” I say.

“we will see about that; we will talk about you meeting my family tomorrow. I love you” he says.

“okay” I say

He fakes a cough.

“Don’t make me come all the way to your place, because I will” he says.

I laugh “okay, I love you too, now off my phone I want to eat, my lady-man cooked me supper” I say smiling at Tumi. He laughs and drops the call.

“Lady-man? Your man thinks he is funny neh?” he says dishing up.

“don’t let him get to you, he just can’t get over your looks that’s why he feels threatened.” I say smiling.

Tumi laughs “yes you are right I am better looking than him, text him and tell him that I am sleeping over” he winks and smile.

“If you have a funeral cover I can do that” I say and we laugh.

We eat and he goes to his place. We live in the same area but different blocks.

Friday I spend my weekend at Thili’s place. He explained to me that he didn’t want to introduce me to his family because he doesn’t want them to interfere in our business, he later told me that we should start to prepare for a future together. We spoke about babies’ weddings, houses and how we would like our life to be together. He listened to my thoughts and added his own.

The weekend went by quickly, I felt robbed because I enjoyed being with my man, yes I am back at calling him with pet names, because he is mine. I love him and I cannot imagine my life without him. He has made mistakes and hurt me

in the process but now I love him deeper than before.

CHAPTER 9

I need prayers seriously, I am always late, my boss is going to be super angry with me today, I just have to think of another excuse to give her, let's hope she will buy it like all those other times. Yesterday she didn't seem to believe my excuse; I don't know what's wrong with me and not keeping time. I am forever late. Even when I wake up early I somehow find ways to delay myself.

“oh my God am I late? my watch says I am right on time!” I say trying to dodge her.

She exhales rolling her eyes “well it seems as if your time is wrong because according to my watch here, you are 15 minutes’ late little missy!”.

“I am so sorry it must have lost track, I will fix it now” I giggle all the way to my table.

Khanyi, is such a cool person. She sometimes gets all bossy and grumpy when she is under pressure but I cannot blame her with the kind of work we do especially her, it is depressing.

Oh it looks like I am early for a change, where is every one? Lebo, my table neighbour is not here.

“Hi Mandy, where is everyone?” I ask the cleaning lady.

“They are in the boardroom, the MEC called for an urgent meeting, didn’t you see the news this morning? There is a huge protest, citizens are also threatening to shut down the department” she says giving me a sideways look.

“oh shit,shit,shit! now the MEC will know that I am a late comer” I take out my diary and run to the boardroom. I open the door swiftly and tip toe trying to locate an empty seat looking down.

Half an hour later the meeting is adjourned and I have a lot to do, so I start working. During lunch time my colleague Lebo offers to go buy food as I remain and work so I give her money. My phone vibrates on my desk.

“Be ready at 04:30 I am taking you out. I love you my future wifey (kiss emoji)”- Thili.

I smile to myself and text him back

“Let’s make it 05:30, its hectic here today. See you then Mr Mudau. (love emoji)”

I get back to my work, so that I can finish my work early and catch my date.

At 05:30, I find him down stairs. He kisses me and holds my hand as we make our way to his car.

“Where are you taking me?” I ask curious.

“Nowhere fancy, I am taking you out to a place where I know that your mind becomes free and relaxed.” He says.

I start to get curious and wonder what that place might be. We make our way to Menlyn mall and I wonder what in Menlyn mall might interest me after 05:00pm. He parks his car and we enter. He leads me around. We finally reach our destination and I marvel at how good he knows me. We are standing in front of the cinema; we are going to watch a movie!

“I know that you love movies, so today we are going to watch a movie,” he says smiling at me.

He can be so cute. I hug him tight in excitement that he is willing to watch a movie even when I know that he doesn't love watching movies.

“Now let's pick a movie before you crush my bones” he says pretending to wince in pain.

“Since you think you know me too well you pick.” I say looking at him with a smirk on my

face. He ends up making the right choice. We go in to cinema 3 to watch Think like a man.

The movie starts playing and he starts drinking his strawberry slush, we are seating at the lover's nest seat, the first row on top at the corner. It is not that packed since it is Wednesday, we are the only two people seating on our row. The spot is cosy. They dim the lights as the adverts plays.

When the movie starts the lights goes off. I have always wanted to watch this movie ever since I saw the trailer. I first read the book so I was excited when I saw that there is a movie. I feel a cold rush as he slips his hand under my black dress. He caresses my thighs all the way up.

“How am I going to watch the movie when you are busy distracting me,” I complain in a whisper.

“If you miss it we will rent it or I will buy it for you.” I see his eyes glow in the dark as he looks at me in the dark and rubs my thighs. He connects our lips before I can complain any

further and he tastes delicious, like strawberry and cold. I can taste the slush he was drinking from his tongue. His tongue is wet and delicious I hold his strong arms tight and kiss him back twisting my body to be face to face with him.

“Take off your panties!” he whispers in between our kiss.

His words sends spark into my core and my heartbeat accelerates. I am reluctant to do what he asked but I want to do it anyway. I look around to make sure that there is no one watching us, to my surprise the heads I manage to see through the lights of the screen are concentrating on the movie. I lift my ass from the chair without standing up and remove my panties. They are already wet, he takes them in his hand and smell them looking straight into my eyes before putting them in his pocket. His gesture makes me shift in my seat. This man is crazy, the things that he does makes me marvel all the time.

“Now come watch the movie sitting on top of me.” He says urging me on to come sit on top of him.

I sit on top of him, my back on his chest as I face the movie screen, as if I am sitting on a chair. How does he manage to get me in the mood and he just acts like nothing happened?

“Does your dress have a zipper on the back?” he asks in a whisper.

“Yes! It does what do you want to do with my dress zipper?” I ask as I swallow.

I am surprised as to what he wants to do with my dress zipper. He better not think that I am going to undress but naked in here!

“Remove your jacket, I will make you warm, you don’t need it.” He says.

Without thinking any further I remove my jacket and put it on the seat next to me.

As I sit and watch my movie, people are laughing and I am already lost as to how the movie got to

where it is. I feel him unzipping my dress, I halt my movement of attempting to get my slush from the cup holder. He blows at my back and his air sends shivers down my spine. He leans in and licks my back. He continues to lick as he nibbles my neck. He opens my legs wide apart, and drags my dress up all the way to my waist exposing my lower body. His hand traces its way to my core, he dips his finger into my core to collect the wetness and he spreads it to my clitoris. He gently works my clitoris in silence as he licks and kisses my back. I don't know what to do from all this pleasure that I am getting, its driving me crazy, I feel like screaming. I let go of my worries and lay my head on his shoulder and look up. The feeling is so nice, and the pleasure is building up. He spreads my legs more wider with his one of his foot and to my surprise it produces more pleasure. Now I want to scream, I am starting to vibrate. He removes his hand and I feel like complaining. Why is he stopping. I was almost there. Shit! "Don't scream, there are

people watching a movie. We don't want to disturb them." He whispers in my ear, as he breathes heavy.

I feel his other hand unbuckle his belt and the sound of a zipper.

"Lift yourself a little bit up" He whispers in my ears his breathing is rougher and his heart beat has accelerated.

My legs start to shake from pleasure as I am about to lift myself up, I manage to do as instructed. I feel his hard solid dick nudging at my entrance. He slips in and I stifle a moan as I hold on tight to the chair in front of me. He is inside me, my muscles contract around him, I sit still and take in the feeling of him inside me.

"Move!" he instructs me.

I close my eyes, bend my back a little bit as if I am about to squat and hold on to the chair in front of me and I start to move. I am moving in an up and down motion and twirling in between although space is limited. I stifle moans in the

process, when my moans become audible, he uses his one hand to cover my mouth.

“oh shit!” he moans in a whisper in my ears.

I grind and grind slowly. His breathing is now heavy and erratic. He holds me tight and bends forward so that his face is now against my back. I am not there yet but I feel him tense and he holds me tight as he comes. He stops me from moving before I reach my happy ending.

“Oh, only if I can just scream my pleasure out” he says as his face leans against my back and I lean on the chair before me.

“But it’s not fair I did not reach my happy ending! I was almost there and you had to disturb me!” I complain raising my voice.

“Wow! keep it down love there are people in here. I am sorry baby girl; I couldn’t wait for you today. You kept on squeezing me too tight” he says as he removes me from him.

“But we can take this home if you don’t mind missing the rest of the movie.” He says with a suggestive smile raising his one eyebrow as he zips his trouser and buckle his belt. He zips my dress.

“Ok, but my place, your place is too far I can’t wait that long.” I say standing up pulling my dress down and taking my jacket and hand bag. I pull a tissues from my bag to wipe myself a little bit. He grabs my hand and we head to the door.

“The popcorns!” I say.

“Leave them, I want you not popcorns”

“Give me back my panties” I whisper as we move to the cinema door.

“No, you don’t need them. Just go and wipe yourself properly in the toilets we will meet here,” he slaps my ass and makes his way into the men’s toilet with a smug on his face.

I use the toilet and also wipe myself. As I wash my hands I see in the mirror that I am still hot

and wanting. A lady comes to wash her hands, but she keeps looking at me. She looks at me and when I look at her she faces down and pretends like she is washing her hands. I think she can see that I just had sex in the cinema. Embarrassed I make a quick job, wear my jacket and exit the toilets. Thili is not here yet so I stand and wait for him. The same lady I saw looking at me in the toilets approach me. She looks like she is in her mid-twenties.

“Hi, I am sorry for staring at you in the toilets, it’s just that I saw you walking with someone I know” she says. What a relief, I thought she was going to say next time get a room. I smell like sex; I was convinced that she was us.

“You mean Thili?” I ask.

“Yes, him!” she says excited.

“Are you his sister?” she asks.

I laugh out loud and she smiles.

I think I understand where she is coming from, if I was her and I saw me with Thili I would assume the same. I mean the age gap between us is huge and we behave more like friends when walking, he is always making fun of me and I am always nagging him like a sister would to a brother.

“No, I am not his sister I am his girlfriend.” I say smiling. I see disappointment wash over her face.

“Oh!” That’s all that she manages to say.

“Do you guys work together?” I ask curious now by her short response. That respond can only be a respond of someone who wanted him. I mean she was happy when she assumed that I was his sister but now suddenly her expression changed when she knew that I am the girlfriend.

“No, he was my Ex!” She says confidently, smoothing her see through shirt as if trying to rub it in my face. I get cold chills in my spine and look at her with no emotions on my face because I have no response for her. If she is the Ex why

was she staring at me and why is she talking to me? Starting to think of it she was following me around, I saw her when we were entering the mall from the parking, when we entered a makeup shop and when buying tickets. I start to boil from anger inside.

She continues to talk. “when I met Thili, he was a fuck boy the guy has some experience, He once sprained my ankle when we were attempting some style. He couldn’t keep his hands off me. Shame I wonder how you are performing when it comes to bedroom matters especially when I raised the standard by giving him the best sex of his life. I know he can be a freak when he wants! He is adventurous. You strike me as the missionary style only type of woman” she says with a smile.

My blood is boiling and I want to scream at her or hit her but I calm myself down. I cannot lose it in front of the whole world.

“When did you guys break up?” I manage to ask.

“Last year August, it was nice to know you, I’m Noxy by the way tell him I say hi” she says winking and leaving me on the spot frozen in shock. I feel a stab of pain in my heart. So he was with her and they broke up last year? I have been with this man for three years and there were others in the process? He finally comes out of the toilet with a smile on his face.

“I am sorry I took long baby girl! I was still smelling your scent on your panties. I couldn’t get enough” He says winking to me as he is looking me up and down trying to seduce me, but nothing in me blooms or melts. I just look at him with pained eyes and a tear falls from my right eye. His sight disgusts me, all those things that the lady told me are running in my mind. She sprained her ankle! Doing what position? So now he is what! a porn star? he goes around fucking any woman he come across and Sprain their ankles in the process! My anger is bubbling and my chest feels like its closing up on me as I look at him standing in front of me. I wipe my

tear and turn around and walk. He starts to follow me muttering something but I can't make up what he is saying because my goal is to escape. My heart rate accelerates so I start to run. I run away from the man I gave my heart to.

CHAPTER 10

Sometimes your heart needs more time to accept what your mind already knows.

My mind knew that something about this guy's stories were off from the get go but my heart kept on forgiving even though broken. I ran out of Menlyn mall knocking everyone in front of me off balance. Thili caught up with me in the

parking lot when I was still trying to request for an uber.

“Baby girl what’s wrong?” he says when he catches up with me. He looks appalled by my reaction towards him.

I look at him with tears on my face, asking myself why I fell for this man in front of me. Why does it feel like he has shared a part of himself with every other woman?

“Your girlfriend Noxy says hi!” I say wiping tears off my face.

He looks at me with a blank stare which turns into confusion, he opens his mouth and close it again and brush his head with his one hand,

“That bitch! I am going to kill her, what did she tell you?” he asks still rubbing his face with his hands.

Ohh! so he knows her wow, I thought he was going to tell me that he doesn’t know anyone by

that name. I look at him with disgust on my face trying to type my password on my phone.

He grabs my phone from my hands. “Alu don’t look at me like that, WHAT DID THAT BITCH TELL YOU?” he screams angry this time, but I don’t get intimidated.

“Nothing you don’t already know. Don’t worry I’ll take an uber home” before I could finish my sentence he is dragging me by my arm, my feet are barely on the ground and he deposits me on the front seat.

“We will talk about this at home, now put on your seat belt” he says with an angry face. Now why is he angry. Where does he get the rights to be angry? I am the one who is supposed to be angry here. I ignore his stupid demand. My tears just keep flowing so time and again I wipe them off. He gets in the driver’s seat and bend to my side to put on my seat belt for me.

He drives in silence but I can see him stealing glances at me. He is still angry, but I don’t know

why he is angry. He looks ahead and looks like he is in deep thoughts. He dials a number and puts it on Bluetooth speaker.

“Wow, you didn’t waste any time lover!” The woman says when she answers.

“Get off your high horse, I am not your lover. What did you tell my girlfriend?” he asks with a harsh tone.

“I didn’t tell her nothing we didn’t do, I just told her you couldn’t let go of me last year in Cape town.” before she could finish he interrupts.

“You cheap bitch! You will pay for this!” he says.

“Oh! So now I am the cheap bitch! in cape town you couldn’t stop screaming my name when you were in between my legs. Shame the poor girl, she looks young, why would she fall for you. I wonder if she knows about her, did you introduce them? does she even....” before she could finish her sentence he cuts in hurriedly.

“You won’t win if you are thinking of starting a fight with me. You are a cheap bitch and you will always be one! You are just a sperm dish for desperate man!” he spits in anger and ends the call before she could respond. He looks ahead angry to the fullest degree.

So he was with her when he was in cape town. I can’t shake the feeling in my body, it’s like she knows something that I don’t know. Why did I fall for this man, why did I love him, why am I still drawn to him even though he is causing me pain? My mind goes into deep thinking and before I know it my body is shaking. I can’t explain the feeling I am experiencing because it is foreign and it is giving my body a bad reaction. Who was she referring to when she said “I wonder if she knows about her”, who is this she? I can’t help but think if its Naledi. He slept with her, did he even use protection? All this thinking is giving me a headache.

We make it to my place in silence, I get out of his car and head to my door in silence. My body is still shaking even though it is not cold. He takes his jacket and puts it on my shoulders. I am weak and don't have the strength to shout or call him out on his shit anymore. When we get inside he locks the security door. I sit on the couch with my knees folded up resting my face up against them. He sits next to me and sighs.

“Baby girl I didn't want you to find out about her, she meant nothing to me. She was just a weakness of the moment; she just wants to start a fight between us” he says.

“How many times did you sleep with her?” this is my thoughts running into my mouth.

He shifts uncomfortably. “I wasn't counting; why do you want to hurt yourself by asking this questions?” he says trying to reach for my hands but I take them away from his reach.

“Did you use some protection?” I ask with tears falling from my eyes.

“Yes I did, I would never put you at risk, baby girl I” I interrupt him before he can finish his sentence.

“Was she good in bed?” I ask again looking ahead at the blank tv screen. The thought of him in between her thighs sickens me, I feel like vomiting.

She must have been good, or I might have been bad in bed if he cheated on me. Maybe I am not doing this sex thing in the required manner. Maybe I don't give him the pleasure that he desires that is why he cheats so easily. My body is shaking more.

“Baby girl please don't do this. It won't help anything it will only hurt you” he says bowing his head into his hands in exasperation.

“I want to know!” I demand. “I want to know why you did it, was I not enough for you? Where have I gone wrong as your woman?” I say. Tears can't stop flowing.

“She meant nothing to me, she is just some slut that I met and who was willing to give a guy a good time. I ended things with her my love. It’s you that I love and want to spend my life with.” He says.

I cry silently, and pray in my heart for strength from God.

“Why then were you still with her even after you came back from cape town? Why did it take you long time to end things with her if you didn’t love her?” I ask as I feel a sharp pain slice through my heart. My head is paining me from all the crying.

“When I came back from Cape town I just figured that she will get the message that all I wanted was fun and that it was back to my normal life but she kept on calling and calling until I finally ended things with her.” He says.

He turns around and looks at me. “Baby girl, I am sorry I know I have been the one messing up in this relationship, please forgive me” he says.

“She spoke about another woman, who was she referring to?” I ask.

He looks at me and closes his eyes and opens them in a second.

“She was referring to Naledi” he says.

“Wow, so all your side chicks know one another? Is it a thing with you?” I am starting to get worked up.

“So if we didn’t come across her today; it would have remained your little secret that you cheated? I would have remained a fool. I don’t even think that we accidentally met her, I think your side dish was after you or your dick, which ever made her nights in Cape town! Why do your hoes have to disrespect me?” I say as I stand in anger and make my way to bed, leaving him sitting on the couch.

CHAPTER 11

There is nothing painful than being in love with someone who is not fully committed to you. I didn't sleep a wink last night, I kept on turning and tossing. My mind kept on thinking. I thought about his conversation with Noxy and what he told me. He came to bed a few minutes after I got in bed. He stared at the ceiling for a while, I don't think he slept too.

My sister texted and said she was going to come over on Friday.

When I wake up, I find him sitting, looking at me.

“Baby girl please don't let her ruin us!” he says caressing my cheeks.

I wake up and sit on my side of the bed next to him. “no one is ruining us but you, it’s all you!” I say starting to get emotional.

He immediately gets off bed and walks to my side, he kneels down next to the bed.

“Baby girl, I know I did you wrong. Please don’t let my mistakes ruin our love, I am a dog I admit. Please forgive me my love, please I even blocked her,” he says giving me his phone.

“It was a temptation of the moment, I lied to you baby please help me so that I can also help myself. I made many mistakes and they are going to cost me you. Please forgive me for being weak and breaking your heart” He says with his face on top of my hands on the bed. My hands are getting wet. I look at him and I see tears fall onto my hands and I feel for him. A man begging to be loved and forgiven, he is admitting to his weakness. It takes a strong heart to love, but it takes an even stronger heart to continue to love

after it's been hurt. I forgive him, we take a shower together and he drops me off at work.

The rest of the week is awesome, Thili spent it with me at my place. He drove me to and from work and took me out on lunch time.

Its Friday, and we are going out, my sister Vule is so excited to be going out especially when Tumi is here. This Two love partying.

Vule is still putting on lipstick while Tumi is busy tying his shoes.

“Let's go bitches!” Tumi says.

Vule takes his bag and we head to the door.

We are going to some club in Sunnyside but we go to a restaurant to find something to eat first.

“So are you going to drink, pastor?” my sister asks laughing.

“Haha, no I am not going to let you two trick me into doing what I don't want” I say.

“Come on don’t be a boring magogo!” Tumi says. I look at both of them as they giggle and high five each other.

I dial Thili to tell him where I am and that we will be heading to the club later after we finish eating. Its 09:30 so I know that he is still up. His phone rings.

“Daddy’s phone hello!” a voice says.

My heart skips so many beats, I look at my phone to check if I dialled the correct number and I see Thili’s name on the screen. Confusion sets in, who is that on the other end?

“Hello?” I say more of a question this time.

“Hello! Daddy is still busy with mom, who are you?” the voice says.

I immediately drop the phone.

If this is not obvious I don’t know anymore. I can’t believe that I forgave him after the pain and trauma he caused in my life. The underlying vulnerability is always there, waiting to be

triggered by the right set of circumstances.

Whose daddy? Who is on the other end of the call and who is he referring to as daddy?

I have bottled a lot of things and I am bleeding inside, I cover my scars with smiles. Every time I open my heart to him I get hurt.

My mind sinks into a dark hole. I'm stuck here feeling worthless and useless, why is it that its always easy for him to hurt me. He has a child? daddy and mom are busy? Doing what?

“Are you ok dolls?” Tumi asks looking at me with concern written all over his face.

I clear my throat as a lump form in my throat
“Yes I am fine! Count me in I am drinking tonight, and I want to change into a dress, this clothes are suffocating me” I say.

“Yes now you are talking, I was wondering where you were going with those pyjamas” Tumi says looking disgusted by my baggy jeans and t-shirt. They accompany me to my place to change. I wear a black short dress which is backless. It is

tight and shows of my tiny body and hips. I put on a black cherry mat lipstick, my maroon high heeled shoes and take my black small bag and we are good to go. I want to numb my pain, I want to feel okay and normal, not the way that I am feeling right now.

By 01:30 I am drunk and I feel like talking my pain seems to have subsided. My sister and Tumi are also drunk. We take pictures and I check in on Facebook. ‘Out with other kids!’ I tag my sister and Tumi. I put my phone in the bag and we take our seats.

“I think Thili is at it again and this time he has a child!” I say loudly drinking my savannah. Savannah has become my favourite ever since that day I drank it with Tshego, may her soul rest in peace!

“What? What do you mean “at it again”, and a child?” Vule asks in shock.

“I don’t want to talk about it, I want to forget about it” I say sipping at my savannah.

“Tell me what he did to you. You said at it again so it means it’s not for the first time. Did he cheat on you and got someone pregnant?” my sister asks getting all worked up.

“Don’t worry about it, let’s go and dance” I stand up and leave them looking concerned. My sister starts to direct all her questions to Tumi. Gosh! she should have been the one who did journalism, busy throwing questions at me as if I am in an interview.

I spot a cutie at the bar, he is not that tall but he is medium height. He winks at me and licks his lips in an inviting way. I head over to him swaying my hips from side to side and flip my hair as I walk to meet my fate.

“Hi, I saw you from across the room, would you like something to drink?” the guy says looking at my chest and face repeatedly.

“Why not!” I say moving with him. He orders some shots and we drink.

We chat and we flirt in between. He brushes my arm and touches my face. Although his touch is nothing close to Thili's I lean towards his hand and close my eyes as he caresses my face. His lips are now on mine he is kissing me but all I see is Thili, why am I thinking about the one man who is breaking me when I am trying to mend my broken heart. I kiss him back but it tastes nothing like Thili's kiss, his lips are bigger and his kiss is dry. I try to squeeze my eyes more shut but all I see is Thili invading my thoughts, I try to caress his face with my one hand but his face is too rough and doesn't feel anything like Thili's so I pull back and look at him blankly. He looks at me and smile.

“You are a good kisser” He says in a soft voice.

I get embarrassed because I cannot say the same thing about him, all I could do when he was kissing me was compare him to my heart breaker. I am saved when my favourite song is

fired up, I hit the dance floor and I scream the lyrics out, sipping' on my drink.

As I dance another hot guy approaches and starts dancing with me. He is taller than the first one. He is Fair in complexion and seems like a good dancer. He looks like he lifts too. He has those nicely built bodies and arms to die for. I drape my hands on his shoulders as we dance and I shake my body. Today I am on a mission, a mission to forget and mend my broken heart. We move with the rhythm in the same pace facing each other. After a while the music changes and I turn around and I face the opposite side, I am now in front of him shaking my waist to personally by p-square song as he grinds from the back and moves with me. The dancing does not cease, as I dance I forget about all the stressful events of the day. It's getting late but I am nowhere near ready to stop the party. I don't care if Tumi and my sister want to leave.

I close my eyes and I move, the guy's hands are now on My bare back as he caress it, he moves them slowly to my hips, his breath is now on my neck. Even though everything inside me is screaming for me to stop him, I do nothing to stop him. If I hurt him this way maybe I will stop hurting inside, I will let this man do what he wants with me. I will let him touch me and caress my body, maybe I will feel no pain or any emotions knowing that I did what he did to me. I close my eyes and try to enjoy the moment. I think the guy has a hard on because I feel a bump on my lower back as he rubs against my ass. His one hand is now on my thigh.

“Get your filthy hands off my woman!” I hear screams as a fist punch flies to the guy I was dancing with. The sound of Thili's knuckles connecting with his face sounds painful. Without a fight the guy is lying on the floor bleeding and people are looking in amazement.

“Get your fucking hands off her” he hisses in anger pointing a finger on the guy who is now trying to stand. He pulls me by my arms forcefully, I can’t walk properly in this shoes as I am drunk and before I know it we are in the parking lot.

“What do you think you were doing in there? Shaking your body to another man and what is this that you are wearing. Alu what are you trying to achieve from your reckless behaviour?” he says pointing a finger at me.

“So now you want to be a prostitute who sleeps with everyone they come across, do you know that guy you were dancing with? SINCE WHEN DO YOU DRINK?” he is shouting in anger but my mouth is tied all I feel is this pain in my heart. For a moment it was gone, I couldn’t feel it anymore but now it is back.

“Answer me Alu, if you wanted attention you could have chosen another way to seek it” he says as he removes his jacket and drapes it on my

shoulders and try's pulling my dress down but gets nowhere. He gets more irritated and angry when he realises that it is just short. When I say short I mean short.

“Look at yourself! throwing yourself at men you don't even know!”, he says in disgust mixed with anger.

“What do you think you are doing? Leave her alone!” my sister says walking towards us in a hurry.

“The guts you have, she is like this because of you. What the hell did you do to her? You cheat on her and expect her to smile to you?” Vule says.

“I don't need to explain anything to you, please stop interfering in our business. How can you let her leave the house looking like this? And since when does she drink?” he says angry.

“Her business is my business, and you cheating on her is my business too. She is my sister, she

can also wear whatever she wants to wear, it's her body." Vule says.

"Vule I think we should just take Alu home its late" Tumi says scared as Thili looks at my sister with a death stare.

"No, I am not scared of him, I will say what I want to say right here, he needs to tell me what he did that pushed my sister to such a state. He thinks I don't see through him. She might not see you for the cheat and liar that you are but I see it." She says starting to scream pointing her finger at Thili.

"Fuck off, you don't know me. You are not better than me, you were busy sitting there while she was busy letting a stranger violate her body in the name of fun even when you see that she is drunk? What kind of a sister are you, what's next where you going to let him take her home?" he hisses in anger.

"Maybe I might have; she would have gotten a good time! and forgotten about you because you

are a bully, and you FUCK OFF TOO” Vule says standing close, eye to eye with Thili.

“Vule, let this go please you are not helping the matter!” Tumi says to Vule.

“You should listen to the lady man; I don’t want to manhandle my sister’s girlfriend. Walk away” he says.

Before My sister can utter another word I get annoyed.

“STOP IT, CAN YOU TWO JUST STOP TALKING ABOUT ME WHILE I AM HER!”

“Just take me home” I say in a defeated voice.

“I will take you home” Thili says.

“I am not going anywhere with you. Go back to your house I think you have a family waiting for you.” I say and turn my back on him.

“Yes you heard her, go you are not needed here MR LOOSE ZIPPER!” My sister says with an attitude giving Thili a death stare.

CHAPTER 12

I am not better than all those women who are being abused physically, because even though everything in me says leave I can't. When I try to leave it always feels like I am leaving another part of me with him. I have become so used to loving him so much to a point where I have become sceptical of being with someone else. I am also afraid of being alone, I am scared of starting a new relationship.

Last night it was chaotic, Vule and Thili got into this heated argument that couldn't be contained after the "loose zipper" statement. My sister just wouldn't back down, she kept on throwing insults at Thili demanding to know what he did

to me. They both calmed down when I started vomiting and Tumi attended to me. I told him to call an uber but Thili couldn't have any of it, so I was forcefully taken into his car since I was drunk, I had no strength to argue. My sister was fuming in anger but got in with Tumi since I was in the car already. Thili had to make matters worse with my sister, on our way to my place. When I was still enjoying the silence in the car he started playing some Venda song which I think was directed at my sister. The song went like "Nne na inwi ndi kale ri rothe dali ni songo tenda ulutanywa nga mafikizolo (Me and you have been together for long darling, do not let Mafikizolo tear us part!). My sister was so pissed she almost went Jackie Chan on him, Tumi had to hold her back. When we got to my place I asked my sister to sleep over at Tumi's place since Thili was insisting on staying the night, I didn't want them to strangle each other.

It was difficult to convince her to leave but Tumi finally convinced her to.

He slept on the couch.

“What did you hear when you called last night?”
that is the first thing he asks when I open my
eyes.

He is now in my bed sitting staring at me. Why is
he still here? I have this pounding headache from
the alcohol that I consumed last night.

“Does it matter? What are you still doing here?”
I ask as I get off bed and make my way to the
kitchen.

I know that I look like a zombie, the hang over is
not helping too. I am wearing one of his long T-
shirts, I think he is the one that put me in it
because I can't remember how I got out of my
dress and into bed. He follows me around the
kitchen as I start to make myself some rooibos
tea. My head is pounding and my mouth feels so
dry. He makes his way to the kitchen counter.

I look at him in disgust.

“Why do you love me? Do you even love me?” I ask sitting on the stool.

“How can you ask me such? of course I love you. I choose you” he says all confident.

“You have a funny way of showing love, and what do you mean you choose me? Did I ask you to?” I say standing up to pour hot water inside my tea cup. I will not make him one, he can help himself if he wants.

“Baby girl it’s not what you think. You remember, when we first started dating, I told you about my ex?” he says.

“Yes, but what does she have to do with this?” I ask.

I don’t see where he is going with his point.

“It’s her son who answered my phone. I told you that we were together for three years before I met you and she had a child. Don’t get me wrong, the child is not mine but I love him as my

own. I found him young when I met his mother so he got used to me as a father.” He says.

“That doesn’t explain why she was at your place with his son that late. What were you busy with? Why was she at your place?” I say.

“They came over yesterday, he wanted to see me. Please love, I just play a fatherly role to the boy. He needs me.” He says.

“When you made me part of your life you never told me that she was still part of your life. You just told me that things were over. Why did you involve me in your complicated life?” I say.

“I am sorry, but I just couldn’t cut them out of my life like that. I didn’t want to hurt the boy. Nothing more is happening, I swear on my grandmothers grave.” he says.

“Why did you leave her in the first place?” I ask getting angry.

“Things didn’t work out between us” he says.

“Do you still love her?” I ask before he could add more to his statement. My heart beat is now accelerating.

“No, I just care for the boy.” He says with a firm tone.

“It wasn’t meant to hurt you; I was just trying to be someone kind. I dint want to involve the poor boy in the fights that are between me and his mother, I am sorry.” He says.

“You should be! By the way what did you do this time?” Vule says when she enters. She still has attitude toward Thili.

“Babe can you tell your sister to get her nose off our business please” He says angry.

“you made it my business when you decided to date her. You zipper needs a lock since you can’t keep it in.” she says with a straight face.

I see Thili clenching his jaw, he is beyond angry.

“Stop it Vule. Can we talk about this later, right now I just want to eat?” I say. Tumi and my

sister start to prepare some breakfast so I go and take a quick shower.

After eating, my sister leaves for Johannesburg after telling me to dump Thili in front of him.

“Dump his ass!” that’s what she said before she left. I insisted that Tumi remains. Thili is grumpy but I don’t care he can leave if he wants.

We are watching a movie and Tumi is in the middle, Tumi can’t help but look from me to Thili. I know he is dying to say something but he is stopping himself. I am sitting on the couch with my feet folded. To be honest I don’t even know what is happening in the movie as my mind is not even there.

“Oh, just sort your issues out already, I am going to get laid I can’t stand the tension in this room anymore” Tumi finally says, standing up and collecting his things to leave.

We make up when Thili assures me that the relationship is between him and the boy. I don’t want to be the one to break the boys heart so I

figure that sharing Thili with him won't be a problem as long as the mother does not interfere in our life. He assures me that he is not cheating and I rest my case.

CHAPTER 13

Few months pass and we are still okay, Thili has been busy the past month with work and I miss him. I have adjusted at work and I am now a pro. I am able to work with no supervision. The whole week has been tight, I have been buried in my work but I am glad that today is Friday. My phone vibrates on my table.

“Meet me at Protea hotel at room A1022. It's on the second floor. Come wearing that flowery dress you wore at union building!”-Thili.

I can't help but feel goose bumps all over my skin. His message is full of promises and unending desire. I type back my response.

“I won't be late; you are so full of surprises” send.

“Wait up until you get here, now finish your work quickly. Get a key at the reception (Wink emoji). I love you a lot” - Thili

After work, I ask Lebo my colleague drops me at home, so I quickly freshen up and put my lacy thong under wear and its matching bra. I also put the flowery dress that Thili requested. I last wore this dress at union building where I almost did the deed in public. If it wasn't for the rain who knows what would have happened. I call for an uber and make my way to the Hotel.

I collect a room key at the reception and get into the elevator, I get off at the second floor and make my way to the room. I get to the third door and open, inside the room its dim and I see flower petals on the floor. He is sitting on the

bed wearing his blue torn jeans and no top. He is not wearing any shoes either and the sight of him sitting on the bed is sexy, I am getting turned on by his sight. He is playing some music in the background, its Fuck you back by Chris brown.

My body starts twisting in desire at the sight, my breathing starts to fluctuate. Then the thoughts start coming, every hot situation we've been in, all the ways we've fucked, and all the fantasies I've had lately of him doing it to me in all ways possible. Damnit! now I'm horny!

“Come here!” he commands.

Without resisting I make my way to him, I am now standing in front of him. He stands up and he is too close to me, my skin tingles. I want him to fuck me and ride me hard.

He kisses me slowly, his one hand on my face and the other on my hair. I want him to touch me everywhere his hands finally go down my body, caressing each and every part of me. The touches

are amplified, everything gets warm and relaxed, yet intense. My hips want to grind.

“Bend over and let me fuck you!” he orders after a while of kissing.

I try to take my under wear off but he halts my moving hand.

“Don’t take this off, I want you in it, now put your ass in the air” He says, looking at me with desire.

I get butterflies in my stomach, but much more intense this time. I feel the slickness of my arousal building.

Once I am in position, he kisses my left ass and moves my thong to the side.

“You are wearing my favourite under wear and dress.” He says in a whisper.

He doesn’t rush the moment. He gets in, all the way in, and presses his whole body against my body, He breaths and groans inside my ears and holds me tight. Each thrust feels so good.

My vision goes black and I can only focus on the pleasure. It is more intense, and it builds up. He is groaning and I can feel his heart beat accelerate. He tenses behind me and I feel a heat wave that spreads throughout my body until my ears are burning and it comes, sweat drips and my eyes become blurry and the pleasure hits. My knees shake as I come and he comes together with me.

I am weak from pleasure; we fall on the carpet next to the bed. He pulls a throw from the bed and we settle on the carpet. We cuddle, and it feels so good. “I wish I could have done this to you at union building” he says kissing my lips. “Haha, imagine me letting you do that to me in public” I say, brushing his arm.

“Never say never, plus that day if it was not for the rain I would have done far worse to you” He says with a smug.

“I love you baby girl don’t ever doubt that.” He says looking at me all serious.

“I love you too, and if you break my heart again I will leave you and get myself pregnant with the next available guy” I say smiling.

“That person must have a death wish then, I am never letting you go” he says.

“Don’t say never, you never know. What if our relationship doesn’t work and I get married to some guy you don’t know and you also marry someone else?” I ask.

“Then I feel sorry for the person who is going to be married to you because your cookie will still be my cookie, I would move in next door to you so that I can have my cookie every day in his house.” He says with a smug and we both crack into laughter. He can be crazy and funny when he wants.

Its dark when I try to open my eyes but they are heavy from tiredness. He is busy kissing my back and licking and it feels so good. I want to drape

my hands around him and make love to him but the tiredness comes back with more force.

His hands are now working my core and it is so good.

“Don’t wake up baby, you are tired I will take care of you.” He says in a soft voice kissing my neck and his fingers working their magic down there, I can feel myself start to throb. He lifts my left leg and drapes it on top of his legs as he tries to slip in from behind me. Once he is in, he thrust agonisingly slow, he is being gentle. He is whispering sweet things in my ears in between his groaning. The thrusts are not deep but shallow, he thrust to the point of frustration where I have trouble thinking about anything. I moan as I come and we fall asleep, I am in his arms.

The rest of the weekend is wonderful; my man is full of surprises. By Monday I am refreshed and happy, that is what good sex can do for you. The

rest of the week goes by smoothly, although Thili spent most of his time at his place. We spoke over the phone every night. On Friday Tumi and I have a supper date so after work I find him already started with the pots. He opens a bottle of wine and he pours into two glasses.

“Who is also joining us?” I ask, surprised that he took out two wine glasses.

“You, honey try it a little bit you will be amazed at what it will do for you” he says winking at me. Tumi and I spend our weekend together indoors watching movies and compiling Tumi’s diary for Monday.

CHAPTER 14

Today I woke up with a bright smile on my face. I am feeling freaky and I am going to surprise my man with a morning sex call. I want to torture him through the phone, he won't know what hit him today. I make my way to the kitchen make myself some tea and sit on the chair next to the kitchen counter.

His phone rings longer than usual and it goes unanswered. Maybe he is still sleeping, it will be more fun when he wakes up and hear my voice. When he answers I just want to say "I love you" and take it from there. I call again and it goes unanswered, I call for the third time and on the fifth ring he answers. The moment he picks it up I get a cold chill, my women intuition kicks in, something is off and I can sense it in my spirit.

'What's up?' "he says with an odd voice.

What's up? since when does he say what's up to me? Oh my God I am being tested here. He is bulshiting me. I knew he was bulshiting me when his phone rang more than three times.

Before I can even ask him what kind of stunt he is pulling on me he drops the call.

I can't believe what just happened and what I just heard. I try to make some sense of it, and it isn't making any sense. I am starting to lose my temper. What the fuck just happened? Did he just say what's up to me? No! maybe he was still sleepy and didn't see that it's me who called him, there must be an explanation. Five minutes later I get a text from his number.

“Please can you stop calling my man, you are disturbing our peace. It's still early in the morning, Oh and can you stop wasting your time as he is only going to use you and dump you because he will always come back to us.”-Thili

The last sentence almost knocks me off my seat, my tea suddenly becomes tasteless and everything around me is starting to crowd my space, it's like I am suffocating, I feel the walls

closing in on me. I can't breathe, I am choking. I stand from my chair and slide down my kitchen counter as tears start streaming like a river. Who is us? Is it the baby mama? Is it possible that they are still together? Have I been played? But he said their relationship was over and that he only has a relationship with her son. Why am I such a fool for love? Why is my heart so stupid that I keep on forgiving him? I cry so hard that my noses start to close up. My phone vibrates on top of the counter, I reach for it and see that it's my boss calling me. I immediately text her that I will not be coming in as I am not feeling well. She immediately replies back and wishes me a speedy recovery. I can't face the rest of the world feeling the way I do so I do what I do best, switch off my phone and bury myself in my blankets and sleep. Slowly with a painful heart I sink into a deep sleep, a deep dreamless sleep.

Someone touches my forehead muttering something inaudible "I love you my angel! Baby girl!". I hear the voice say, I think I am dreaming

but It feels so real. I try to open my eyes but it is difficult with the lights that are blinding my puffy eyes.

What time is it? I finally manage to open my eyes and there he is, sitting next to me. He tries to help me up and I just instinctively react by taking my hand away from him.

“Don’t you dare touch me!” I say.

“Baby I am sorry, it’s not what you think!” he says with an innocent looking face.

“Really, are you trying to tell me that I just did not hear you ask me what’s up? And after that I get an Sms from your phone number telling me that you are someone’s man? Thili are you telling me that I am overreacting its nothing? I...”

He immediately jumps in “what did she say? Did she say that?”

“yes I can read thank you she said you are her man!”. I say with tears in my eyes.

“who is it this time? Is it the baby mama?” I am crying this time.

“and you believed her? She is trying to create tension between us, please don’t let her do that to us. I told her that I am with you” he says trying to move closer to me.

“Don’t touch me. What was she doing in your apartment in the first place? You know of all the things that you have done that are stupid and heart-breaking this takes the award. How can you? how can you let another woman disrespect me like that and you come here afterwards claiming that you love me?” I say sniffing and whipping tears from my face.

He looks at me and I wonder how he can claim that he loves me but still allows another woman to disrespect me like this. There is no amount of words that can capture how distinctly painful and powerful heart break can be.

“Who knows maybe you sent that text because I am the one who is unwanted from your life” I say with a painful heart.

“How can you think like that? I would never do such a thing.” He says.

“Anything is possible with you. What was she doing at your place that time of the morning and why did you answer my phone like you were talking to one of your whores? Why did she send me a message using your phone? Am I your side chick?” my sadness is building into anger now.

“No, baby girl you are not my side chick, you are the love of my life. It’s just that she said she wants to commit suicide just because I moved on with my life. So she was fighting me for being with you. I didn’t know what to do, I don’t want to blame myself if anything happens to her. I don’t want to be the reason why she takes her life.” He says.

Blame! death! I still blame myself for Tshego’s death. All the pain I have bottled up during and

after her death stabs me in the heart through a sharp pain, I cry out loud as I gulp for air. He lets me be and buries his head in his hands. I don't know why I am hurt, because I have been here before. I have experienced every feeling and emotions. He has lied to me before, cheated on me and shared what is most precious to me with another. The pain is too much and it is crippling. It is like a thorn piercing through my soul.

CHAPTER 15

Paulo Coelho says “A mistake repeated more than once is simply not a mistake but a decision”
My heart broke when I woke up because it was a reminder that I made it through the night and

that I get to live another day. Every day I fight inner battles that are too much for me to handle. From now I can say that I have mastered the art of pretending, I have killed myself a thousand times in the inside by pretending when everything is not fine. Maybe he is busy with her. Every time he leaves for work I can't help but think that maybe he is busy with her.

I have spent two days living like a zombie. I have slipped back to the point of no return, where my body aches and feels heavy. I don't actually know what's wrong with me, but I don't want to go to a doctor so I just sleep. For a moment try putting yourself in someone's shoes and try to feel the pain they are feeling, it is easier said than done, you cannot really understand a situation unless it happens to you. You can only know how they feel but you cannot understand what they are feeling. Thili has been trying to explain but I have been having none of it. I learnt to master the art of crying all night and waking up to be the happiest, chirpiest human being the following day, but

today things are different. I thought I was finally making peace with myself towards Tshego's death but Mondays event has brought back unwanted painful memories. I drown in my own thoughts and It frustrates me not knowing what is wrong with me, one moment I am heartbroken the next I am just sad and can't explain why.

When I finally gather some strength I take a shower and wear my long boring dress and decide to go buy myself some Ice-cream. Maybe all I need is sugar, it can help to boost my mood and appetite. I check my phone and there are missed calls from Thili, my sister and Tumi. There's also texts from Thili too. I ignore everything, I take my small bag and head for the door. When I get to Macdonald at Hamilton street I get some appetite after tasting my Ice-cream so I continue to walk to Sterland to get myself some ribs at spur, maybe if I feel up to it, I might watch a movie. I make it there in 15 minutes. As I walk into Spur I see there is someone having a party, it's a cute little boy, but

what grabs my eyes is the blue t-shirt that the guy sitting at the end of the table is wearing. I get goose bumps all over my body and I start to feel uneasy. The guy is facing the other direction so all I can see is his back, the mother of the child is sitting at the other end of the table facing the entrance. I rid my mind of the thoughts which are starting to crowd my mind, my mind is starting to overthink and I think it's about to jump into conclusion. I am still fragile that is why my mind is making up things. I walk past but I immediately halt at my steps as I hear his familiar voice sing "Happy birth day to you!" I stand, frozen in the restaurant as waiters and waitresses brings a cake with some candles lit. "Happy birthday boy, mommy and daddy loves you" He declares his love.

The woman at the other end off the table stands and makes his way to Thili. As she walks she stares at me as if she knows me, she sways her hips in the process of walking and when she gets

to him she plants a kiss on his cheeks and drapes her hands on his shoulders.

“Let’s take a family picture” she says as I reverse my steps out of the restaurant.

As soon as I step outside I drop my ice cream in the bin, it no longer tastes sweet. I wipe tears that start to flow from my eyes, and I start to walk back to my place. I am like a person who is mad because I am knocking everyone who is on my way. Maybe if I punish my legs this pain I feel in my heart will reduce, so I walk and walk. When I reach my place I am out of breath, the upper part of my dress is soaking wet. I drop my bag on the bed and rush to the shower, I get in the shower with my dress on and just sit under the water. The water falls onto me making me wet, I close my eyes and torture my heart by reminding it of its betrayal to me. It should have let go while it still had strength. I should have walked away the first time I cried, instead I kept holding on.

The water is now cold but I don't care, I just sit on the floor as the water continues to rain on me. I am surprised when the water suddenly stops, I look up and see him still wearing that same t-shirt I saw him in at the restaurant. I look at his face and he looks like he is in deep thoughts like he looks conflicted. He brings a towel and wraps it around me silently, I am carried out of the shower into the bedroom.

I don't complain because I am emotionally drained and tired, I feel empty and hallow. He removes my dress and underwear; and helps me put on one of his big T-shirts and puts me to bed with no word spoken. I close my eyes and allow myself to drift to the land of sleep.

“I know my heart will never be the same but I'm telling myself I'll be okay.”-Sara Evans

CHAPTER 16

Have you ever had one of those days where you question everything? A day where you dig deep and ask yourself the questions that you so often try to avoid. My mind is conflicted and my heart is going through a lot.

I laid awake all night and finally gave up trying to at 4 o'clock. I took a long hot shower trying to wash away my pain. How do you stop loving someone that you have spent your whole life loving? How do you heal from the pain they have inflicted to your soul? Why does bad things always happen to good people?

I am jolted awake by another passenger who is trying to squeeze herself next to me. Damn, I blacked out inside a public transport. Today I am so early, the plan is that I bury myself into work

the whole day and avoid small talks because I am not in the right state of mind. The weather is down like me today; it is raining. I cannot believe that he lied again. He told me he was going to work and I see him sitting in the restaurant with her. They were so comfortable as a family. I cannot forget how she kissed his cheeks and he just sat there and accepted. She even knows who I am, I saw by the way she looked at me when she swayed her waist just to rub it on my face. That's it I am nobody's fool, I am leaving his ass for good this time, it doesn't matter if I tried to leave him fifteen times and failed, this time I am leaving him. "Short left!". My mom called me yesterday and I know she could sense that I was not okay My sister did too. She didn't hesitate asking me what Thili did, I couldn't tell her because it still sting in my heart. The rain is now hitting hard but lucky me, my umbrella is big, I jump out and make my way into the building. Today I am in no mood to answer any media enquires of some lazy

journalists who are always asking about stuff they can get on the website. They always think there is more to information that they gather from social media especially when it is controversial and paints the department bad. Bloody journalist, watch dogs my ass! I am also in no mood for Tumi, so I plan to ignore all his calls just like I did yesterday.

Walking in I jump into the elevator and press ninth floor and tap in my smiling mode. I am so early; I think I am the first to arrive. My phone vibrates as I make myself a cup of rooibos tea, I swear one of these days I will turn into a rooibos tree, I drink it every day, it is my fix. As I sit on my desk I fire up my computer and I grab my phone from the bag. Oh it's a message, it better not be him because he has another thing coming if its him. I haven't spoken a word to him ever since.

“I saw you at the restaurant yesterday and you did not seem well. Shame! You thought he was

yours didn't you? Stay away from my man because him and I are expecting, he is going to be a father very soon. Leave my man alone you barren woman! (Wink emoji)"

I swear it's like my heart literally stops beating and my body starts shaking. I suddenly feel cold and nauseous at the same time. I try to balance myself as I sit on my chair because for a minute I feel like the building is skewed and is about to fall. Everything becomes a blur and my mind goes blank. I just see people passing, those who are coming in greet me but I can't respond because my mind is absent. My mind has taken leave. It's like I am suffocating.

I try too hard to control what I am feeling but my heart is failing me. I feel a stabbing pain in my heart and I feel a hot sting behind my eyes. My emotions are coming like a flood. I manage to stand up and hurriedly walk to the toilets and lock myself inside. A father! Her man? The bitch has nerves she even winks at me. I don't know

the numbers but I know exactly who it is. It's her, she did see me yesterday and she knows me. I let my heart pour out the pain as I cry silently in the toilets sitting on the floor. I know I am planning to leave him but it still hurts. Is love supposed to be like this? Is it supposed to hurt in the process? As I cry all the hurt that he has put me through comes back. I cry until I can cry no more. As I get back to my desk everyone is in including my office desk neighbour Lebo.

“Did you fall from your bed? you are early today.” she says eyeing me suspiciously.

I offer a forced fake smile.

‘Are you okay you look like hell. Look at your eyes and face, are you sick? You shouldn't have come in if you are sick. You look like you are going to faint’ She says with her eyes popped out. she is drawing attention from the whole office now. My phone vibrates on the table and I pick it up and hold it in my hands, but instead of answering I just freeze and look at it.

“Are you not going to get that?”. Her loud self-asks me.

The phone vibrates in my hands illuminating his name. I draw some breath and start to walk back into the toilets. I am going to need some privacy for this. As I close the door behind me it stops ringing and it illuminates from my screen “11 Missed calls” as I am about to unlock the phone his name illuminates again on the screen. I breath in three times before answering his call.

“What!!” I say with my eyes closed.

“Hi baby girl, I have been trying to call you why were you not answering? I want us to fix this but you don’t want to talk to me” he says breathing heavily.

“Why did you lie to me Thili?” I shoot straight to the point. I am a woman with a goal today. I am ending this for my sanity and for my hearts sake. I cannot take any more pain.

“Lie? About what?” the bastard doesn’t even have balls to tell the truth.

“About breaking things with your crazy ass bitch. You said you guys are no longer together and that the child is not yours. Why did you give her my numbers? She even has the guts to text me why do you keep on doing this to me? So you even have the guts to go make a baby with her? Wow congratulations father to be! You know what go be happy with your women, I am not doing this anymore we are done she can have you.” I end the call and wipe the tears on my face and steady myself. I said it with my mouth but my heart cannot stand the thought of him with someone else.

You are strong, you can get through this day because you do not submit to pain. I repeat the mantra in my head as I make my way to my desk.

“Alu!!” my manager shouts behind me. “Oh my God! No, no, no. So it’s true that you look like this? go home you shouldn’t have come to work looking like this.” she says.

“I can manage Khanyi!” I say trying to convince myself also.

“No, Alu go home, I am requesting a driver to take you home, look at yourself you look like a zombie. Pack your stuff and leave. It’s not up for discussion.” She says.

Now I will be heart broken and alone at my place, thanks to Lebo and her big mouth. I switch my phone off as it vibrates in my hand and throw it in my bag as I switch my computer off and pack my things.

“Don’t you dare come tomorrow if you wake up still looking like that!! You can take the rest of the week” Khanyisa shouts before closing her office door.

CHAPTER 17

It still hurts, why am I such a fool. Why can't I love when I want to and stop when I want to. "How can he hurt me like this after I loved him so much? After the sacrifices I made to be with him. You see what he is doing to me now I am talking to myself. "WHY AM I TALKING TO MY SELF?"

Two hours later it still feels like I did when I received that SMS. The SMS still rings in my ears like the jingle bell song.

I want to forget and pretend that it did not happen.

I have since switched my phone off; I don't care if he is calling or not. He can go to hell.

I sit on the bed and her words still ring through my head sending a sharp pain in my heart.

“Why is your phone off?” he says barges in the bedroom with a harsh voice. I didn’t hear him enter.

I look at him with a straight face and he softens.

“I am sorry it’s just that I was worried about you. When you dropped my call I panicked, I went to your work and they told me you left because you were not feeling well.” He says.

“I am not the one you should be worried about, you should start worrying about your baby mamma,” saying it actually brings pain in my heart. He looks at me with a shocked face. As I say it I start to realise what it really means. That he is going to share a child with someone else, not by name this time as he said but by blood. Tears start to well up in my eyes.

“Baby I don’t want to lose you” he says coming closer to me.

“I think you have, I have no more fight left in me. It’s fine you can have her and she can have you, I

don't want to be part of this anymore." I say feeling exhausted.

"I want you, I still want you baby girl. please don't just let go, don't give up just like that, fight for me baby girl, fight for your man" he says bending towards me.

What's there to fight for? Why should I be the one to do the fighting when he is doing nothing. All he is doing is breaking me into pieces every day.

"Why fight when there is nothing to fight for? Why should I be fighting for you anyway?" I ask looking at him with red teary eyes.

"I am also trying to fight this battle but I am tired, I feel like a loser for failing you. I am a broken man and I need you to fix me. If you leave me no one will ever be able to fix me. You are already fixing me, please just be patient with me baby girl. You are my healing!" he says the last word as if he is defeated and weak.

“But I am dying in the process of saving you, what about me? My heart and what saving do you need when you are the one in control here? I am the one who needs saving because I am the one with a broken heart, I am the one who is in love with a man who makes me cry most of the time. A man who I am not sure I know anymore. What is it that I will be fighting for?” I cry out in pain.

“I need you, more than you can ever know baby girl. You are fixing me, when you are here I am okay, I know you think it’s my fault but It’s not my fault that I am the way I am. I have been trying to fix my ways for us baby, I just feel lost as a man, I have lost my sense of direction to life and I feel like a failure. shit! I am really trying to change and be a better man for you. I want to be that man whom you can be proud of, I am battling with my demons for you baby.” he hisses in pain.

“Is it me who is the problem? what is it that I did wrong? tell me! maybe I lack something, where have I gone wrong as your woman?” I ask with a painful heart.

"No its not you, it has never been you baby girl. You are perfect to me; in fact you are more than perfect. I want to do good by you trust me. I don't want to blame my family, but it's part of their fault why my life is messed up like this. This is all happening because I wanted to just waste my life and make them feel the pain I felt by complicating my life." he says with his head bowed.

What is he talking about now?

"What does your family have to do with this? Did they tell you to cheat? You know what fuck this thing I don't think I can do this anymore!" I am sick and tired of him playing the blame games. It's always someone's fault, not his.

"Please don't do that, I understand your frustrations and anger towards me, but don't

swear. Its not you, you are not the swearing type don't start it today. I get that you are pissed at me but..."

"Do you?" I say before he can finish his words.

"When I met you I had been with Taki for 4 years, and I have been trying to tell her that we are over." He says his head still bowed.

I die inside that very moment. Today I finally know her name and she was telling the truth, I am the side chick, four years? Is he actually confessing that they are still together? If yes, then their relationship is close to 7 years.

"Things were promising, until my parents found out about her. They didn't want her as a wife for me" he says.

Wow, things are starting to get interesting and painful.

"Why didn't they want her, why did you have to go and involve me in such a messy relationship? I

shouldn't have fallen in love with you" I say as tears sting at the back of my eyes.

"Like I told you, her son knows me as his father but he is not actually my son, when I met his mother he was young so he grew fond of me and I became the father that he knows. After my family found out that I was planning to settle down with a woman who has a child they couldn't hear of it. They were going to disown me. They fought with me, my father was so disappointed. " He says.

I can't believe why he couldn't leave me out of this mess, why didn't he just love someone else and not me?

"After I tried to break things off with her, she told me I was weak for letting my family decide my life for me. But what was I supposed to do? Stay with her and become a man with no name and background? I tried to stay with her but their decision were not changing I even tried to

make them see reason but they were adamant." He says with a shaky voice.

" So why involve me then when you know your life is a mess?" I ask emotional of what my life has turned out to be. I only hear of such things in movies not real life.

"It wasn't my intention to involve you, I just fell in love with you baby girl." He says.

"So I was just a replacement that you planned to use and throw out when you got tired?" I ask harshly.

"No you are not a replacement; you are my soul mate. The very first time I saw you my spirit was just drawn to you. I couldn't help but feel like my whole world was complete at the thought of having you. Everything just felt perfect, like our souls were meant for each other and to complete each other. I tried to resist but I couldn't. After Taki found out that my family doesn't want her, she became the total opposite of who she was, she changed from what I used to know. Although

I told her we were going to find a way out of the situation, she started nagging. She became a nuisance; it was like she assumed the role of a man in the relationship. She would blow small arguments out of proportion and always assumed I was cheating if I didn't answer her calls. It was as if she was punishing me for not walking away from my family and not choosing her. I just became frustrated and I felt trapped, and by then my parent's words kept on playing like a mantra in my head, "she won't respect you. You were in school when she was busy opening her legs, now you want to come and raise another man's child? Over my dead body son!" so the whole thing frustrated me. I asked Taki and begged her to move on with her life without me but she refused and said I was selfish. I had no peace so I started sleeping around with women hoping that Taki will eventually walk away but she kept fighting all the women she caught me with. I dint care anymore, I felt like my parents ruined my life, I was angry with them

and with myself too for being a disappointment to my parents.” He covers his face with his hands and takes a long breath.

“Things became worse when she found out that you are in my life, she vowed that she will make my life a living hell.” he says.

I don't believe what I am hearing, it feels like a dream yet it is so real. I try to pinch myself to wake up from the nightmare but it's no nightmare, its real.

"You don't respect me!" I say as a matter of fact.

"I do respect you, a lot" he says defensively looking at me with wide eyes.

"If you respected me, you wouldn't have involved me in such a situation, you wouldn't have opened a door for me to be disrespected by her, you would have left me live my life alone without you. How many times have you lied to me saying you were working at night? Only to find that you were with her? And all those other woman? If you really love me why is she still in your life,

why is she still in the picture? Why did you lie to me?" He should have told me the truth at the beginning.

"Baby girl, the thing is it's not that simple to just walk away especially considering that she has been in my life many years." he says.

"Then let go of me, let me walk!" I say with a heavy heart.

"No, never. I can't stand to lose you; I can't stand the thought of another man having you." he says all of a sudden his face hard and pained.

"It's just that she supported me when I had nothing and we have been together for a long time, so it is not easy to let go, I just need some time to detach myself." he says covering his face with his hands.

"Please don't give up on me. I wish I met you earlier then things would be totally different. Just allow me some time to detach myself from her." he says with a sigh.

“What do you expect me to do? Wait while you decide what you want in life?” I ask

“Fight for your man! Fight for me and our love.” he says those words again with a straight face.

" I don't think you Know what you want. You can't have the both of us." I scream in between my sobs.

"If only you were one person, you all have the qualities I want in a woman." he says

"Get out of my flat! I don't want to see you anymore, GET OUT!" I throw a glass of water towards him and it misses him and hits the wall behind him. He immediately walks to the door.

"I'll come later, I know you are mad at me. Please forgive me baby girl, we can make us work" he says walking out. I close my door in his face.

How do I begin to digest such a revelation? I mean what am I supposed to think of myself after finding out that he is with me because he

couldn't have what he wanted? How do I continue to love him when I now know that I am his second choice, a choice he chose because he had no choice anymore? How do I forgive myself for the hurt that my presence might have caused to the other woman? at this moment I realise that I was her enemy from day one. I interfered, but only that it was not willingly. I hate myself for being the source of pain in someone's life, and I hate him for making me part of his life and lies.

CHAPTER 18

Present day (After suicide attempt)

It was my first time trying to commit suicide, but it failed. I have lots of anger and hatred towards him. The problem with me is that I don't know how to love small, I love like a child, my love goes over the lines and it splashes all over the place. Having to fake a smile and acting like I'm okay is silently killing me on its own. I got discharged a week ago, the doctor recommended I see a therapist. Now they think I am crazy. I think I did it because life is clearly not made for me and I will be better without it. I felt like I was drowning and suffocating so I wanted to search for peace through death.

I sometimes cut out the world because I'm done pretending to be okay, I just want to be by myself because no one really understands how I feel. I was tired of crying, being sad and overthinking. I am tired of feeling like there are thousand needles lodged inside my heart.

Every day when I wake up, as soon as I open my eyes, I set a silent prayer "Lord can you please

mend my broken soul, Lord help me escape myself. Lord I walk and talk but there is no life or emotion in me, Lord it hurts but I cannot point exactly where the pain is, please make it stop!”. I sometimes get into a dark hole that I sometimes cannot get out from, The pain triggers unwanted emotions and paralyses me. I want to escape but how? Where to from here. Should I just walk away? If I do how because everything I know is here with this man. He is the one who made me feel loved and wanted. Memories flood me. I hate him but I feel like I’m stuck to him. I close my eyes and dose off. I sleep until my body aches.

I convinced my sister not to tell my mother what happened because I know what this would do to her. She is the only parent I have so I don’t want to lose her too.

I had to move in with him as he was the one close to me, my sister had to go back to work in Johannesburg as her work is sending her to

Durban. She was so angry; I haven't told her why I almost ended my life although she has begged for me to confide in her. I know somewhere in her heart she blames Thili, although she won't tell me. The times that I spent in hospital I would imagine how things would be if Tshego was still alive. Maybe she could have helped me through this darkness. I advised her to leave her bad relationship but I am failing to leave mine. I went as far as almost taking my life.

I have tried to see things in Thili's eyes but I cannot help but feel unloved and used. I feel like he used me to try and get over the love of his life. How do I come to terms that I am with him because he couldn't have her? How do I continue to confidently stand and say he loves me when I am his other option?

He still insists that he loves me but I feel used, cheap and broken.

We haven't had a serious talk after my suicide attempt, he is just extra caring and careful these

days. He cooks, cleans and even does laundry. I cannot do much, all I do is sit, overthink, cry and sleep. I don't know how to carry on, what hurts me the most out of all is the fact that she said he is going to be a father. He hasn't confirmed it but the fact that he dodged it in our conversation tells me that maybe the other lady(Taki) was telling the truth. Tumi texts me every day because I told him that I don't want to talk over the phone. So he just texts me to check if I am still alive and kicking. He sometimes comes in during lunch time with bunch of food that I don't eat since I don't have any appetite. My sister insists that I should go see the recommended therapist but I am not sure if I want to go. Will he/she fix my broken heart and mend my broken soul? I refused when my colleagues wanted to come over to see me, they understood and wished me a speedy recovery. They only know that I was hospitalised because I was sick.

I am in bed when he comes back from work. I hear him remove his shoes and as he hangs his suit in the closet. He sits on the bed.

“Did you take your medication?” he asks.

I keep quiet, I don't want to talk to him because I know if I do I am going to end up crying.

After some few seconds when he realise that I am not going to answer him he breaths in heavily and goes into the shower.

After taking the shower he comes out with a towel wrapped around his waist, he comes to my side and looks at me, I look back at him. Tears threaten to well up my eyes.

“Should I make you something to eat?” he asks bending closer to my face. I just close my eyes and a tear drops from the corner of my one eye. Few minutes later I hear him sigh as he stands and walks away from me, the bed sink as he gets in bed. I close my eyes and wait until sleep finally takes me away to a land of dreams.

Today it's one of those days where I feel like sending Thili a message "I would like to step down as your girlfriend with immediate effect due to unforeseen circumstances".

Only if that was easy, why is it so hard not to feel. Love is sweet yet so hard and painful at the same time. It's bitter Sweet.

He told me that he had an ex when we first met but he sugar coated some of the things. How does he want me to fight for him when he belongs to someone else?

He cheated on me many times and all times I forgave him because to be honest I loved him dearly. I figured in most long term relationship it was a fact of life that he would cheat at some point. But in my situation he did not only cheat he complicated my life. I go through the day like all those sad days, in the blankets where no one can see my pain and feel pity for me.

CHAPTER 19

It's been few days and today is that day where there is no sunlight, no sky, warmth nor life. All I can do is to lie here in bed under a pile of blankets in the dark staring blankly at nothing. I heard him leaving for work earlier on but I played dead. I didn't want to see his face because these days it is becoming a constant reminder to my pain. I don't understand how does a man claim to love two women at once the same. Why can't he just let go of one? The words he said to me keeps on playing in my mind repeatedly. I tried to revive my spirit by going to church and it did help a little. The pastor preached about the Israelites being set free from Egypt. They spent many years in pain but when the Lord remembered them he set them free. The message

was titled 'let my people go'. Maybe God will send me a Moses to set me free from my pain.

When I finally make it out of bed, I stand in front of the mirror brushing my teeth and I see it, its staring back at me. I see the loneliest person in the world, whose dying on the inside, a person whose soul is perishing and light dimming by the seconds. I try to smile but my smile doesn't reach my eyes.

Admitting that hurt had the power to hurt you is hard, but it did. I am hurt!!

'Both of you have qualities that I want in a woman, if only the two of you were one person!' his words ring in my head again.

His words pain me and brings back unwanted thoughts in my head.

I am slowly slipping back to that dark place again, the place of no return. I don't want to go back there! but the pain is starting to take complete control. I am slowly slipping away into the place I prayed to God not to go to again.

The constant reminder of his words pains me to the point of anger. All of a sudden I am overwhelmed by anger, rage and I am fuming. My anger is extremely toxic; it is becoming dangerous to me. Right now I feel like I am about to have a heart attack. I try to cry but my eyes are dry like the Kalahari desert.

How do you become strong when you are stuck in this sad dark place? I am tired and exhausted, this physical pain I feel is caused by holding back tears, tears I couldn't cry out loud because I did not want to seem weak. I have no emotional connection to reality because I am literally not here. I tried to cry but couldn't. I think silently I have cried for a life time that is why nothing is coming out now.

He has been wronging me and I have kept quiet, I have said nothing, I didn't voice my cries enough. The pain I feel penetrates through my bones and cripples my soul. I start to gasp for air and start to shake uncontrollably. I sit on the

floor trying to ease myself from the pain slicing through my soul. Right here at this moment I think back to where it all began and all I have been through in this relationship, and I realise that I have bottled a lot of things and I am bleeding inside, I always cover my scars with smiles. I realise that I am bleeding inside.

I realise that if I don't walk out I will self-destruct. I always carry a heavy heart, I no longer smile nor laugh. How do I talk to him when he has contributed heavily towards the situation I find myself in? After few minutes of looking at this lifeless being that stares right back at me in the mirror, I finally wash my face. I head to the closet and start packing all my clothes into my big travelling bag. When someone has broken your heart, you all of a sudden notice how vulnerable and powerless you have become.

April Mae Monterrosa said "When it comes to love and loss, acceptance is never easy. We can't make someone see all we have to give, make

them love us, or make them change. All we can do is move on and stop wasting time”.

He mostly defends himself by saying he has made a mistake but mistakes which are repeated constantly are simply decisions. He decided to hurt me, cheat on and involve me in a relationship were another woman was already present.

It is not an easy step but Yes! I am moving on. After packing all my stuff in my bag I wear my jean and my golf t-shirt. I wheel my suit case to the sitting area and sit on the couch. Am I doing the right thing? Here it is, I admit, I am sinking and the man that I love is the reason why. So for my sanity I am leaving. I don't think I will be able to look at man long enough without my heart breaking after my experience with him. I take a notepad that is on the table and tear off a page and take out a pen in my bag.

This is a letter from a broken hearted...

I didn't know what love felt like until I met you,
but now I also know what a broken heart feels
like too.

If I could, I could make you see yourself through
my eyes, only then would you realise how much
you've hurt me and broken me.

Behind my smile is a broken heart, behind my
laugh I'm slowly falling apart. Behind my eyes I
shed un-ending tears, behind my body is a soul
trying to fight.

There is a thorn piercing through my soul

I cried a lot because of you

I'm heartbroken because of you

My broken heart bleeds tears!

once upon a time you were exactly what I
needed, but my delusion of who you were was
shattered by the truth of who you really are!

My tormented mind wants to forget about you
and to forgive you, but my broken heart will
always remember why I fell in love with you.

I wish I can close my heart to things I don't want
to feel for you, but it's impossible!

Love was never supposed to hurt, but it did!

One day you're going to remember me and how
much I loved you

And I hope when you do you hate yourself for
breaking me.

I know my heart will never be the same but I'll be
okay!

It hurts like hell but I know one day it won't.

It's all going to be okay!

I never knew until this moment how bad it is to
lose something you never really had.

You are not mine

You were never mine to begin with.

I'd rather lose you than have you while your heart and mind belongs to someone else.

Today I chose to turn the page and write another book.

Today I simply close this chapter of the book.

Grief is the price I paid for loving you.

“In the end, only three things matter: how much you loved, how gently you lived, and how gracefully you let go of things not meant for you”- Buddha

I am gracefully letting go!!!!!!

I am letting go of him not because I am weak or that I don't love him anymore, I am just tired of the sleepless nights, I am tired of feeling like I am all alone and the only one trying in this relationship. I am tired of feeling like a replacement. I am tired of feeling emotionally, physically and spiritually drained. God created me different, I am different, I am no fighter and

I was meant to be that way but I was not meant to be broken by him. I was meant to be loved and cared for. I put my pen in my hand bag and take a glass and put it on top of the letter. Someone once said “Sometimes it takes a heartbreak to shake us awake and help us see that we are worth so much more than we’re settling for”. I see it, I deserve much better, I am done settling for less! I have been with him for years and never have I been introduced to any of his family members, no ring or move to show that he is serious about settling down all I got was his unfaithfulness. He was never mine to begin with.

If you know of a man who has been dating a woman for more than years without marriage or introducing her to his family tell that pharaoh to loosed that woman. He must let the Israelite's go!

With one final glance at the living area, I wheel my bag out of his apartment with my mind made up. Clearly it was fate that everything led up to

this moment, I am pressing forward because there is nothing else that can be done.

CHAPTER 20

Thili

“Dear woman forgive me for breaking your heart, forgive me for awakening your love with no intentions to love you back. I am sorry for when I was supposed to love you and build you I broke you and changed you. I am sorry for cheating, lying and manipulating you. Forgive me for making you seem weak and making you vulnerable. Forgive me for all those nights you

laid awake in your bed being haunted by the scars that I caused. Forgive me for every time when I declared my love to my mother, daughter and every female member of my family I forgot that you are also someone's mother and someone's child. I am sorry for making you feel like there is something wrong with you. I am sorry for the million tears you cried because of me. You are perfect just the way you are and you deserve to be loved and cherished. You are ten times the man that I am. Your heart is brave for when it falls in love it does so deeply and selflessly. Forgive me for the pain you paid for loving me, for the deep scars that shall forever be engraved to your heart.”-Thili. (Unspoken)

“She remembered who she was and the game changed”- Lalah Deliah

I am in disbelief but more in denial. Alu can't leave me! she loves me. This is my worst fear coming to life. Why is this happening to me? I

stand and read her letter again and I feel like I have just landed in someone's nightmare. When I first read the letter, a piece of me ruptured and it felt like I would never be the same. My body is numb and my heart has sunk and only God knows that I have died a thousand times inside. I must fix this! I immediately grab my car keys and head to her place. I knock like a mad person; I am a man on a mission. When I knock and no one answers I start to look for the spare key but it is not in its usual place. My heart rate is increasing and I feel like I am about to have a panic attack. Being desperate I knock at the next door neighbour.

On my third loud knock an old white woman opens the door with wide eyes full of shock and questions.

“Hi ma'am, do you have any idea where the lady living next door might be?” I ask out of breath.

“Hi young man, I am fine and how are you?” she says with an arched eyebrow.

“I am fine, I am sorry ma’am this is a matter of life and death” I say hushing her to tell me what she knows.

“No, I just saw her leave few hours ago, did you try calling her?” the old woman says looking at my phone that is in my hand.

“I’ll do that, thank you ma’am” I say as I head down stairs defeated, old people and protocol. In my car I sit and try to cool off, I rest my head against the steering wheel. Only if she was answering my calls. Sitting with my head on the steering wheel I remember the gay guy he is so fond of, Tumi. I remember accompanying him and her sister that night when they were drunk. I reverse my car out of her parking lot and drive to his place. It’s not that far but just a block away.

The idiot looks at me with wide eyes as he opens his door.

“I promise I did not sleep at her place!” Tumi says as he raises his hands in defence. I still marvel at his woman tendencies; I mean the guy

can have any woman he wants including my own. That is more the reason I don't want him spending too much time with her. I am afraid that one day he will wake up straight and take her from me. I see how she looks at him and how she cares about him. How her eyes twinkle when she talks about him, the shit scares me. What if she also wakes up one day and realise that she has feelings for him?

“Where is she?” I ask harshly.

“She is not here!” he says hurriedly.

“If she is not here then where is she?” I ask, as in demand.

“I don't want to get involved in your fights, please don't put me in this awkward position...” before he could finish I push my way inside his flat. It's only now that I realise he is wearing a towel to conceal his dignity.

“I am not getting involved, please go! she will call you if she wants to talk to you” he says, rolling his eyes.

“If you don’t tell me willingly, I’ll just have to make you tell me.” I say threatening him. This might be my only way of getting what I want. I give him a hard stare without backing down.

“Ok, don’t choke me again she went to her sister’s place, can you leave now, ””

“babe why are you taking so long?” a light skinned guy appears with a towel wrapped around his waist. Okay, this is my cue to leave, without saying anymore I reverse my steps and leave. When I get to my car I am defeated. Alu’s sister is difficult, she doesn’t back down, she is what many people call the ‘Mother fucker of the Game’ she doesn’t take shit and she is a tough woman. I am sure that right now she has already convinced her not to even look at me anymore. I don’t know why she hates me but I know that she can’t stand me. I know I betrayed Alu, I lied and disappeared on her for almost a month and caused her so much grief. I know I have so much to be forgiven for, I know that I don’t deserve

her but my heart wants her. My head drops and a tear falls from my eye and I burry my face inside my hands. I have never been to her sister's place, I just know that she lives in Johannesburg so now I just have to wait, and I am not a patient man. I invaded her life and complicated it. Now my heart is shattered into million pieces because she left me. I know that you are judging right now, men are trash and all, but yes I do feel like trash. I am about to lose a woman who moved my body and soul. If it was few years back, I couldn't have seen that because I was overwhelmed by anger and confusion. I got confused because my family meddled into my affairs. I pushed her to the limit and she had enough. All the pains even the buried ones comes back and my frustration builds. It's all their fault.

.....

I have her up against the wall in the shower. I kiss her lips with all my might. She is slippery as the water is cascading on us. I kiss her neck as I

also lick off the water hitting her body. Lord the pleasure that I get from hearing her moan under my control! I lift her up and she wraps her tiny legs around my waist. As I enter her my dick feels hugged from all directions, there is a warmth feel, and this tickles the nerve sensations up and down the shaft of my dick. My dick hardens further and I feel a will to go forward even deeper inside her. It feels like heaven inside, its smooth, encompassing, embracing. I feel a huge depth of sensations across my dick and whole body. She is becoming wetter as I move inside her, all very enjoyable. As I move my balls strikes against her sweet pot and the sensation is sending waves into my ears. There is nowhere else where me or my dick would rather be, this is my perfect fit, my heaven on earth. I'm thrusting deep into her smoothly as I try to resist the urge to stroke harder! And I'm loving it. I love everything about this woman, her tiny body, her marks, cellulites, scars and everything. Her body hypnotises me. I hold her even more tight

as my emotions of my love for her start to overwhelm me. I always long for her touch, her kiss and innocent face. A sensation sends a vibration to my body and I feel an urge to pound harder into her. She is holding onto me, her tiny hands on my back as her nails dig into my back.

Everything makes sense for a split second, it's like I'm seeing things clearly for the first time. My dick fills up with desire, gratitude, and longing, while it is enveloped by her. My baby girl is opening up to me and accepting a part of me inside of her with all my imperfections. Her eyes are closed as her head is against the wall in ecstasy, she is moaning in pleasure, I really love having her face in plain view because I get to see her beautiful face. I see how she enjoys me entering her and how she enjoys me being inside her. I lasciviously grab her ass as I put my head against hers so that we are eye to eye, I feel her muscles clench around me and she tenses.....

I am Suddenly jolted awake by my phone vibrating under my pillow.

Oh shit! It was a dream. It felt so real, my big guy is up in arms and wants to poke something. This is frustrating she haunts me even in my dreams. Every time I have sex with her, there's this overwhelming sense, I feel humbled to be accepted by her. Even in my dreams she still has the same effect. I grab my phone as I support my back with some pillows.

“Why are you ignoring me? You have not been answering my calls. Are you with her? What is it that she has that I don't have? Why are you doing this to me? You are stressing me and I think I am pregnant. I missed my periods”- Taki.

Pregnant? Thinking of it actually sends shivers down my spine. How did she get pregnant? I made sure that I did not make any mistakes. I never make mistakes; I withdrew before I came.

I came in my hand and nowhere near her opening and it was only one round. So how can she be pregnant? Was this a trap? because she is the one who insisted on the no condom thing, telling me she is on birth control. Pregnant! I don't believe her because she once told me she was pregnant when we broke up before, only to find out that it was a stunt to have me return to her. Could she be lying again? I hope she is because if she is indeed pregnant this changes everything. Why did she have to send Alu that SMS? Things would still be normal. I don't know how she managed to grab my phone with such speed, all I saw was her running into the bathroom and locking herself inside. She later came back and threw my phone on the bed. My heart stings at the thought of me losing Alu. She once told me that having a child with someone else is a deal breaker for her, and said if I ever do that I should just forget about a future with her. I can't see a perfect future with Taki anymore. All my love and dreams for a future with her were

blurred a long time ago by her disrespect towards me and how she insults my parent every time she gets because they couldn't accept her and her son. She has become abusive towards me, she is bossy and disrespectful.

Lord, to think that she was the woman I wanted to marry! I don't know her anymore. She just changed overnight, she started belittling me and throwing insults at me even in front of people. It got worse to a point where she would take our fights into the bedroom, we always have to be happy on her terms. I was willing to make us work, no matter what my parents said but she just couldn't be patient. She started talking about how I should just walk away from my parents and home and start a future with her. I am a man! How do I walk away from my name and become a nameless man? What do I tell my children when they grow up when they don't have a place to call home?

This other time she told me how less of a man I was in front of her sister, when we went out. it frustrates me as a man because I feel like I am a man who is not a man. I once loved her with all my heart and I wanted to marry her, now I am not sure anymore. She is bossy, controlling and bitter. I love how resilient and tenacious she is though. She is strong in a sense that she fights for what she wants; she is feisty. On the other hand, Alu is just Alu, she is fragile and loves me, respects me and submits to me. There is just this thing about her that keeps pulling me to her, I always want more with her. She makes me feel peace in my heart, she is my peace. I stress less when I am with her. I tried to let her go at first but I just couldn't. I am always drawn to her. She invaded my life with her bright smile and loud laughter and now she is also invading my dreams. She is so sweet and innocent. Even when she is angry she is calm, although I see that there is this part of her that wants to scream and shout at me she always remains calm. She is calm

and strong. I hate that I did this to her, I hate that she almost took her life because of me. I hate that I broke her but I just fell in love. When I saw her with her friends that fateful day I couldn't help but gawk, it was worse when I heard her laugh out loud because when she did my heart fell and it fell hard.

I was reluctant to expose her to my complicated life but my selfish heart wanted what it wants. Once I got her I couldn't let go, I tried to just let her go that month in December but, I had no peace. All I could think of was her and how I was hurting her, so I warmed my way back into her heart.

I don't respond to Taki's SMS, because I know she won't stop talking, so I just put my phone on silent and burry my head in my pillow. I will deal with her when I have the will and power to do so. Her friend said she went to her sister. I wonder if she arrived safely, what does she think of me now? what did she tell her sister? Her sister will

hate me even worse now. I thought we were going to be okay even this time. I thought we were going to get through this together. My heart is broken beyond the name broken, maybe I should have shown her that I am committed, I should have introduced her to my parents. But that would have ruined everything, they always ruin everything, maybe they would have judged her too. I am a selfish man, even when I saw how innocent she is I just couldn't help but look out for myself and selfish heart. I knew that letting go of her will only mean death to my heart because I am the one who fell hard, I don't think I can make it without her. I can't picture my life without her but I don't want to hurt Taki too. I have already done that by cheating with different woman. But with Alu it was different. I had told Taki that we should go our separate ways as things were not working out but she couldn't have it. I know I should have waited for her to heal before I move on but my heart betrayed me when it saw a smiling angel. Who do I want?

Who do I love? I have been with Taki for Many years and I have been with Alu for few years. Who do I choose, who does my heart want? Do I want the one I have been with for long years or do I want the one who has captured my heart? I slowly drift into sleep where I know that she will be there haunting me. My sweet little thing, only if you know that I am your slave!

CHAPTER 21

ALU

I haven't said anything much since I got here. The only words I have managed to say were that me and Thili broke up. My sister is over the

moon and even though she can see how shattered I am; she is excited that the relationship is over.

“You did good for your heart nana! It’s not everyone that we love that we should end up with. Some we must love, let go and move on” she says brushing my back.

“You don’t understand! I love him so much, even now as broken as I am I still feel like I made a huge mistake by leaving him” I say tears streaming down my face.

Yes, I have left for my own sanity but deep down I know that a piece of me is left with him. Deep down I am scared that he will not even notice that I am gone, or he won’t even care that I am gone. I am scared that he will just move on with her as if nothing happened and I will be that girl that he used when he was lost or when he was failing in his mission of being a real man. I am scared that I’ll be discussed as an obstacle that once tried to destroy their relationship.

“You didn’t do any mistake, and you will not go back to him. You must move on with your life. Can’t you see that he has played with you! I know that he did worse than cheat to you several time, what did he do?” she asks handing me tissues.

“I don’t want to talk about it,” I say whipping my tears off.

“Okay, whenever you are ready to talk I am here for you, now you just need to erase him from your life and do you. You need to focus on you. You need to live, get yourself a new man or a new dick” She says nudging me with her elbow.

“It’s not that easy, it’s easy for you to say that because you are not the one feeling what I am feeling!” I say harshly.

“I know it’s not easy, believe me I have been heartbroken before. But it to get over the old Dick, you just need to slip on top of another one. Now you just need to focus on you and the less you see him the better so you have to change flats. We must look for another place for you to

stay, he might come and convince you otherwise. Don't worry I will pay the deposit and the amount needed." She says.

"Great and what's next? I must quit my job too?" I ask annoyed.

"Of course not, just tell security not to allow him in if he comes unless if you want to quit and come stay with me while looking for another job. Just be careful I don't want you to end up like your friend Tshego!" she says as she unlocks her phone.

At this state that I am in I feel like that was the most insensitive thing she could ever say. All the pain I thought I have gone past comes back and they sting in my heart and at the back of my eyes. My eyes well up. How did she manage to bring back my past pain, my forgotten pain? I stand up from the couch.

"Where are you going? We need to find you another place to stay!" she says.

“Its fine you can do that alone; I trust your judgement.” I say with a low voice.

I feel weak. I am empty inside. My head feels heavy and my legs feel like they are floating in the air as I make my way to the bedroom. As soon as my head hits the pillow I drift off to sleep.

THILI

I am jolted awake by a loud bang and I hear the sound of glass shattering.

“OPEN THIS DOOR, TODAY YOU WILL SEE THE BITCH IN ME!” she screams.

I get out of bed with the speed of lightning, when I get to the door, she is holding the keys which she took from the door, the top glass of the door is shattered on the floor and there is a brick on the floor.

“Where is she? Is she here? You better think twice if you think I will just disappear from your life just like that. I am not some piece of chappies you can chew and spit when it becomes tasteless.” She says screaming.

she pushes the rest of the remaining door open and gets in. Neighbours are already standing outside watching.

“What do you want Taki? Haven’t you ruined my life enough? I need to go to work I don’t have time for this.” I say with no strength.

“If you think I did anything to you, you clearly don’t know me properly. I haven’t started yet not until you leave that bitch. What is it that she has that I don’t have? Did your parents love her? Do they approve of her? Why, because she doesn’t have a child?” she says hitting me with her hands on my chest. I cover my face because I don’t want any bruises on my face. I let her be, I let her get all her frustrations out after all I am the one who caused it didn’t I?

“Why do you love her more than me?” she asks pulling me with my vest.

“Do you want us to go over that again? Look at the way you are behaving! Look at you!” I say getting impatient with her.

“What am I doing? How am I behaving?” she asks but I ignore her question and ask her what has been bothering me.

“You said you are pregnant, how far along are you?” I ask.

“Three months!” she hisses.

My heart sinks, and pains at the same time. How is this possible?

“I want proof; I am taking you to the doctor during lunch time!” I say looking at her. Her head drops to the floor. She starts patting down her weave.

“I lied, I am not pregnant. I just thought I was....” Before she can finish I interject with

anger. This woman is testing me, does she know what I just lost because of her lies?

“Get out of my place right now” I hiss in anger. I feel like exploding into million pieces right now. My hands are itching and I want to punch something.

“Get out!” I hiss but she walks closer to me, closing the distance between us. We are now eye to eye and almost chest to chest.

“What will you do if I don’t?” she spits in my face; I clench my fist even harder. It is taking all my power to stop myself from reacting. This woman has a way of getting to me.

“Just like I thought, you will do nothing. Just like you did nothing when your parents rejected me. You are weak, you are not a man. look at you now you can’t even defend yourself against a woman!” she says looking straight into my eyes. I know what she is trying to do and I won’t give it to her.

Her words sting and leaves bruises in my heart and soul, where have I failed as a man? I am boiling in anger and my hands are clenched to a point of pain. I close my eyes as she continues to spit insults into my face. I find the power left in me and after a few minutes I leave her sight and make my way into the bedroom and lock it. I won't react, I will not be that man and I won't start today. That Is one path that I will never allow myself to go down as a man. I will never lay my hand on a woman. I was not raised that way and I won't start now. She is just angry and hurt and I know it's my fault, I just have to give her time to heal from all this.

I will prepare for work; I will deal with her later.

When I finish preparing, I am still left with 30 minutes so I decide to leave anyways. When I make my way into the sitting room she is gone. Thank God! I call a handyman to come and fix my door, for now I will just leave the bedroom door locked. The brick is no longer on the floor,

she took it with her maybe it's her special brick. I look at the remaining piece of my door and lock the security door and leave the key with my neighbour. I told the handyman that he will get my neighbour to open up for him. As I make my way down the stairs, I can't help but hear a sound of a car alarm, I almost bump into another man as he rushes up the stairs out of breath. What the hell is happening.

“Yoh dude its crazy today, some crazy chick just hit her man's car with a brick, I feel sorry for the guy. Whatever he did must have pissed her because she is like a possessed woman.” He says out of breath as he continues to climb up.

Why am I panicking at this guy's words, my legs are rushing now? It's not my car right? she did not do that to my car. She is not that crazy! She wouldn't, would she?

I unlock my car and it clicks stopping the alarm from sounding. The more I get closer to where I parked my car the more I panic. Why did the

alarm stop sounding when I unlocked my car?
My legs freeze and my heart shatters into million pieces. My head pounds when I see what she did to my car. Some of the people are still standing and watching. She broke my car windows and all my side view mirrors. I can't believe my eyes. How did my life turn into a mess like this? Last time it was my phone now my car? I was going to give her the benefit of the doubt when she broke my door, I was going to let it slide like I did when drugged me so that I wouldn't leave her home, when she broke my phone and stabbed me on my arm with a scissor.

I stand and bury my head in my hands. People are going to have a gossip today, wow, I will be the topic of the day or better the talk of the weekend. I take my phone out and request for an uber, I' will handle it when I get to work. I still need to cool off.

CHAPTER 22

ALU

I can't even look at man long enough without my heart breaking. Though I hate him for all that he put me through, I still miss him, I dream of him most of the times and all the time it feels real. It's like I re-live all our happy moments in my dreams.

I am finally back at work. When I came back everyone was excited to see me. My table was full of flowers and chocolates. I never thought I would be welcomed back in such a way, I thought everyone would have forgotten about me. I changed flats, my sister insisted that we go

pack my things at night the same weekend. When I arrived, I was surprised my old white neighbour told me that my man was looking for me. Who told her that he is my man? I don't even remember seeing her before today, so how does she know he is my man. Old people and assuming and jumping into conclusions. She then started telling me how lucky I am having a man that begs like he does. She said he came every day and when he did he spent more than an hour waiting for me.

“You young people, don't see when you have a good man. Only if I was his age, we would be married by now!” she says dreamily, tilting her hip up with a smug on her face. A good man? How does she know that he is a good man? So he managed to charm the old lady. Wow! I couldn't help but laugh.

“so what should I tell him when he comes by tomorrow? I want to know exactly what to say because my tongue might slip and I might end up

telling him that I love him” she said with her eyebrow raised. This old white lady is something else.

I never told my sister what she said because I know that she would have added the poor old lady to her list of enemies.

I instructed the security at work not to allow him in. I get reports everyday of him showing up and demanding to see me. I sometimes get tempted to call him, but I don't because I don't want to go through that kind of pain again.

THILI

It's been a week since she left me, I only found out yesterday that she moved out on the weekend that she left me. The old white woman is crazy. She said she took too long to tell me because she loved having me around. She always offered me

coffee and biscuits every time I went to look for Alu but I would refuse.

“Forget about her, she doesn’t see what I see, I can give you more than she can offer. I can handle you” she said winking at me holding a bottle of wine. It was hilarious though. I walked out laughing.

Only if my baby girl was still here, we would sit and laugh about this together. I know she would find it cute and hilarious. I miss her physically and intimately. I have tried to go to her work several times but I am always told that I am not allowed to see her. This other day I saw her from a distance when I was at the reception area. She looked miserable like me. Or was I just trying to comfort myself? I thought she looked empty and broken. It devastated me to see how she has died an emotional death at my hands.

I got the job that I always wanted, I am now a financial auditor. She would have been happy for me because she has been the one encouraging me

to apply. She believed in me and my dreams. She sees and understand the vision that I carry. She knows how to comfort and push me. I miss our crazy moments, my crazy girl. She is so spontaneous and flexible, always willing to stretch herself beyond the limit. I can't help but think about that day at the cinema. She drove me crazy in the darkness in the presence of all those people. Thinking of her actually gives me a hard on. I will not give up on her and us. I will fight for her.

My phone vibrates in my pocket causing me to wake up from my trance. I am in a meeting with other auditors. But my head is not in the game. They keep talking but I cannot hear anything. It's a good thing that there are minutes being taken down that I can always referee to, my mind is absent.

My heart skips a beat, when I see her through the window walking into Wimpy across the road. I sit up straight and my body starts to feel alive

just from her sight. I can't see her face perfectly so I don't know if she is happy or is still hurting inside. I need to see her; I must plan my escape from this meeting.

ALU

Today I decided to finally have my lunch out, I enter the restaurant and order food for a sit-in. I eat my chips busy looking at my phone. He won't stop calling me but I have been ignoring his calls, I know its him because its private numbers. I know deep down in my heart that I still love him. I haven't forgotten about him; this is why I don't want to see him because I fear how my body will respond in his presence. After a while of siting my plate is still full, I haven't eaten much. I am pulled from my thoughts by a shadow over me. When I look up I can't believe my eyes, its Mr 2 minutes' noodles looking down at me with a smile.

“Wow Rendani, how long have you been standing here staring at me?” I ask.

“long enough to see that you are troubled”, he says sitting next to me, he pulls a chair so that there is no distance between us. “So tell me, what is troubling you?” he asks interested.

“Nothing much just work matters, how have you been, it’s been long?” I ask, trying to shift the conversation to him.

“I have been well, although there was this girl I loved so much, who just left me hanging without any reason, you really injured my ego you know especially after the magical night we had that day. I dint know what I did wrong” He says nudging me with his elbow with a smug on his face as he raises his eyebrows in excitement.

I used to feel guilty for not answering his calls after our last encounter but right now hearing him say he doesn’t know why I left him hanging, my conscious is cleared because he definitely has no idea of what he did wrong when he has to

know. “Magical night?” what was magical about that night?

“Yes you did nothing wrong, I just grew up, I wanted to follow my dreams un-interrupted” I manage to say putting a fork full of chips in my mouth to avoid talking further. He leans in and whispers in my ears.

“You look even more beautiful now; can I take you out on a date?” My body tense at his sudden closeness to me. My fork halts in front of my open mouth as I try to digest his words, putting my fork down I close my mouth and open it again but no word comes out of my mouth. The next thing I see is Thili flying in front of my table. Where did he come from?

THILI

I couldn't help but follow her when I saw her pass the restaurant where I was having a

meeting. It has been Two weeks since I laid eyes on her. I had to make an excuse so that I can follow her. I sit at a corner table with my sunglasses as I watch her eat her food. She eats slowly as she stares at her phone, maybe I should just go and talk to her, I will just go and declare my love for her. Why am I sitting here and watching her when I have practiced a million times what I would say to her when I finally find her? Maybe if I promise to marry her she will accept. As I stand up I halt at my tracks when I notice a guy now standing at her table. She looks up and smile. The guy takes a seat next to her comfortably dragging the chair closely to her and holds her hands, although I see her body tense at his touch she does nothing to voice her discomfort. Does she have a new boyfriend? Who is he? Is he the reason she left? Why is he brushing her hands like they know each other? All these thoughts are making me angry at the sight I see. The guy leans closer to her and it's like he is whispering something in her ears, her

body tenses again and before I can stop myself my legs are in motion, my heart and pulse racing.

“Get the fuck away from her!” I hiss with rage, the guy stands and I get eye to eye with him.

The guy looks at me with an annoyed look and I hit him with a death stare. He better back down because I will not. He finally gives in and looks down and starts to button his jacket. Before he leaves he takes out a card from his pocket and puts it on the table.

“Call me, we have a lot to talk about” he says not able to contain his excitement in his eyes for my woman.

“What are you doing here, are you following me now?” She asks annoyed slipping the card in her hand bag.

“I just need to talk to you, who is he? And why was he sitting so close to you?” I ask.

“I don’t see how that is your business, last time I check, we are no longer an item” she says. Why is she punishing me like this?

“Whose fault is that, you are the one who left, we need to fix things please talk to me my love” I say sitting down next to her.

“You are right I left, so wake up and smell the coffee, I have moved on. Go back to your woman or go find someone else.” She says looking at me in the eyes. I know she doesn’t mean any of that. She is still hurt; she wants to punish me.

“I am not going to allow you to do this to us, we can’t be over just like that. We have come a long way for you to give up on me.” I say trying to reason with her.

“Get it into your thick skull, Don’t get me wrong I love you but I love myself more, that’s why I walked away” she says and stands grabbing her bag and puts some money on the table and head for the door.

She said the last part too loudly, now every one's eyes are on me and I want the world to swallow me because I am embarrassed. Now everyone knows that my woman left me.

CHAPTER 23

THILI

Have you ever been so confused and not know what to do with your life? I don't know what to do with myself and my life. Thoughts of her giving herself to some man out there breaks my soul. She is mine and I still want her, I can't stand the thought of her moving on with

someone else. I can't stand the thought of her being happy with someone else and not me, that will make me even more of a failure and it will destroy me completely.

I am exhausted, after my encounter with her today on my return to the office I buried myself in work. I stand naked in my shower and everything reminds me of her. Everything in this house brings back happiness of our memories. And they are very happy. Even when she was angry I knew that she doesn't turn crazy, I could even warm my way to her heart again. I still remember what she did to me that fateful morning, I thought she was angry at me but I was surprised when I felt her warm tiny hands in my shorts as she held firmly to me. She always knows how to surprise me. I was so surprised at her because with Taki, when she was angry we could even spend the whole month without being intimate. The point that she can still take advantage of me when she is still angry at me turned me on even further. It made me feel used

by her in a good and pleasurable way, she took charge and owned me. She showed me that I am hers no matter how bad our relationship was.

I've caused her so much pain. Pain that she doesn't deserve. But she is mine I refuse to give her up.

I am asleep when I hear a window creak, I think it's the wind. I am tired so I leave it, after a few minutes I feel the other side of the bed sinking. I think I am dreaming, but hopeful I start to think that it is Alu. My baby girl is back. Her hand brushes my chest but there is something different about the touch. I turn around wanting to lay my eyes on my baby girl but I immediately jump out of bed.

I switch on the light.

"What the hell!" I say shocked at how extreme her behaviour is becoming.

"What are you doing here? How did you enter this place?" I ask.

"How can you fuck me good and expect me to leave you alone? You made me this way, you should blame yourself." She says laughing. She is laying in my bed wearing a lingerie and a see through night gown and she is barefoot. How did she get in? I locked the doors. The clock on the wall says its 10:26 pm.

"Taki your behaviour is getting out of hand, who did you leave your son with? And how did you come in here?" I ask perplexed by her behaviour.

"Oh, now he is my son? And not ours? You know you love him as your son. Why the sudden change of heart? Is it because of that barren bitch?" she says with hate in each and every word.

"Don't call her that, she is not barren!" I spit back in anger.

She laughs like a mad person "Then where is her baby? Don't be fooled she can't give birth. Let

me give you a child, this one will be yours by blood, maybe your parents will love me when they find out that I am carrying your child" she say.

"Stop it! Why are you doing this to yourself? Can you stop thinking for yourself only and think for your son too? He needs a strong mother not this woman I see now in front of me; he needs you to be strong and there for him." I say.

"And what about what I need? I need you, I want you." She says starting to be emotional. I sit on my side of the bed and look at her with pain slicing in my conflicted heart.

"Taki, you are beautiful and will be happy without me. I know I am a selfish person in your eyes, but what would you advise me to do if I was your son and in the same situation I find myself in. Would you want me to disown you as my parent? Leave my home and go live in a foreign land?" I ask her.

"You all men are the same, once you get what you want you toss us away like garbage. Why can't we make us work? Why? I love you Thili I can't stop thinking about you. I can't live without you" She says.

"I have to wake up early tomorrow for work, you can have my bed I'll sleep on the couch" I say taking a pillow and a throw to the sitting room. My heart is conflicted; Lord why don't you give her strength to forget about me. I loved her once but my parents took that away from me, she took that away from me too. I can't look at her the same especially with the way she behaves now. I just feel like somehow she is being selfish especially to her son, that boy deserves a home where they will accept and love him. Let's say I insist and marry her, if I die first it's going to be another chaos; I know my parents will blame her for everything. Before I gave up on us I exhausted all possible options and I can't put her through any of them. I just thought she was strong and was going to handle it better. Lord

why is it that everything I touch turns into dust?
I slowly sink into sleep troubled in my heart.

Taki is wearing all black sitting on the mattress. I see besides her there is a picture surrounded by burning white candles.

"You killed my son you witch, I told him not to marry you but you tricked him" my mother is shouting at her as she pulls at her black dress.

I am standing at the door and see everything that is happening. I try to come to her defence but it's like they don't hear me. I am becoming agitated because my older sister is also joined in and is throwing insults at her. I try to scream at them but my voice doesn't come out. How can they not see me or acknowledge me when I am standing in front of them?

I am suddenly woken up when I hear a glass shatter as it drops to the floor. Shit! it was a dream. What a confusing dream. What was that? What kind of a dream is this? I raise my head

from the couch to see what made the noise and I see her. My eyes open wider in shock of what I see before me. She is butt naked in my kitchen, her lingerie gone with only her see through night gown that she wore yesterday when she broke in. I am still wondering how she gained access. She moves swiftly in my kitchen opening drawers bending and closing them. If it was years back I would have found the sight sexy and would be by her side at a speed of lighting but now nothing in me reacts, it's like there is load shedding in my body. I actually get annoyed at the sight. I look at the wall clock and I see that it's 05:55, I am suddenly wondering what she is doing in the kitchen that early. I make my way into my room leaving her and lock the door behind me as I enter the shower to prepare for work. 30 minutes I am done and still have a lot of time to spare. When I get to the sitting room the table is full of food. Toasted bread, bacon, eggs and more. She stands when she sees me approaching.

"My love breakfast is ready!" I look at her in disbelief at her words. Why is she making this so difficult for the both of us?

"No thanks I'm not hungry, can you leave I want to lock up I need to go to work" I say defeated.

" So now you won't touch me or eat my food?" she says.

"Stop it! You are the one who stopped seeing me as your man. You remember how you used to make me beg you when I wanted you? You told me that I wasn't man enough to do you right." I say louder than intended.

"I was mad at you and your stupid parents, especially your **CONTROLLING MOTHER!**" she says.

"That's it, leave I want to lock. I pull a throw from the couch and give her to conceal her dignity. I give her hand bag over which is beside the couch and I push her swiftly to the door.

"At least let me drive you to work, I know you don't have your car" she says with a smile.

"Whose fault is it? I have already requested for an Uber, don't worry about me. Go home, don't you have work to go to?" I ask as I finish locking up.

When I get down stairs my Uber arrives and she is still here standing quiet besides me.

When I open the door she starts getting closer to the car.

"Morning driver, I think you should drop this man at Men's clinic. I think he has a problem down there! He slept next to this but his guy down there didn't even flinch" she says as she reveals her leg and thigh to the driver through the slit she created from the throw. She winks at the driver and starts to wave at me with a smile.

"Bye baby, I will cook supper tonight don't be late." She says and the driver looks at me in the rear view mirror as he drives out. I can see sympathy in his eyes. I bury my head in my

hands. This is some fucked up shit, it's like my life has turned into a movie overnight.

I loathe the day I fell in love with her.

CHAPTER 24

THILI

This damn coffee machine! Why is it not working? I try to press all the buttons but it doesn't make any sound or show any light.

“Woah, please don't kill the coffee machine, we love coffee!” Ayanda says approaching me in the kitchen hurriedly.

Ayanda is my best friend and colleague, we have been friends ever since my second year in

varsity. He is younger than me by two years but unlike me his life is in order. He is married, has a four-year-old daughter and is happy. He is the prefect family man.

“I see you didn’t get some today!” he says as he puts his cup on the counter with a smug on his face.

“Fuck off! I just had a rough morning dude” I say making a way for him to sort the machine out.

“Whatever happened this morning it did a huge damage to your head. You didn’t plug the machine, you idiot! Why do you look like you are carrying the whole world around your shoulders? Tell me what happened, trouble in paradise again?” he says looking concerned.

“I have fucked up big time, Dude, it’s more like I lost direction of my life, Alu left me because she found out about Taki, and on the other hand ever since Taki found out that I have moved on with Alu she is acting all crazy, her craziness has

doubled. She says I can't replace her. She still insists that we can make our relationship work." I say brushing my face with my one hand.

"But I told you dude, to fix your issues with Taki first before you involve Alu in your mess. You see now you are causing pain for this two women?" he says.

"I know, I am confused, Taki even broke into my home yesterday at night and the other day she smashed my car" I say still not believing what she did.

"Man you lie! Next time she is going to chop your manhood off" he says laughing.

"Stop joking! I am serious bafo." I say.

"But on a serious note, who do you love? Who do you want to spend the rest of your life with? Who completes you?" He asks.

Who do I want? Who do I want to spend the rest of my life with?

“I love Alu with all my heart and she completes me. Not that I never loved Taki, but she has changed ever since my parents rejected her. She stopped being the woman I fell in love with. She stopped respecting me. Stopped being my woman and started acting as my mother. I also can't let her go because we have been together for a long time. When I think of all she went through with my family I feel like I owe it to her to make it work with her” I say.

“Are you sure that she changed? Maybe when your parents rejected her it gave her a push to show you who she really is. Maybe she is showing you her true colours.” He says pouring the coffee for both of us.

“Maybe she is just hurt, my parents hurt her, so she is still hurting. I hurt her, she will come back to her senses.” I say trying to hope with all that is in me that she does.

“Keep telling yourself that dude, but it's in situations like this where a person shows you

their true colour. She is not just reacting crazy I bet you she is crazy.” He says and we head to our office.

“I love Alu and I am scared that I have lost her, what if she has forgotten about me and she becomes happy and I become miserable?” I say.

“My friend you are being selfish right there, maybe you are a polygamist. Marry them both!” he says mocking me.

He has given me enough to think about though. Alu makes me happy, she makes me feel like a real man. Some people are so rare and there’s no upgrade after them, I don’t believe that I will ever find a woman who loves like her, laughs, smiles, cares and cries like her. I’m not even talking about looks it’s her heart that I love, her soul.

I call my insurance company to check if they have collected the car as agreed and bury myself in work.

She is looking at me with a smug as she slowly puts me in her mouth. She licks from the base to the tip. Then she blows some air and the sensation is too good. She is using 'The Halls trick' some tricks she has! Where does she find these tricks? I am not complaining because they surely work wonders.

“ohh...SH***..” a moan escapes my mouth.

The sensation is too much, I want to pin her to the wall and have her up against it. I see desire in her eyes and enjoyment. My baby girl enjoys pleasing me, she is sucking, blowing and licking as I stand holding onto the kitchen counter. She stands up slowly kissing her way up to my face. We are eye to eye and she smiles at me. I love her smile, it's pure and innocent. I lean in to capture her mouth.

I am jolted awake by my phone ringing next on the table. Oh shit! It was a dream. I answer the phone without checking who is calling.

“I am waiting for you to come back. Why did you change the locks?” she says as she answers.

I immediately drop the call, I don't have strength for her, that is why I chose to work this late. I dozed off trying to finish up this report. Now my big man down there is up in arms because of my dirty dream at the office. Why does she torture me even in my dreams? This dream makes me miss how passionate she is when she is with me. She is an angel but once we lock the bedroom door she is an animal, she becomes wild and I like it. She worships my dick. She enjoys me as much as I enjoy her.

I stand up and try to adjust my trouser before I leave to go face my demons.

She is standing at my door with an overnight bag with her son. He immediately runs to me and I embrace him in a hug. All my anger evaporating within a minute.

“How are you boy?” I ask him my anger for his mother evaporating immediately.

“I am good. Mom said you missed me!” he says excited.

“Oh, she did?” I say giving her a side deadly stare.

How dare she involves him in our business? Why would she want to involve him in this?

“Why did you change the locks?” he asks looking up at me when I unlock the door.

“It’s for safety measures boy, some crazy woman broke into the house yesterday” I say looking at his mother.

Once we are in he runs to the couch and grabs the remote.

“Why are you here?” I ask her in a low voice.

“Tshepo wanted to spend some time with you.” She says passing me as she heads for the bedroom. I follow here in pursuit.

“I thought we agreed that I will no longer communicate with the boy for both our sake” I say.

“I changed my mind!” she says dropping her bags on the bed and heads to the kitchen.

After supper I put Tshepo to sleep and head to my room.

“I hate what you are doing” I say.

“I hate that you gave up on me. You failed to fight for me even when you claim to love me. You just went ahead and tried to replace me.” She says all emotional.

“I didn’t just give up on us you changed, you became a different person overnight” I say sitting down on the bed.

“Do you blame me? When your family rejected me? When all they could see was my son being a problem.” She says crying now.

“But I didn’t reject you, I didn’t reject Tshepo. It was my parents who did, I was going to fix it, I

promised you but you killed our love, you killed me. You said I wasn't man enough that I was a failure. You made it worse by swearing at my parents." I say.

"If you really love me or loved me at least let's try again. Let's try to fix us! please. I would rather die if I can't have you" she says looking at me with pained eyes. My heart breaks at the sight.

"Love me again, I promise I will do better. I will be tolerable." She says looking at me with tears in her eyes.

ALU

"Why are you smiling?" Lebo says as we leave the boardroom.

I haven't realised that I was smiling.

"I am not smiling!" I say defensively.

"Yeah right, look at you blushing. It's that Zulu Financial Auditor who was busy looking at you

like a snack back there! What's his name again?" she asks.

"Zweli!" I say.

"Yeah, Zweli! He is so Bae" she says all excited.

I feel embarrassed because I was checking him out the whole time during the meeting. He just has that thing that screams authority. He kept on staring at me during the meeting. I think he caught me staring at his lips.

"He was checking you out" she says giving me a sideways look.

Was he? I thought I was imagining things.

"No he wasn't, he looked at me normal, like he did with you." I say trying to convince myself. For the first time someone managed to shift my thoughts from Thili. The Guy is handsome.

"Keep telling yourself that!" she says walking away to her table.

I don't know why I am entertaining Lebo because I don't want relationships anymore.

After my breakup with Thili, I deleted all our photos, sms, videos and blocked him, I told myself that it is over. I always pray to God to help me forget him and I go to church and pray for myself. There was a time where I stalked him on Facebook and I would see pictures of him and it pained beyond any pain imaginable, I would get hurt all over again. He looked so happy. Then one morning I woke up and thought, I survived a lot in my life, losing people I love to death. I was not born with him, we just met along the way. I reminded myself that I was once happy even before I met him. I acknowledged the fact that I loved him with all my heart so if there is someone losing here it's him because he just lost the best woman he can ever have. I admit that even after telling myself all this it still hurts as hell. Every time I breathe I think of him and it pains. I sometimes get panic attacks from the thoughts that he is no longer mine. When I think of the possibility of his happy futures the pain increases beyond. It still hurts but I am a

wonderful woman and Nature doesn't make double copies, he will never find someone like me. I accept that he is not mine maybe there is someone out there waiting to love me more than I have ever imagined. If he was able to love me like he did then there is definitely someone out there who can love me better. I am trying to embrace the pain I feel. I let it hurt until I could not feel it anymore. I started to write down all the points of why he doesn't deserve me, and it was very long. I don't stalk him anymore, one day at a time I am finally forgetting.

I sit down and switch on my computer. As I check my emails I feel a hand on my shoulder tapping lightly, oh my God its him. He is more handsome up-close. Lord help me not to say anything stupid.

“Alu, right?” he asks.

“Yes, that's me!” I say trying very hard to seem normal as possible. Lebo is no longer buried in her work. She is looking at me and Zweli with a

smug on her face. Her eyes move from me to Zweli simultaneously.

Now that I look at him, he looks very intimidating.

“How can I help you, sir?” I say.

“Don’t be silly, you can call me Zweli. Since your manager is on leave this week, I’ll have to work with you. You know all her work right? Because I need some documents” he says, all I see is his inviting lips moving up and down slowly, I am captivated. He looks at me with a smile waiting for my answers. Oh wow he can smile too. Lebo clears her throat and I come back to the land of the living.

“Yes, I can help with that, which files do you need?” I ask as I stand from my table directing him to Khanyi’s office. I hear Lebo chuckle as I leave.

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“So what is the problem then? You are heartbroken so you need a new dick to get over the last one” Tumi says.

“I agree. You need to loosen up. Maybe this guy will help you forget that piece of shit” my sister says.

Why am I even listening to these two drunks? I don't love Zweli, he is nice looking and all but I don't think there is love.

“But I don't love him. I don't want to complicate someone's life and besides there is something dark about him.” I say.

“Stop exaggerating not everyone is Thili. Everyone has something dark with them, you are only saying that because he is Zulu and that's what you hear people saying about Zulu man. We are not saying that you should complicate his life, just go with the flow. Allow yourself to know him and let him touch you in the moment. Maybe his dick will help you forget the last dick” she says chuckling.

That's it, I am not taking advice from drunk people...

CHAPTER 25

Four months later.....

ALU

I think I am now strong and resilient; I came out moulded. The pain never really leaves you but as times goes on you find ways to move on and make peace. I have forgiven him but I don't think I will forget. I trust God despite all the bad things that happened to me, my trust is deeper

than anything. I am a strong young woman who has been through a lot at the hands of life.

Ladies there is a man out there searching for everything your giving to a man who is not man enough to appreciate it. I've been going out with Zweli, Lebo was right after all, he was checking me out. I was reluctant to give him a chance at first but I did it anyway, although it was after my sister and Tumi convinced me. He has been so great so far, he seems calm and funny, almost too good to be true. We've been on several dates. He asked for my numbers before he and his co-workers finished working at our department. It's funny how I always find myself attracted to people in the finance department. When all the auditing people left I just found myself missing him, I was used to having him around. He finally convinced me to be his girlfriend after two months of meeting. I have been taking things at my own pace, I am trying to take things slow.

He has been patient with me, and we haven't done the deed yet. I never got deep into my past relationship with Thili because he said there is no need to talk about the past although I questioned the motive behind that. I sense that something big might have happened during his past relationship. I saw something disturbing in his eyes when I tried to ask about his past but maybe I am still hung up on my past, or maybe it's that thing that all Zulu man have. He is not Thili but he is better in so many ways even though he is not that tall. I am his height when I am wearing my heels. It always annoys him and he insists that I wear flat shoes when we go out. He is fair in complexion and his lips are to die for. All I want to do is kiss him every time he starts talking. He is well built. I get myself ready to knock off. Today I am going to give him the cookie. I want it to be special, this is my final step of forgetting Thili completely. I pass by a restaurant to buy some take always. When I get to his place he hasn't arrived. Perfect, I still have

time to setup. I take a quick shower and change into my lingerie. This one is kind of kinky, it's one of those which are strings everywhere. I pour myself some wine as I prepare the food that I bought. Yes, I am drinking wine and Zweli bought it for me on my birthday together with a hand bag that I always wanted, he insisted and said it will do my heart good, so what better moment to use it than this special moment. Its bitter but I just drink anyways. I have prepared some tracks to go with the mood. I switch off the lights and switch on the candles. I need to check how far he is.

“Hi sthandwa sam!” he answers.

I blush over the phone, there is just this thing that I feel when he says ‘sthandwa sam’ to me, his voice is so deep.

“How far are you?” I ask.

“I just pulled up at the parking lot, I’ll be up in 2 minutes, yini, do you miss me?” he asks.

“Haha, you wish, just get your ass up here already” I say.

“Aweh mah unehlamba wena, mukololo, I am coming to fix your dirty mouth” He says.

I drop the call and laugh. I am now a little bit tipsy. I start to play the music, and the first track is drunk in love. How ironic, I am actually drunk in love. I put the wine glass on the table. I have moved the coffee table and laid some blankets. He comes in with the speed of light and halts at his track when he finds me standing at the door of the sitting room, with my ‘fine sexy self’. His eyes bulge out in desire. He is just standing in front of me motionless, staring at me. I am wearing heels but today he doesn’t seem to notice because he hasn’t made any comment or complained. I move closer to him and circle him slowly until I am standing behind him. His breathing has accelerated. I remove his Jacket, and I lean in from behind to whisper in his ear.

“You smell so good; do you eat Venda cookie?” I say running my hands over him all the way to his abdomen and down to his front over his trousers. He tenses and groans at my tight squeeze. That’s the reaction I wanted, I hear him swallow hard. I remove his jacket and put it on my arm and sashay to the couch. I can still feel his eyes piercing through me from my back.

I stand in front of the couch and slowly bend down to drop his jacket and then turn around to see him still staring with a wide mouth opened and his jaw dropped his head tilted to the side a little bit. I look at him with a smug on my face.

I didn’t think that this was going to work, but it looks like it.

He clears his throat and seems to recover his senses.

“Wow! Sthandwa sam umuhle yazi, (my love you are beautiful), yes I would like to taste that Venda cookie” he says with a husky voice clearing his throat in between.

“Not that easy big boy. You have to follow my rules!” I say waving a finger.

“Okay, Speak I will hear from you” he says with his deep Zulu accent, his voice shaky as he swallows.

I sit on the couch, and look at him, as he turns and puts his phone and keys on the kitchen counter.

“Come stand in front of the chair!” I say directing him with my eyes to his chair.

He makes it in front of the chair and stands while waiting for more instructions. I am now enjoying this wine. I am almost done with my second glass. The music changes and the whole room is filled with Dance for you.

“Strip, I want you to dance for me” I say with a smug on my face.

He smiles at me and starts to unbutton his shirt, he slowly starts to shake his waist in time to the music, in a sexy manner. Who knew that this

Zulu guy had it in him, I am getting turned on and he sees it. His shirt is gone and I see his bare chest, with well-defined muscles. He unbuckles his belt and unzips his trousers, and they drop to his knees. The sight is funny because he sits down on the chair when he realises that he didn't remove his shoes first. I laugh at him as he removes his shoes, socks and trouser hurriedly then stands again. He is now wearing his underwear and our friend down there is happy.

“What is next, nkosazana?” he asks excited.

I smile as I stand from my chair which is facing his and only a few meters away.

“Sit down now it's my turn” I say as he sits down fast.

I walk towards his chair and sit on his lap facing him. He shakes his head as if trying to wake up from a dream. I am looking straight into his eyes and moving my hips in circles. I stand up and turn around to face away from him, I slowly lower myself until I am a touching distance to his

lap. I put my hands on my knees and start to grind. I am moving my ass from side to side in circle and also up and down. He tries to touch but I slap his hands away.

“No touching until I tell you” I say with authority.

I stand slowly and work my hips while I run my hands on my body as I make my way to my chair. I put my one leg on the couch and start to shake my waist. I am not that good at sexy/ dirty dancing but I copied some moves on the internet and the wine is giving me some confidence. He is looking at me with desire in his eyes as I remove my leg from the chair and go down slowly still shaking my waist. I sit down when the song comes to an end. We are now sitting on opposite ends staring at each other hungrily, I see it in his eyes. He can't wait to lay his hands on me. His chest is moving as he breaths. A wicked thought comes to my mind. It's going to be a sweet torture. I spread my legs wide as I sit on the

chair and I see his eyes open wider when he sees that the lingerie doesn't cover my vagina area. He can see me and its dripping wet down there. I think the wine is making it worse. I want him badly but I have to wait a little longer. I look at him straight in his eyes as my right hand goes down to my girl down there. The wine is giving me confidence. I slide my ass to the tip of the chair so that he can have a full view. I press the next button on the remote and 'when we' immediately fills the room. I am gently stroking myself and he is watching me do it. I see him swallow as he looks at my hand working.

I learnt this stunt from Thili, he taught me. He would always say there is nothing sexy like a women confident with her lady parts. He would always encourage me to stroke myself in front of him as he watches, it used to get him hot and wanting. We would do it over video call and he would drive all the way to my place in no time.

“Tell me how you want me to do it. Do you want me to do it slow or faster?” I ask gasping for air from the pleasure that I am getting.

He rubs his big guy through his underwear.

“Do it faster baby!” he says slightly audible as he wipes a sweat off his eyebrow.

I follow his instructions and start to do it faster, I am working the right places with my fingers and it feels so good.

“Mmmm...Yeah, baby. Right there. Just like that...Don't stop, don't stop!” He says looking at me.

I close my eyes and tilt my head up to look at the ceiling still working myself.

“Oh shit!” that is what I hear before I feel his head in between my thighs, his hand pulling my hand out as he starts licking my honey pot. He puts my legs over his shoulders. Oh it feels so good! My legs are shaking as his head is buried in my core. I can't contain the pleasure I am

getting. His tongue is skilled, he is kissing and sucking, His lips hold my clitoris while his tongue rhythmically lashes at it. He is using an up and down licking motion. When he comes out for air I grab his face and kiss him hard. I can taste myself from his lips and tongue. He opens his eyes and breaks our kiss. He looks at me with want and hot desire. I see fire in his eyes. He wants me and he has managed to control himself till this far. He stands and I stand together with him. He grabs my ass and lifts me as I wrap my legs around his waist. I shake my hips with my legs wrapped around him and he smiles down at me. He puts me up against the wall and is kissing me hard. I start to get worried that I might be heavy for him. "Take me to the floor, I have waited enough, I want you" I whisper softly and I see excitement in his eyes. He carries me to the floor where I had laid blankets and some flower petals.

"How do I remove this thing? It's like a spider web" He says trying to remove my lingerie. I

giggle at his comment. Typical Zulu man. When he finally manages to remove it, his mouth attacks mine with passion. He leaves my lips to recover and attacks my breasts, this man's mouth is skilled, he does something with his tongue.

“Yes! Yes! Oh, Go...Oh, Go...!” a moan escapes my mouth involuntarily.

He is nibbling and sucking. He kisses next to my hip bone and it sends some sensations. He looks me in the eyes as he pushes his underwear off revealing his wanting dick. In few seconds the condom which was on the pillow is set and he is ready to continue. He waits for my approval as he stares into my eyes, I nod for him to continue. I feel him poking at my entrance, he rubs himself against my core for some seconds and enters slowly looking at me with burning eyes. I feel him inside me. He withdraws and rubs at my opening again for few minutes and slip back in again. He closes his eyes and gather some strength before he opens them again.

“I love you!” he says looking down at me.

A feeling of uneasiness rushes through me and my tongue gets tied up and I don't know how to respond.

He loves me. I look at him and smile at him because that is all I can do and he starts to move. He is thrusting slowly into me as he kisses my neck and breast. Unlike Thili he is gentle all the way, he is moving softly and hitting the right spots. I thrust my hips up a few times to enhance the sensation. My vision is starting to be blurry, I am close but I am struggling to reach my release because of the slow pace. I want him to pound faster but he is going soft. I need him to pound harder so that I can reach my happy ending. I feel it, it's close but I am not getting there, this slow pace is torturing me, it's like when you feel that sneeze but it doesn't come.

“Ah, Alu, ohh fuck!” he groans.” my sight becomes blurry, and I forget myself as my head starts to spin, everything becomes a blur and all I

feel is this heat washing over my body like a wave.

“Ah, hanefho (There!), oh Zweli, Nga maanda(Harder!)” . I close my eyes and my nails dig into his back as my muscles squeeze him tight, and milk him dry. I think I just went to paradise for a second. Few seconds after we recover, I am lying on top of his chest with my eyes closed as he stares into the ceiling. That was awesome, that was very frustratingly intense, I almost lost my senses when he was driving me crazy. I stand and leave him lying on the blankets. I go to the bathroom to dispose the condom and come back with a basin filled with hot water. I sit on the blankets next to him and moisten the washcloth with the hot water and wait for it to feel warm and place it on his dick. He closes his eyes in pleasure.

““Oh, God, that’s so good! Wow, this feels so good sthandwa sam” he says.

I hold it in place and rub while laying on him. I kiss his chest and rub it listening to his heart beat.

I feel his as he breaths in.

“Baby, who is Mandla?”

“Huh?” I ask confused.

“I heard you screaming, uthe Mandla, who is Mandla?”

I start to laugh, because now he is being a typical Zulu man. He leans up forcing me to lean up and face him.

” Don’t laugh, I heard you screaming that name, don’t deny it” he says in his deep Zulu accent. He is starting to get worked up.

“That was me expressing myself in my mother tongue, or is that a crime?” I ask jokingly.

“I heard what you said, stop with the lies, who is he?”. He is angry now.

If this is how he starts behaving after sex, then I think sex is bad for him.

Hauw!!, this man after such a wonderful session and then this? Is it my fault that he can't hear Venda?

“Sthandwa Sam, I said ‘nga maanda’, which is loosely translated as harder,” I say not believing that I am even explaining this. I should be angry at him for thinking I can call out another guy's name while with him.

“I was telling you to give it to me harder.” I emphasise.

“You are lying, Mandla it's a name, and you called that name, manje you are just confused because I caught you” he says.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth! this man. Is this some kind of a joke? If it is, I don't like it. He looks serious, his expression has changed to angry in few seconds. I see a disturbing look in his eyes. Its rage but he is trying to suppress it I think.

“Okay, call your friend Thendo and ask him what ‘nga maanda (Harder) means’.” I say.

To my surprise he stands and goes to the kitchen counter and comes back with his phone and calls his friend.

“Bafo, tell me here what does ‘nga maanda’ mean?” I look at him with disbelief as he talks to his friend.

“Oh, so it can also mean harder too?” he asks.

He listens and thanks his friend. When he drops the call he looks at me and smiles, but I don't return his smile.

“Aw I am sorry, sthandwa Sam, you are just too beautiful, I am afraid that they will take you away from me. You make me crazy in love when you speak your language”.

Wow, this man just made love to me, and thought I called someone's name and now he is apologising and his explanation for his behaviours is stupid. This is crazy. Why didn't he get off me the moment he thought I called someone's name?

He kisses me everywhere singing his apologies.
“I am sorry, mother of my children, I wish we can just make a baby right now, I love you and want you to be mine forever and a baby can seal the deal sthandwa sam”.

“No, I am not yet ready for a child, it’s too early. Why would you think I called someone’s name when I am with you?” I am very curious, his behaviour has spiked some questions in my head. Or maybe I am overthinking it’s just simply language barrier.

Instead of answering my question he kisses me until I give up and let him take me to paradise while driving me crazy again. How can I stay angry at this?

I have found my Zulu king.

CHAPTER 26

Thili

Taki and I have been trying to make things work, We tried several times to be intimate but my big guy couldn't respond, I have lost all sexual interest in her. Its from all the stress, I tried to look at her like she is the woman I fell in love with but my body doesn't respond and if it does it doesn't last long. Ever since that she hasn't allowed me to touch her. I am sexually starved. I think karma is dealing with me. I still think of Alu and her sweet smile. Every time I think of her with someone else my heart pains, this rage washes over me, I could kill for her. I ruined us, I destroyed her fragile heart. I woke up at around 5 am even when I am not going to work. I check her facebook every day to see what she is up to but she doesn't post anything. It's a cloudy Saturday, and the sky promises rain. I found

myself watching this movie “Only for one night”, It's one of Alu's favourite. My eyes long for her, I can't even say of my body. I don't know how I will react if I ever come across her. I just hope when I do I am not with Taki. I have done enough damage to her and her heart. I don't blame her for leaving me, if I was her I would have left a long time ago, but she put up with my shit first until she could take it no more.

My phone rings and I pick it up.

“Ayanda mfo!” I say.

“Hi bafo, did you get the money that I sent?” he asks.

“Did you send it? Nothing came in” I say.

“I sent it the day before yesterday on Wednesday, I was surprised when you didn't complain that I sent it late because I was supposed to send it on Tuesday” He says.

“No worries, bafo. But it's strange my bank always sends me notifications when money goes

out and in my accounts but it's strange because I didn't get any notification.. Thank you I will check maybe something malfunctioned” I say dropping his call.

I log into my banking app.

My easy account is fine, and my 30 day fixed account is also in order but there is something alarming with my savings account. It had R250,000 but now it says R0. I feel a heat wash over my body, I am starting to sweat. What happened, have I been robbed? I check the transactions and see four different transfers made, three were made last week and the last one was made yesterday. The money was transferred in amounts of R50 000 and the last R15 000 from Ayanda. The account that the money was transferred into is a savings account from Capitec saved as “Pay back”. As I am still confused as to how this happened and who did this Taki enters with his son. What time did she leave last night?

“Hi, oh you are here? don't stress yourself you can continue with whatever you were doing, don't mind me, I am just here to pack my things. I have realised that I can't continue with this, I need someone better. I deserve better than you. Tshepi go get your toys that you left here, get all of them because we are not coming back to this place. OH and say goodbye to Malume Thili, this one here is no longer your father son, He is not man enough to be your father, he is a man who is not a man!” She says as she enters my bedroom, her words stings. How can she say that in front of Tshepi. I follow her.

“Where are you going? Why the change of heart all of a sudden. What time did you leave yesterday? I think i was scammed my savings account has been cleaned out, my money is gone.” I ask my heart going into panic.

“I changed, I started loving myself and saw that I can do better than you,” she says as she takes her bag and exit the bedroom.

“Boy, hurry up we need to go” she says calling Tshepi.

Tshepi comes out carrying his toy bag. He runs to me and hugs me.

“Sorry, malume Thili, mom says I am going to have a new daddy.” He says all sad.

He takes his mother's hand and they turn to leave. Before she can reach the door she turns to me and gives me a diabolical smile.

“Oh and thank you for sponsoring my new ride, it's very comfy” she says as she plays with a car keys and exits with her son.

What the fuck! What does she mean sponsored? I run after her.

“So it was you who stole my money?” I ask, angry.

“Point of correction, I did not steal it. I took it” she says.

“You stole it, where do you think you are going? Wait right there” I say trying to grab her hand but she pulls it to her chest before I can take it.

“Don’t you dare, unless if you want a criminal record. Touch me and I will start screaming” She says.

I follow her to the parking lot. My heart almost stops when i see a brand new white Mazda CX3 parked.

“Why are you doing this to me? Why didn't you just leave me if you wanted or do something else if you wanted to get back at me. Did you have to take my money? Please give me back my money and I will talk to my parents and make them see that I love you” I say frustrated.

Out of all the women in my life, why did I choose this one here?

“Don’t worry, I don’t need their approval anymore, I have accepted myself the way I am and I love my son. I can’t have my son thinking that he is a mistake or that there is something wrong with him. He deserves a family that will love and accept him” she says.

“But why did you take my money, I was going to use that money to put up a new ceiling for my parents!” I say frustrated. I promised them that I was going to do it this December.

“Well you can just tell them that I used it as an insurance for all the trauma they have caused for me and my son” she says and enters the car with Tshepi.

I get that I caused her pain and she is angry at me but how can she just take my money like that? Just like that and she leaves. Wasn’t she the one who was crying for me, now she leaves me. I can’t help but feel a sharp pain slice through my heart. Karma has caught up with me. They all left me, and the crazy one took my

money. I thought she said she couldn't live without me. How could she do this to me, and what will I tell my parents about the new ceiling they asked for?.

ALU

It's now raining. We are still in the blankets, as he holds me tight. This man is so sweet, he is very attentive.

“Are we not eating? I thought I was going to be surprised by breakfast in bed” he says caressing my back.

“We finished all the takeaways” I say.

“You could go cook, If you could. What were you doing when the rest of venda women were being taught how to cook? Where you busy eating avocados?” he says and I giggle at his silly jokes.

“No i say pinching his nipple and he screams.

“I was reading books; besides, I am not the only vanda women who can’t cook” I come to my defence.

“Yes you are, come on let’s go, I will teach you how to cook for the sake of our kids,” he says.

I smile as I stand. I love how he always includes me in his future talks. I help him cook and I distract him there and there but we finally sit down to eat. Tumi calls me while I am still busy eating.

“You are so quit, how is husband” he asks all excited.

“Haha funny, he is okay, you are disturbing I am having breakfast” I say.

“Wow, so I guess you gave it to him. How was the Zulu dick, I should get myself some of that!” he says chuckling.

“Stop it, it’s still early for your drama, my man is waiting for me” I say rolling my eyes looking at Zweli who is smiling at me.

I stand and head to the bathroom and close the door.

“Friend he is good but i think he is crazy” i whisper.

“What do you mean crazy, what did he do?” he asks.

“Yesterday he just went psycho on me, he thought I was calling another mans name. He thought I screamed Mandla during our ‘parliament session’,” I say. It still worries that he would think i did that, why would he think like that?

“Yoh! Did you though? And who is this Mandla guy?” he asks interested.

“There is no Mandla here, it was a communication misunderstanding. I was in the zone and english decided to run and I wanted it harder so I asked for it in my mother's tongue” i say. I can't believe I am actually telling this bitch, he is going to remind me of this every day of my life.

I hear him laugh out loud and I don't think he is going to stop anytime soon.

“Bitch bye, you are just like him. You are supposed to tell me that he is not crazy and that all men act like this when they love a woman.” I say frustrated.

“No, not the man I know. Yours is crazy and sexy, just don't get too dickmatised. We must have an all night just to talk about this, I can't wait, give him a kiss for me. Oh your man's lips are so gorgeous” he says as he giggles, then drops.

I find him staring at the table, thinking deep. He looks troubled.

“You drive my friend crazy; he says I must give you a kiss for him,” I say as I laugh at him to wake him from whatever is bothering him.

He laughs in return. “Tell him I only have eyes for you. I like him because he is very lively and your friend. He is cool” he says as he pulls me

towards him. We enjoy the rest of the day indoors.

CHAPTER 27

ALU

Today I woke up craving for some chicken, so during lunch time I make my way out for lunch.

I can't stop thinking about Zweli's face when he saw me on Friday. He couldn't let go of me.

“A Venda cookie is nice” that's what he kept on saying. He is full of jokes. I feel guilty that ever since we started dating I have never gotten myself to say ‘I love you’ to him. Every time he says it to me my tongue gets tied up, no words comes out of my mouth. When I get to the

restaurant its fully packed. I go to the counter to request for a table, but I am told that I am going to have to wait for 15 minutes. This is going to inconvenience me, let me just try some other fast food restaurants. I make my way out from the restaurant trying to squeeze my way pass the crowd still waiting for tables. As I pass some woman, her drink spills and bits of it lands on my shoe. I am few inches from the door as I look down to asses my shoe. Someone bumps into me and my purse drops to the floor. Oh shit, it's my fault, why was I walking looking down, I pick up my purse and stand to apologise. "I am sorry si..." I stutter when my eyes reach his face. My heart accelerates, and my breathing quickens. I become speechless when I see who I just bumped into. I look at him and he looks at me like he has just seen an alien, butterflies fill my stomach. He moves back and I move to the side. We are now outside just staring at each other. What do you do when you realise that

after a few months of being in a new relationship, you still long for the high intensity of the days of the past? He looks at me from my shoes to my hair. He smiles and moves a little closer to me.

“you are even more beautiful; you are glowing” he says.

“Thank you” I return a nervous smile.

“I still love you” he says looking deep into my eyes.

I look at him and a smile creeps on my face. Why am I blushing, this is the man who put me through the most. He said he still loves me and I so want to tell him that I love him back but I won't, I left him and it should remain that way. Should I tell him that I saw him last week when he was driving by? Should I tell him that I still feel the same as the first day I opened my heart for him? am I insane for feeling the same, for loving him even after everything?

“Are you okay?” he asks with his hand reaching for my arm.

As soon as his hand makes contact with my skin I twitch at his touch. Memories comes back flooding, good and bad. His touch triggers the painful events of my past and I go back to the exact moment of pain.

My throat is closing up, I can't breathe. I think I am having a panic attack. I breath in and out, trying to calm down.

“Alu! Are you ok? look at me baby girl, are you fine?” He says trying to shake me. Hearing him calling me baby girl, the way he used to call me sends more panic and I start backing away from him. I am running away from him; from the way he makes me feel, my feelings are all over the place spiralling out of control.

“Baby girl, what is wrong? wait, are you okay? talk to me” he says trying to follow me but I run, and run until I disappear into the crowd and I can't see him anymore. Without realising it, I ran

back to my work. As soon as I enter the building I go straight to the toilet.

I thought I was over him; why do I still love him even when my heart is bleeding. I cry in anger; I am angry at myself for still feeling love for him even after he hurt me so much.

THILI

I took my chance when I thought I saw her. And it was her indeed. I was craving for the chicken meal she used to buy as dinner most of the time. The spice they use is nice. I was passing by as I saw how packed it was, then I spotted her talking to a waiter. I had to act, I had to talk to her at least hear her voice. I saw some light in her eyes. She looks alive again, like the very first time when I fell in love with her. I became motionless when I saw her, all I could do was

asses her body, I couldn't help but notice how she was glowing. The thought of her happy with another man shatters my heart into million pieces. I feel lost and all alone, I feel like my life is sinking and has no direction.

For a chance there, I thought she still loved me, then when I touched her I saw all the pain in her eyes coming back. It was like she was re-living all the pains I have caused her. It breaks my heart thinking that the only woman who has captured my heart hates me. She ran from me again; it is as if I am a trigger to all her bad memories. I love her and still want her. I could

even marry her today if it was possible. I hate that I failed to love her the way she deserved when I had the chance to.

I feel stressed, this place feels empty. I was even thinking of Moving to Midrand but that's expansive, I am tired of this place. It has bad memories. Maybe I should try moving to a less

costly place since Taki stole my savings. I call my father; I know he will make me feel better.

“Mulaudzi!” he says when he answers.

“Baba, Vho vuwa hani(Dad, how are you)?” I ask.

“Nne ndo vuwa nwananga ini no vuwa hani? (I am fine my son, how about you?)” he says.

“Ndo vuwa, baba. (I am fine dad)” I say.

“You did well by calling me my son, when will you get married or are you waiting for me to get in my grave? I am getting old” he says.

I hate it when he does this, when he starts talking about marriage he starts acting like he is dying tomorrow.

“I will get married dad” I say.

“when, I want grandchildren. Tell me here who is your girlfriend? Tell us if you don’t have one we can arrange a nice young woman for you son.” he says.

“No, I have a girlfriend dad...” before I can finish he cuts in.

“So what are you waiting for? Who is she and who are her parents?? Where does she come from?” he asks all excited.

“umm, she is from the family of Mudau in Makwarela, her father is the late Nditsheni Mudau.” I say hoping that this will get him off my case.

“waite a minute, you mean Nditsheni Mudau who died from a car accident? Oh, I know them, I went to school with one of Nditsheni’s older sister. If its indeed them why are you delaying? I will find out if its them we must act fast. I know that family and they are good people.” He says.

“But dad, my finances are not balancing” I say, hoping he will leave the topic, and besides who am I kidding I am now a broke man. We have a long chat and the old man he has big plans. Now my father wants us to go to the family. I neglected to tell him that she doesn’t want me

anymore. I didn't think that he would know her family, I just wanted him to shut up and stop pestering me. Now my father has big plans. Now I just need to win my baby girl's heart again before my father sends people to her home, I just hope I am not too late. What have I done?

ALU

“Whoa! you said you what?” Tumi asks in horror as he drops his wine glass on his coffee table harshly.

“I said, I think I still love him, why are you making noise? there is still this part of me that longs for him” I say embarrassed.

“You are such a whore! So tell me here, after having that Zulu magical dick you are still clung up on Thili? What is it about him anyway? I get that he is handsome and gifted down there but why him, did he bewitch you? I heard Venda

people are good in that” he says as he sips his wine.

“Wait a minute, before you start accusing people of witchcraft remember I am Venda too.

There is just this pull I feel every time I am with him. I don’t know how to explain it but it always feels like he is this one piece that was missing from me. Every time I see him I just want to say yes to everything he says, I just want to see myself clung to him.” I say.

“Yes, this is witchcraft. That’s the only explanation” he says shaking his head in disbelief.

It is unexplainable, everything in me tells me that he is mine and I am his, that we should be together forever. But is it everyone we love, that we are supposed to end up with?

“Why am I even talking about him, when I have a man who loves me. Am I starting to be selfish like Thili, aren’t I?” I ask, confused looking at Tumi hopping he will clear some senses into me.

“Yes you are being selfish. Zweli loves you, so please don’t hurt him. Thili doesn’t deserve you, just move on and focus on the handsome Zulu man. It’s a pity he does not play for my team; I was going to snatch him from you.” He says with a smug.

“You, loose thing. Leave my Zweli alone, speaking of that he said he is cooking me supper today. I need to go, don’t kill yourself with that wine.” I say as he stands to walk me out.

When I get to my place and see Zweli’s car parked, its 07:00Pm. I wonder what he cooked for me. He is a good cooker., Although, I was surprised the first time he cooked for me, I had the mentality that Zulu man were stubborn to a point where they wouldn’t set foot in the kitchen.

When I told him how surprised I was at the knowledge that it wasn’t a taboo for a Zulu man to set his foot in the kitchen he laughed.

I open the door and it smells good, I lock the butler door and close the door. When I turn

around I can't help but open my mouth wide. He is standing in front of me shirtless, in black shorts.

They show his nice hairy legs and they cling nicely on his waist, I want to run my hands on his chest and feel all of him. He walks towards me drawing closer.

“And the Avocado prince arrives” he says with a smug.

I stand still looking at his body, slowly assessing every part of it. I notice there is a scar under his right arm. It looks like a bite mark from a human. But why would someone bite him? The way the scar is, I am sure that the wound was deep, the teeth sunk deep.

“Hi, sthandwa sam, you are right on time. I just finished cooking” he says planting a kiss on my lips.

I am still ogling and assessing the scar when he takes my bag from my hand and takes my hand leading me to sit down next to a set table.

I can't think straight with his shirt off, he is hypnotising me, he looks so good.

“What happened to you here, this looks like someone bite you.” He tenses at my question.

“It's a long story, forget about that today I just want to focus on you” he says.

He sits beside me on the couch. I let it go, I will raise this another day.

“I have cooked rice and chicken stew” he says handing me a spoon.

It's not complete without tomato sauce I say as he passes me one, I dig in and it taste nice.

“Mmmhh, Not bad!” I say.

“What do you mean not bad? I cook better than most woman especially you” he says looking at me with a side eye.

I laugh and he continues eating, I can't help but notice how he is chewing slowly. Am I mad?

I even love the way he lifts the spoon to his mouth. I am all of a sudden not hungry. When he

finishes swallowing I jump at him, and kiss him hard. I sit on his lap as I continue to kiss him.

He breaks our kiss and looks at me.

“You haven’t even eaten yet. Is my cooking that bad that you want to use your charms to avoid eating it?” he asks smiling at me.

“No, I can’t concentrate with you shirtless.” I say shaking my head trying to recover.

He laughs at me and holds my waist tight.

“Mukororo wanga (My princess)” he says with a smile.

I laugh because he sounds funny when he speaks Venda.

“It’s Mukololo, there is no R.” I say caressing his face.

“Okay mukorolo, let’s feed you first then, I’ll see what I can do latter with the itch in between your legs.” He says darting his tongue out and licking my cheek.

He looks at me and his mood changes to being serious.

“Sthandwa sam, would you like to accompany me to a company function?” He asks, looking at me.

“Here I was thinking that you were spoiling me with supper. So it was all just a bribe?” I say smiling.

“A man can only try; so will you accompany me?” He asks.

“Okay, only if you buy me a dress. What will be happening there, I hope I won’t be bored to death” I say. Trying to picture myself with bunch of men adorned in suites and ties busy discussing Audit risk and clean audits, I never understood those things.

“It’s just a function for Auditors, It’s my auditing firm and other firms too. They will also be giving awards.” He says.

“Okay, sounds boring but what the hell lets go baby.” I say.

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A week later the function night has arrived, and my navy blue dress is to die for. It is backless and long, hugging from my waist upwards and lacy from my lower part, it has a slit that starts up from my thighs all the way down revealing my sexy legs, it is longer when I am not wearing heels. It has a see through lace which covers my breast area. Tumi finishes fixing my shoes.

“Wow, look at you. Sexy and classy! Can I please come along?” He asks pouting.

“Only if you want to be our spare wheel” I say laughing.

“I don’t mind. Just go there and have fun, also listen to those juicy conversations for me. I might get my next story from you. Who knows what those auditors do on their spare time, they might have sex scandals. Bad news sells you know!” he says sipping his wine.

“Wow, you are such a typical journalist. I will do no such, I am not going there to spy, I am going there to accompany my man. Do you ever stop thinking about other people’s secrets?” I say raising an eyebrow.

“It’s my job love, I am licensed to gossip” he says adding some hell of an attitude to his voice.

Tumi is something else I tell you.

Zweli comes in as I fix my matt lipstick. He freezes when he sees me. He is wearing a black suit and navy blue shirt with a tie that matches my shoes. He looks sexy and I am failing to control myself. My Zulu man looks handsome and like a king that he is. Tumi is busy looking at my man with his jaw dropped like he is a snack served on a silver platter.

“Wow! Look at you. I can’t wait to show you off to the whole world.” He says looking at me with his one hand brushing his chin.

“Is it me or is it hot in here?” Tumi says using his hand to blow some air on his face.

We both look at him and crack into laughter as he kills our moment with his crazy stunt, Tumi has a crush on Zweli and he can't even contain it anymore. Right now he looks like a teenager who is love struck.

“Thank you for making my date this beautiful” Zweli says offering Tumi a hand shake but Tumi goes in for a hug and squeezes Zweli.

“It's a pleasure.” He says as he now tries to smooth Zweli's shirt feeling him up, his hands linger on Zweli's chest for too long. Watching Zweli's reaction is hilarious. My poor man is mortified but he is trying hard to keep calm.

“He has six packs friend” he whispers to me all excited after completing his mission of harassing my poor man as he grabs his wine glass.

“Stop it!” I say to him.

“You don't see it hun, I see it” he says raising his eyebrows.

“I am ready to go love” I say as I look at Zweli.

“What happened to those nice shoes that I bought that goes well with the dress?” he asks looking at me all weird.

When he says nice shoes he is referring to flat shoes that he bought because of his issues of not wanting me to be taller than him.

“They are in my bedroom, this dress is nicer with this heels.” I say.

“No, this shoes make you taller than me and that is not nice, go change them” he says.

I see Tumi’s eyes are wide now in confusion and questions.

To avoid further arguments in front of Tumi I go and change to the damn flat shoes that he bought, now my dress is longer and I have to hold it up like a Cinderella who has just lost his glass slipper.

CHAPTER 28

ALU

The venue is classy, it's in Sandton. There is a red carpet and champagne by the door. He hands me a glass as we enter and takes one for himself.

“You can drink as much as you want tonight, I'll be your protector” he whispers softly in my ears as he holds my waist. I chuckle in response.

Mmh this is nice, better than wine.

He introduces me to a few people that he works with and we chat and laugh. I grab a few finger snacks from waiters on the move. We sit at the bar and he orders more champagne, this meet and greet thing is tiring. A friend whom Zweli introduced me to comes and sits beside us and starts talking to him about some audit things so I

am left alone to mind my business. It's starting to get chilly in here, I feel this funny feeling in my stomach and I have goose bumps. I feel the hair at the back of my neck rise, I think it's becoming chilly. Zweli hands me a glass of champagne, I take a sip and turn to face the crowd scanning through the crowd admiring dresses worn for the night but I immediately halt my moving eyes when they connect with his glare. My stomach flips and falls, my face goes slack and my hands go numb. My legs start to shake and I start to feel a shiver down my spine. My mouth feels dry all of a sudden. He is talking to Three men but his eyes are rooted on me. I breathe in a long, slow breath as he drags his eyes from my face down my chest that is only concealed by this see through lace part of my dress. He is wearing a char-coal suit with a black shirt and a maroon tie. It looks like he just had a haircut recently. I drink my Champagne and it's when the strawberry hits my mouth that I realise I have drank all of it. I drag the strawberry with

my tongue and toss it in my mouth and start to chew. I shift my eyes from his direction, but I can still feel his gaze on me. I know that he is still looking. I can feel it, his eyes are drilling holes on my back.

“Sthandwa sam, are you okay?” Zweli asks as he slips his hand around my waist assessing my face and my empty flute. His touch feels foreign all of a sudden. It feels like my body is being violated.

“Yes, I am okay” I say clearing my throat.

“Are you sure? You look like you have just seen a ghost” he says trying to scan through the crowd.

“No, I just need to use the bathroom” I say moving away from his hold.

“should I accompany you?” he asks trying to stand with me.

“No, I’ll be back in few minutes, my stomach doesn’t feel good, I think it’s something that I ate earlier on.” I say, then he kisses me on my lips and I walk to the bathroom. I am a little bit tipsy

but thank god for this flat shoes that I am wearing.

I saw the way he looked at me and then Zweli, it was as if he was planning to murder someone and hide their body somewhere in the desert. He looked murderous and dangerous. His expression darkened the moment he saw me in Zweli's hold. I don't know why my body reacts when he is in the same vicinity with me, I feel weak and defeated. Why did he have to be here tonight? Why didn't I think that he will be here when Zweli said it's a function for Auditors? Do they know each other personally? I sure hope they don't know each other. But I don't think they know each other because Zweli didn't introduce me to him. I get inside the toilet with my knees weak and take a long breath without closing the door, after a few seconds I turn to the door and my hands fly up to close it but I realise that it's not the door that my hands rest on but his chest. I gasp and try to jump back but the space is limited so I just land a few inches away

from him. I stiffen at his presence. The last time I was this close to him I had a panic attack, but that day I had space to run, now I don't know how I will escape.

“You look good but you are not wearing heels, they make you look sexier” he says looking down at my pumps.

“What are you doing? Why are you trying to ruin my life?” I say in a defeated whisper as I look up to him.

I see his jaw is ticking but I see him struggling inside to keep himself calm.

“I just need to talk to you.” He says, his voice hoarse, his eyes continuously glancing at my lips. He looks conflicted and I see a vein popping on his forehead.

“I don't want to talk to you” I say in a low whispered voice.

“Please just hear me out, I am losing myself without you. I don't know who I am anymore” he

says closing the distance between us and kicks the toilet door closed behind him with his leg. How did he get in here? I mean this toilet is small for the two of us and weren't he scared that he might find women naked in here?

"Please don't do this, Zweli is waiting for me out there" I say starting to panic when I think of Zweli. What if he saw him follow me and he comes looking for me?

"Fuck him! To hell with him!" he says harshly emphasising every word while looking me in the eyes, daring me to answer but I keep quite. He assesses my face for few seconds.

"So you are giving him my cookie?" he says reaching out to hold my shoulder, his expression darkens.

"That clown out there is the one who is taking what belongs to me?" he says as if in pain.

"I don't belong to you, not anymore" I say in a low whispered voice.

He holds me with my waist and he suddenly has me up against the toilets door. He is looking at me straight in my eyes. His hold on my waist is strong and firm. I remain silent, I study the steady rise and fall of his chest as he examines my face.

His gaze lingers on my chest for a few moments, his eyes flashing heat, before he physically shakes himself back to the here and now. He swallows prompting me to look him in the eyes. His eyes are now concentrating on my lips. Everything in me wants to scream for help but my tongue is twisted and tied. He runs his hand from my knee through the slit of my dress all the way to my ass. I gulp with my eyes closed, and then I'm seeing a million visions of us naked, kissing, touching and fucking. I am loosing this fight of resisting him, and the fact that I am staring into his eyes is not helping. I am slowly loosing this battle. I know what he can do to me, he's an animal in bed, an expert. Skilled and talented, he is the master of my body. I know he

knows that too, I see it in the confidence written on his face right now, he knows that my body bows at his command. He applies a little pressure to his hand that is on my ass and pushes me closer to him. He is hard, I feel him through his trouser. He darts his tongue out and licks my tightly pressed lips and I can't help but breath in.

“You are mine Alu and you know it, don't you?” He says, his voice a rough rasp in my ear. He doesn't allow me the time to respond.

He lifts his free hand to my face and tucks away a few wayward curls behind my ears. I feel my heart hammering in my chest and my breath comes quick, racing. I look at his broad shoulders, his chest then his face. His eyes does a quick sweep of my face.

“Alu! You belong to me. You are mine, please don't resist this, you feel it and deep down you know it” he says still looking into my eyes.

I am mesmerised, there is something that moves in my stomach when I hear his deep voice saying

my name. He smells incredibly good, he tightens his hold on my ass and chills run down my spine as I feel his arousal against me. My heart pounds so hard on my chest I can almost hear it. His eyes linger on mine then drops to my lips. He connects our lips and his tongue penetrates my small mouth, he is kissing me and all I feel is bliss. It's a kiss meant to claim and to own. Desire swirls through me too fast to stop, and I part my lips and accept him. My mouth and tongue starts to move and it is slow and sensual. His mouth is now on my neck nibbling and sucking, it feels so good. My dress is bunched up at my waist and my lower part is now exposed. His mouth moves to my breast and he is attacking my nipples over the lace part of the dress and the sensation is out of this world. His hand slides down from my ass to my thigh and he lifts my leg and wraps it around my waist. He bends forward on a hiss, his hand pressing my body against his body, his breathing becomes instantly laboured. I am now standing on my one

leg and the only thing keeping me up is his body against mine. My panties are soaking wet, he slips his hand into my panties and plunges a finger inside me. He groans as he plunges deeper with his finger.

“You are always ready for me baby girl.” He says and a tear falls from my right eye. It’s not from pain but it’s from all the good memories I have shared with him. It’s from the frustration of how good he makes me feel. He kisses my tear away. With his one hand on my lower back he undoes his zipper and belt. His trouser drops to the floor.

He slides my panties to the side and I feel his big guy poking at my entrance and I start to tense. He tries to push in but he goes nowhere. He kisses me harder in frustration.

“Baby girl it’s me! Please accept me. I need you. Please accept me once more” he says as he kisses me in between his words

His big guy is still at my entrance trying to push through but my body just won't relax.

He lifts my other leg and wraps it also on his waist and bends his knees a little to get into position.

“Baby girl, please don't deny me you. I need you, please welcome me, love me again. Don't shut me out. I am your slave!” he says the last word as he finally goes through. My fingers claw into his arms, my eyes rooted to his, unable to look away from him, his eyes are full of desire and unending pleasure. A tear drops from my right eye; for the first time ever since I left him, I see hope in his eyes, he closes his eyes, I feel him inside me, a perfect fit. He groans and opens his eyes and looks at me with desire.

“Baby girl, don't deny what nature has matched. You were made for me, stop over-thinking, stop pulling away” he says and he connects his lips to mine. He starts to move slowly, its exquisite torture.

My body is responding, it's as if there is a light which switches on that was off. My body ignites in sparks of fire. I hold on to his shoulders, lock my ankles around his back as he plunges deeper into me.

“Ah!” I moan.

“Don't make noise. Oh! Lord knows I miss that sound” he says as he nibbles my throat.

His strokes become hard and deeper, it's all becoming intense. I missed this kind of intensity. The pleasure hits me, a sensation spikes up my spine and everything around me becomes a blur. My tongue is sensitive and my body is vibrating. He is not stopping though, he keeps on driving into me harder and faster.

“Ah Thili!” I moan in pleasure.

“Oh fuck. Shh!” he whispers.

I thought he was going to stop as I have reached my happy ending but he is still driving into me like an animal possessed. A heat washes over my

whole body and he plunges into me repeatedly, he hits me at my deepest. My legs straighten from his back and I feel something warm inside spreading then he pulls out, making me wince and him hiss. I think I just peed on myself. The liquid runs down my leg.

“You just squirted” he says giving me a wicked grin all proud as he takes a tissue to wipe himself. My body is still in a state of shock as I lean my back against the wall of the toilet. He cleans himself and fixes his trouser and sits on the toilet seat and looks at me. I come back to the land of the living and realise that there is a stain on my dress. He hands me a tissue and I reluctantly take it as he uses some to wipe the liquid on the floor. I wipe myself as he stares at me with naughty eyes.

“I like your dress, but why are you wearing it with flat shoes?” he says. I don’t know what to say so I just keep quiet and continue to wipe myself.

“Why did you leave me baby girl?” he asks looking at me still wiping the liquid from my inner thighs.

I left him, I am with Zweli now, the most caring and loving man and I just cheated on him now with this man who broke me when he was supposed to love me. My mind starts to travel far and I start to cry from guilt.

He stands up quickly and he is now at my side.

“Don’t cry baby girl” he says trying to embrace me but I push him off me.

“Stay away from me. I am with Zweli now” I open the door and run to the other toilet and lock myself inside. I sit on the toilet seat and start to cry. How could I be such a bad person? I just slept with the man that I walked out on in the toilet. I am a bad and horrible person, I hate myself. I hear his footsteps as he passes the toilet that I am in. I also hear some gasps from ladies whom I think are entering.

“Sorry ladies I didn’t realise that I entered the wrong toilets, I have a stomach bug” I hear him say.

I get angry at myself all over again when I think that Zweli or anyone else would have caught us in the act.

I walk back in shame to the bar; I feel like the whole world knows what I just did. I want to confess my sins because its killing me inside. I feel dirty. As I walk in, everyone else has already took their seats but Zweli is still at the bar waiting for me. He lifts his hand to signal to me.

“Wow, I thought you left me hanging when you heard all that finance talk earlier. Are you okay?” he asks looking concerned.

I just look at him and smile, because if I open my mouth I am afraid that I will just confess all my sins.

He kisses my cheeks and holds my waist as he leads me to our table. I just hope I removed the stain on my dress and I am praying with all that

is within me that I don't smell like sex. I had to stand for few seconds under the hand dryer to dry the stain. He opens a chair for me and I sit and he also takes his seat next to me. I see all the people he introduced me to sitting around the table with their partners. I smile at the lady sitting next to me and she smiles back. My heart almost stops beating when I register Thili sitting at the table next to us. We are eye to eye and everything is starting to become uncomfortable for me. He no longer has a tie and his shirt is not buttoned all the way up. He darts his tongue out and licks his lips seductively, his eye rooted on mine. I am mortified by his behaviour so I shift in my chair a little bit. There is a lady sitting next to him, she talks to him touching his hand time and again. She looks comfortable, Wow so he has a date, the lady is beautiful and she is wearing a black dress with a red lipstick. My stomach performs a flip and I start to feel cold all of a sudden, there is a pang on my chest. Why am I feeling this way? I drink the champagne that is in

front of me. I am starting to tense, Zweli holds my leg down under the table.

“Why are you shaking? Are you feeling cold?” he asks as he rubs my knee with the aim of giving me some warmth.

I try to calm myself down. He is still looking at me although the lady next to him is talking to him. I can't even hear what the programme director is saying because my mind is running wild. I want to get out of this place right now, I can't cope anymore. I also need to confess my sins, I will tell Zweli what I did as soon as we get home. He deserves to know, maybe he will forgive me.

THILI

I get hard again as I think of her up against that toilet door. I look at her and she is staring back at me. I've battled with having feelings for her

from the very first day I met her, knowing that I was going to complicate her life with my complicated life. But even though I knew I couldn't have her, I had to have her, I had to taste her and once I did I was hooked, I just couldn't let go. I was addicted and now I am still addicted. The last thing I wanted to do was hurt her, I tried to get out of my complicated relationship with Taki and all those other women without involving her but she just kept on finding out all my secretes. I was trying to fix myself , to be better for her but I hurt her in the process.

This woman next to me is annoying, I just agreed to be her date not to be her boyfriend but she is behaving as if I am her boyfriend. I just felt sorry for her as she had no one to bring so I figured that why not pair with her since I don't have a date also but now she is all over me. I will forever cherish that moment that I had in the toilet with Alu. I get harder as I look at her.

“Isn’t it right Thili?” I am brought back to life by Zanele as she brushes my hand. I have no idea what she has been on about so I just nod at her and smile.

I feel a stabbing pain as I see the guy sitting next to her kiss her cheeks. Is he the guy she spoke about, what’s his name again... she said its Zweli. How come I have never seen him before? I don’t know this guy. I hate him already because he is staking his claim on what belongs to me. Alu is mine and she knows it too. I know she knows it and she can’t resist it. We just had a moment out of this world in the toilet. She even squirted, I made her whole body shake, her body still bows at my call. I felt her fighting herself, she was resisting and didn’t want to accept me. She let go, and God, it was beautiful. I was scared when she couldn’t take me in, once I was in I wanted to remind her how good we are together. I wanted to stake my claim, I wanted her to feel all the pleasure there is to feel. I just couldn’t let go, I wanted to see and feel her body bow at my

presence and touch. I wanted to come inside her and fill her and I did although I don't think she noticed because I pulled out few seconds later. I hope she didn't notice that I came inside her. I saw on my calendar that the implant has expired last week, I just hope she didn't get a new one. But what would kill me to try. I am desperate to get her back, if I can't maybe a baby will do that, let's just hope that my ancestors hear my cry for help. She stands up with him holding her waist. My body tense. Are they leaving? It's taking everything in me not to jump at him and give him the beating of his life. Maybe I should make my presence known, I don't think he knows who I am.

She tenses and offers a fake smile to the people at her table and they leave. I still know her, I know when she is smiling genuinely and when she is faking it. I know when she is about to climax and when she is having troubles climaxing. I know how to get her off very quickly. As I read these things in my mind I want to count

them to him so that he can know that the woman
he is busy parading with belongs to me, she is
mine and I just made her cum!

CHAPTER 29

ALU

Dear self

I am sorry that no one told you how painful pain
is.

Especially when you cannot point it out

Especially when it is not visible to the human eye

Forgive me for all the foreign emotions that clash because of the contradictions between your heart and mind.

Forgive me for not knowing what to listen to,
For your heart wants to go south when your mind wants to go east and your body is left behind to bear the physical pain.

I am sorry because no one taught you how to stop loving, because you were told love is eternal.

Forgive me for being naive and for making you think that you can teach another how to love you good

Forgive me for this weak body and heart, for it fails to acknowledge the ones who've hurt you

Forgive me for even though I have been broken my heart wants to try again in hopes that this time things will be better and different.-- Alu.

I am trying to make up for Friday night, that night was something else. I am angry at myself for enjoying every second of it. The worst part is that I am hundred percent sure that if I was given the power to change anything from that night, I wouldn't change a thing. I would have everything happen they way it did. I still hate myself for what I did to poor Zweli. I never told Zweli what happened. I spent the rest of the weekend at my place. When I got to my place Zweli wanted to cuddle but I was still hung up on my sin, so I told him I was not feeling well. The poor guy didn't know what to do or how to help me so he just left me in peace. I hated myself for what I did so having him around made me feel guiltier. He checked up on me every day though. Today I am going to surprise him and try to apologise. I know it's a Monday but I just hope he won't be tired when he comes back. I was unfair and I am evil for what I did, I am still contemplating whether I should confess or not.

1.5 cup water

1 tsp salt

4 cups mealie meal

This are the things that Tumi said I need. I dial his number and put him on loud speaker.

“Now tell me what do I do.” I say when he answers, I need to do this fast before he comes back.

“Love I told you to place water and salt in a large pot and bring it to boil, and when the water is boiling pour in the mealie meal, all at once, then stir well to mix. Oh and make sure that there is no dry mealie meal left or the mealie meal will form into clumps.” He says.

“Okay, no clumps got it. What’s next?” I ask all excited. The instructions sound easy.

“After, you must reduce the heat to lowest, and cook it on a low temperature for about 30 minutes, and you must stir every 10 minutes to prevent it from burning.” He says.

“When done I can serve. This sounds easy” I say.

“Haha! Leave me some I want to taste. Bye love, I have a story to cover, I am working late” he says.

When he comes in I help him remove his jacket. He is looking at me with a smile.

I stand in front of him. I hope I haven't forgotten, I practiced the whole day. I put my hands on his chest and clear my throat and begin.

Zulu, Ndabezitha, Mntwana, Zulu kaMalandela
ngokulandela izinkomo zamadoda,

Zulu omnyama ondlela zimhlophe, Wena
kaPhunga noMageba, Wena kaMjokwane
kaNdaba, Wena wenkayishana kaMenzi
eyaphuza umlaza ngameva,

S'thuli sikaNdaba, S'thuli sikaNkombane,

Wena kasihhawuhawu siyinkondlo bayikhuzile
ngoba ikhuzwe abaphansi nabaphezulu, Wena

kanogwaja omuhle ngomlenze, Wena
kaMbambelashoba, Ndabezitha!

"Hauw, nkosazana yam!" he interrupts all proud
of me. I smile.

"What did I do to deserve this special
treatment?" he asks.

"I want to ask for forgiveness for my behaviour
on the gala night, I was just tired and on my
periods and feeling sick" I say feeling guilty for
lying to him again.

"Ah, don't worry sthandwa Sam I already forgave
you " he says holding me by my waist. He drags
me closer to him and kiss me.

He closes his eyes, and as I look at him all I see is
Thili.

He is kissing me passionately and all I see is
Thili.

He has me up against the toilet wall, holding my
thighs firmly groaning. Stop it Alu! I close my
eyes and try to squeeze the image out of my eyes.

After some few seconds of kissing I break the kiss.

"Come I cooked today" I say all trying to shake myself from the awkward moment.

"You did what? You shouldn't have" he says coughing. I can hear the doubt in his voice, I had help preparing this meal, I am sure it can't be that bad. He sits down on the couch and I bring him a container with water for him to wash his hands.

"Baku fundise kahle e Venda neh?" he says impressed.

I smile as I walk to the kitchen. Today I want to impress him, I saw someone saying that Zulu man are proud of their culture and who they are. I load the food on the tray and head to the sitting room.

Half an hour later we are sitting at a restaurant and he has this grin on his face.

“You tried sthandwa sam, it wasn’t that bad” He says, holding his laugh.

“Then why did you insist we come eat here” I say angry now. After the hard work that I put in preparing the food.

He cracks and laughs. “I am sorry my love let’s just say you have a weakness when it comes to cooking. But at least you know how to switch on the stove.”

I give him a death stare and he stops laughing.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam, but your food wasn’t edible. I loved the sauce though.” He says with a straight face. I get angrier, what does he mean he loved the sauce? Did I cook the sauce?

“I won’t be cooking for your ass any time soon.”

I say and start to attack my burger.

Before he could complain about my swearing my phone rings.

“Hi, my daughter. How are you?” my mom asks.

“I am fine and you mom?” I say. A call from her always brighten my day.

“I am good baby. Your aunts say you and Vule must come back home early for the festive, apparently there will be a family meeting and you two need to be here, Its urgent” she says.

“what Is the meeting all about?” I ask curious. Meeting, we never have meeting at my home.

“I don’t know my daughter; you know that your father’s family never involve me in any of their plans. just make sure you and your sister arrive.

When I drop the call he is looking at me interested, so I put him out of his misery.

“My mom says, there will be a meeting at home, so me and my sister are not supposed to miss it.” I say.

“Oh, okay. So when will you leave?” he asks.

“I am not sure; I will ask my sister” I say.

“So, what, I don’t get introduced to your mom?” he asks.

I laugh “I don’t introduce boyfriends to my mom, the only person I want her to know is my husband” I say.

“So meaning your mom doesn’t even know about me?”

“Yep” I say.

“Does that mean I can’t even drive you home myself to that meeting?” he asks, his mood has changed.

“No, it’s a family meeting Zweli and only family will be there.” I say.

“Okay, so did your mom tell you what this meeting will be about?” he asks.

Why all these questions.

“No she didn’t I will only find out when I get home in Limpopo.

“Okay” that’s all he says and goes back to his food.

What's eating him up now? Maybe I am overthinking.

THILI

I am now desperate to get her back, more than ever, and I hope the decision that I am about to take is the right one.

“Mulaudzi, how are you my son?” my dad says when he picks up.

“I am good dad. I am ready. I want you to go ahead with the arrangements, but I need you to make it a surprise. I want to surprise her dad. I want it to be special.

“Ah, you see now son. Now you are talking like a real son of mine. Mulaudzi. You are telling me good news son” he says.

I hope I am doing the right thing; I love this woman.

CHAPTER 30

ALU

Most people don't see what they have, until they have lost it.

The whole house was woken up by people shouting at the gate. Well at first I thought they were lost until my Aunt came flying into my room saying "they are here".

Who is here? I was so confused.

"Wake your sister up, we have guests. Make sure you wear a doek." She said.

I was so confused only to find out later that it's him. I had to force a confession out from my aunt. She said that he wrote a letter to my family

and requested that it be a surprise as he wants to surprise me and my aunts went ahead with the plan.

The length he has gone to now is too extreme. I mean, how do you send people for lobola negotiations without confirming first if the person you want to lobola wants it or not. The bastard has gone too far. A few minutes later I get called by my elders. The plate of audacity that he has! okay if he wants me to humiliate him I will gladly do so. With my head bowed I sit on the mat next to my uncle's feet. My Aunts are looking at me and they are so happy, these old bats, why wouldn't they be happy? they are always looking for ways to make money. Now I am their way to making money.

"Niece, do you know this people sitting here?"
My uncle asks me.

I steal a glance at them. I don't know any of them, not that I had the pleasure of being

introduced to any of them when we were still in a relationship.

"No, I don't know them uncle," I say looking down. They all gasp in shock. I hear one of them clearing his throat.

"They say, they are from the family of Mulaudzi and they are coming from Makhado. They say they are here to ask for your hand in marriage for their son. So are you sure that you don't know them or their son? And are you sure you don't want to hear them out?" he asks a little worried.

I clear my throat and steal another glance at the people who sit opposite my family. I see one of the man busy typing on his phone as he waits for my response. If it was one year ago, I would have said yes as they walked in the room, I would have agreed to be his wife without a doubt in my heart, but now I feel different, I am different. I'll admit the love is still there but I am not sure if it's enough for me to give myself to him again.

Why did it take another man for him to realize that he cannot live without me?

My uncle clears his throat to bring me back to the present.

"No! I don't know them and I don't accept their request, "I say a little bit harshly than intended.

"Are you sure Alu, this people have travelled far" my aunt chirps in. I give her a death stare and turn to look at my uncle.

"I am sure uncle; now can I be excused?" I say.

He excuses me and I go straight to my room. I hate the game that Thili Is playing. He had his chances why can't he just move on? My mom comes running into my room looking concerned.

"What is wrong with you? Do you think being a single parent is nice? That young man is doing a good thing, it's not all the boys who will marry you when you are pregnant, what he...." I cut in before he finishes.

"Wait, what? What does pregnancy have to do with this?" I ask.

"His family told us that their son says you are expecting his child. My daughter he is trying to do good by you especially now that you are pregnant" she says concerned.

I laugh, I laugh very hard that my mother gets confused.

"What is funny Alu? That young man is doing a responsible thing if I might say" she says.

Wow, when I thought he was out of tricks. They should have named him Thili the trick-star.

"Is his family still in the sitting room?" I ask.

"Yes, what did you change your mind?" she asks.

"Yes, I think I am going to kill someone." I say as I rush out of my room through to the kitchen then the back door. I know he is here; I can feel it as I get closer to the gate. I think he sees me coming because I find him outside the car waiting.

“Thili, the fact that we had sex that day doesn’t mean I want you back. I mean does it make a difference? It’s not like we haven’t had sex before. So what made you think that I am yours. It was just meaningless sex okay. Now move on!”

“You lie; it was never meaningless. It is never meaningless with you. It is always special,” he says in a whisper as if there is a knife plunged deep in his chest.

“But we are no longer together, another thing I don’t appreciate you telling my family that I am pregnant. How can you be that desperate, do you think I am that stupid to fall pregnant for you? There is no pregnancy, just go tell your family that you don’t have a woman, maybe they might assist you in your search for a suitable bride.” I say angry.

He sinks to his knees and holds my legs as he looks up to me.

“Baby girl, ndi mufuna lwaufa, (I love to death). I don't think I can make it in this life without you” he says as a tear drops from his eyes.

“Please, don't reject me. I still love you and I can't live without you Alu. I tried and it was not good at all.” he says as he sinks further down. He rests his face on my toes and I feel his warm tears as they wet my toes.

I feel bad, I want to cry with him. I want to put him out of his misery and tell him that I still love him too, but there is Zweli and even if I confessed my love for him I don't think things would be the same again. I grab his hands and help him to stand and my heart breaks as I see how wet his face is from all the crying. Men don't cry, not in public. I am scared that my heart won't take another heartbreak from him, maybe from someone else I might survive, but from him it will be the end of me. It will be my end.

“I can't live without you” he says.

“You should have thought about that before you hurt me,” I say and leave him standing. I run back to the house.

“You didn't fall for his lies, did you?” My sister asks as I try to make my way into my room.

Well I think he fell for mine. I said I don't want him anymore but deep down inside, I know that it's not the truth. My heart is dying to accept him back, especially when I see him begging me and crying like he just did. I want to put him out of his misery of begging but at the same time I want him to hurt the same way that I did. He hurt me and I know I still love him regardless of how many times he hurt me, but I now have Zweli. I can't disappoint him, I must shift all my love and give it to him. I can't see Thili, it's Zweli that I need to see and love.

My aunts, sister and mum are now standing at my door, they are all looking at me.

“I am not pregnant okay!” I say and close my door.

So this is the stupid meeting everyone was talking about. So what, was he expecting me to jump back to him like nothing ever happened?

Thili

I think I have made things worse. I thought this is how I was going to get my baby girl back. She hates me more, My heart shattered when she suggested that our sex was meaningless. Have I been lying to myself? I felt something move in me, I always feel something move in me when I am inside her. Does she not feel the same about me? Did I kill her desire to have me and enjoy me? This is so frustrating. I have never wanted anyone the way I want her. I can't get her out of my system. I love her and I want her. She is mine, my baby girl. I know I fucked up but I have tried to redeem myself. I close my eyes and the burning sensation in my eyes is very intense. I breath in and out just to try and calm myself. I have broken in a sweat.

“Thili, why didn’t you tell us that the woman you are sending us to doesn’t want you?” my uncle asks angry as he approaches the car.

“You think we have time to play? Didn’t you agree with her before we come here?” my aunt asks.

I am starting to get annoyed by all these questions. They won’t understand. My father is going to be so disappointed at me.

“I just wanted to surprise her. I thought she was going to forgive me and take me back,” I say with my head buried in my hands.

“What! Boy so you brought us here knowing that this girl is not speaking to you? You are full of games son. You don’t ask for forgiveness using Lobola money. Grow up and stop acting like a 10-year-old boy.” My uncle says furious.

“You wasted our time and humiliated us, you said she is pregnant but the family is refusing your claims. You are a disappointment. First you wanted to marry a woman with a child now this.

Mulaudzi you are disappointing your parent's boy. Drive us home!" my uncle says as he enters the car.

CHAPTER 31

ALU

It's a new year and I have been back for a week now. Zweli came back three days ago from the festive holidays. I haven't mentioned a word of what happened to him. Tumi is coming back some time today if not tomorrow, I know wherever he is, he is dying to hear the whole story. His place makes me nervous. I haven't

been to this place since I left last year, I have also rarely seen him, I saw him only once since I came back and it was briefly. I don't know how I will react when I see him. I have been avoiding him every time he suggested we meet or I come to his place but I finally agreed to come because I have run out of tricks. I settle on his couch and switch between channels when I hear the sound of the door. Why did I agree to come here? But who am I kidding, if I didn't come here he was going to come to my place, and he was not gonna leave. I want to tell him but I don't think that he will take it well.

"Sthandwa Sam" he says all smiles as he comes in.

He comes in, making his way to the couch.

"I miss you my love" he says as he kisses me.

"Me too, let me fix you something to eat," I say.

I put a tray of food on the table and grab the tv remote. The chicken looks nice but I am stuffed from the stress eating that I did at work.

" Leave this remote and focus on me sthandwa Sam. I miss you my love, now give me what is mine I want to taste," he says as his hands runs from my thighs Into my dress. I just sit and smile. This is awkward.

He connects my lips with his and starts shoving his tongue into my mouth. My skin crawls and I can't even enjoy the moment. He presses me harder against him. His hand reaches for my panties and he grabs the Hem of my panties. He groans as his fingers go further. An image of Thili nibbling my neck flashes in my mind

Okay this must stop, I cannot do this. I roll off the couch landing harshly on the floor.

" What is wrong, baby?" He asks sitting up straight, his eyes all out.

"Ouch,oh.. I was..I fell..my back is in pain," I say hoping that he will forget the sex and get worried about my back.

" Come here, let me give you a massage," he says grabbing my hand to drag me towards him.

"No, I think I just need to lay down a little, eat up you will find me in the bedroom." I say as I stand up and head to the bedroom.

Minutes later, I hear the door opening and I shut my eyes close and lay still. How did he finish eating so quickly? I pretend to be fast asleep. He calls my name softly and I keep quiet. He crawls in bed under the blankets and his hand reaches for my back and I wince to get him off. He coughs in response.

"Is it still painful?" He asks as he tries to caress my back

" Ouch", I respond.

He lets me be and goes to sleep.

Now Tumi loves Gossip. He came back today in the morning and instead of getting a proper rest for the whole day he decided to come see me. I know why he is here, I am not complaining

though because things are less awkward when he is here. Zweli is not his usual self today and it's my fault. I am just scared that I might call Thili's name when I am with him. I will never ever cheat in my life again, this thing messes you up.

Tonight I want to make it up to him, it is not fair that he has to suffer because I couldn't close my legs. Tumi said he came over for some chilling time but he has been gossiping. Zweli is busy drinking his beer while watching Tv as we sit and chat. He has filled me up on all of the gossip in his hometown. He refills his beer glass.

“So almost makoti tell me, you said your ex did what? How can he just rock up at your home with his family?” he says loudly.

I almost choke on my drink, Tumi has a big mouth, he wasn't supposed to speak about this. Not here, I haven't told Zweli what happened, I wasn't going to tell him either. I see him as he turns to look at me, his face hard, his expression

changes immediately. Tumi is not stopping, I try to give him a death stare but he is not barging.

“So how much was he willing to pay for you? It must have been a lot, I can imagine a surprise lobolo negotiations.” he says.

I place my tea mug on the counter banging it a little bit harder to show Tumi how pissed I am. The bitch has nerves to open his mouth wide in surprise.

Tumi, has a big mouth. Zweli stands up from the couch and heads to the bedroom and that’s when Tumi’s eyes pop out. Zweli comes out minutes later with his jacket and car keys in hand.

“Where are you going?” I ask

“I am coming back” he says.

“Where are you going?” I ask again all nervous.

“I said I am coming back,” he barks too loudly. He walks out and closes the door behind him. “I am sorry my friend. I didn't hear myself, I just started talking and I just couldn't stop talking. I

just got excited. I didn't mean to cause trouble for you," he says, abandoning his wine glass to comfort me.

"I forgot that he is around," he adds

"Next time think before you open that big mouth of yours." I say a little annoyed. How do I fix this? God, why did I have to get a friend who has no filters?

When he comes back, it is dark and I am sleeping. I should have just went back to my place. I don't know what to say to him so I just lay still in bed. I hear him as he removes his clothes and later he gets in behind me. He smells of alcohol. He comes closer to me and I can feel his warm breath hitting my neck, but instead of feeling pleasure or any butterflies I flinch from his touch. His hands runs over my curves as he caresses me. He starts kissing my neck and nibbling. His hand finds it's way into my panties and I hold his hand to stop him. "No, I'ts late babe, I am sleeping." I say and close my eyes.

He pauses for a few seconds and continues to try to move his hand in my panties. I turn around annoyed at him for not respecting my wishes. How dare he, he has been gone for almost 10 hours and he expects me to attend to him this late?

“I said no. I am tired and I want to sleep.” I say to his face and he opens his eyes wider as if not believing what he is hearing. They are red, I think it’s from all the alcohol he was drinking. Since when does he drink this heavy? I don't like this at all.

Before I know it, he is on top of me straddling me. He holds my hand, restricting me to shake him off me. He looks at me with wide scary eyes. I see something scary in his eyes, its anger.

“What do you mean no? You are tired? What made you tired? You have no right to say no U am your man. I want you and I want you now. You can't say no, I am your man,” he says as he

bends to kiss me, but I look to the side. He gets angry and sits up straight.

“You, think I am an idiot neh? You go around giving your ex-boyfriend what belongs to me and when you come back you tell me you are tired? That won't happen. You are mine and if I want to have you I must have you. You belong to me,” his hands are rough now as he tries to make his way to my thighs pushing them apart hard. He is on a mission and has no mercy. I try to fight him off but he prevails so I just lay limp on the bed and watch him satisfy himself with my body. I watch him do what he pleases. When he enters me the pain is unbearable. I scream out loud and tears start to flow.

“This is mine. I am the owner, you are even lucky because I am using a condom,” he says as he drives into me.

I try very hard not to concentrate on the pain. He is right I am his girlfriend; I am supposed to give him when he wants it. I close my eyes deeply and

start to think of something that makes me happy. Thili comes to mind. The night in the toilet. The way he was so rough and yet gentle, he owned me that night. He never forces me to have sex with him. He has never forced himself on me. I have always done it willingly. For a moment I almost forget Zweli as my imagination runs miles away with Thili. I knew that he was good with my body but that day he set my body on fire literally. Thili has never forced himself on me. When I open my eyes he is done and looking down at me, as if in deep thoughts. He looks thoughtful, he sighs and his stinky breath hits me and I crank my nose in disgust. He climbs off me and removes the condom heading to the bathroom. I grab my blanket and tug at it and cry. Why has it come to this? I keep getting myself caught up in webs that I can't get out from. I hear him as he comes back. He stands quite, and I hear him breathing roughly.

The blanket that I am holding gets tossed out of the bed.

"Tell me here, why are you crying? What! do you want to go back to him? Is that it?," He asks annoyed. I don't answer him; I just continue with my sobs. I am hurriedly tossed from the bed with my legs and I land on the floor, and I am immediately hauled up to stand in front of him as he deposits me there. Tears are still flowing and I can feel rage from him. He is angry.

"Why are you crying Alu, because if you don't stop I will think that you are crying because you still love that moron. You can't disrespect me like that anymore. When I want you I must have you." He says and a sob breaks from my mouth unintended.

He looks at me annoyed and my face crashes with the palm of his hand and I fall beside the bed.

My body is in shock and my face stings. I rub my hand over my face where his slap landed and I flinch a little from the pain.

“See what you made me do now. I am not this kind of a person but you have pushed me,” he says pacing around the room.

“You know I love you sthandwa sam but this is your fault. You pushed me. How can you let another man disrespect me in such a way? How can you?” he says. “I am sorry” that is all I manage to say in my pain.

How did I get to this? How have I managed to get myself in such a mess? Why is that everything I touch turns into a mess? It's like I am a cursed. He is right. I shouldn't have allowed What happened to happen. It's my fault. If I didn't have sex with Thili that day, he wouldn't have thought that I still loved him. He wouldn't have come to my home with his family and ask for my hand in marriage.

CHAPTER 32

ALU

'Dear Zweli, I don't think, I can be able to live with a man who hits me, that is scary, so I think it will be best if we go our separate ways. Sorry for ever hurting you, If I did, it wasn't my intention. I hope you find someone who will make you happier than I ever did.' send!

I don't know if he will respond, but I hope he doesn't because I don't want to talk to him anymore.

“I will fetch you at lunch time,”-Zweli.

What the hell!

During lunch, I tag along with Lebo and some of my colleagues to lunch. We are heading to chicken licken. He must think that I am crazy if

he thinks that I am going to have lunch with him. I saw his message and deleted it.

Just like that and he thought I would obey? After the message I sent him? Today I am going back to my place. It is over, why is he pretending like he didn't see my message? Let me resend it. I send the message again and switch my phone off.

We place our orders and find a table for five as we wait for the food.

“Hello ladies,” my heart goes into shock when I hear him say from behind me, while he drags a chair from another table sitting facing me.

The whole table greets gleefully.

What the hell is he doing here? I know that part of what happened was my fault but he had no right to hit me and besides I told him that this between us is over.

“Hau mami, but I said I was going to take you out for lunch today,” he says as he looks at me straight in the eyes, daring me to go against him.

“We have already ordered and the food is almost ready,” I say.

“No worries, the ladies can share your meal. I want you all to myself. Sorry ladies I need my woman,” he says as he stands, leaves a R100 note on the table and holds out his hand for me to take.

"My woman" what does he mean by that? I just dumped him.

Now everyone is looking at him like he is an angel or a unicorn. For sure they think he is romantic and a gentleman, they all wish he was their man. Well ladies, he is all sweet and romantic but underneath all that he is a woman beater.

"Ladies, have a lovely day," he says as he grabs my hand and silently will me to leave with him.

How selfish of him, we are at his favourite fast food restaurant, eating his favourite meal and to hell with what I want.

"Sew'qedile ukuzihlanyisa sthandwa Sami?(are you done being crazy my love?)" He asks looking at me as he chews.

I just pick at my French fries but nothing is getting in. He is busy chewing his burger and licking the sauce off his fingers as he assesses me in between his chewing.

"You see, you are starting. You are not talking or even eating. Can you eat before I get pissed," he says it a little louder this time. I force myself to eat just to please him.

"Sthandwa sam I don't know what came over me yesterday. It's just that I felt disrespected as a man. How does a man go pay lobola for my woman?" He says looking at me.

"But you are behaving like I accepted his proposal," I say starting to get emotional.

"I know I messed up but please believe me, it won't happen again, I was just angry and I reacted without thinking. I love you sthandwa Sami and I will never want to hurt you," he says

as he grabs my hands which are now limply on the table.

"But you did hurt me yesterday, not just emotionally but physically," I say as a tear runs down my face.

"I was drunk babe, I didn't know what I was doing. Trust me, I am ashamed of what I did, please anything you want me to do for your forgiveness I will do, please just don't leave me," he says.

I look at him and his sorry eyes, he looks like he means it. I wronged him, I cheated with Zweli. Maybe if I forgive him it will calm my guilt for cheating on him. Everyone deserves a second chance. I am getting a second chance and I will never sleep with Thili again.

"If you ever do what you did yesterday, I will leave you and never look back," I say.

He swallows hard and his grip on my hand becomes painfully tight. He let's go of my hand and start eating his Burger.

"Nawe uyekele ukuzihlanyisa sthandwa Sami, I am a man and that thing between your legs is mine," he says after a few minutes

"Ngizokulanda emsebenzini namhlanje yezwa(I will fetch you from work today)," he says smiling.

.....

Today was a very lovely day at work although my contract is coming to an end in few weeks. I am not sure if they will be taking me permanently. My co-workers believe that I am getting a permanent post but I think they were just trying to comfort me. Mpendulo has even bought me a coffee mug and a nice pen. How thoughtful of him.

Zweli asked me to sleep over at his place today. I have since limited my sleep overs at his place since that day he hit me. I feel like his love sometimes overwhelms me and overpowers me. When I get to his place I find him busy in the

kitchen finishing up cooking. He is playing some music too.

"Uyenza buhlungu intliziyo yam, Udenza ndizi buze imibuzo" the music plays.

He moves swiftly in the kitchen opening cupboards and pouring spice's.

"Hi," I say as I put my hand bag and my gift bag on the kitchen counter.

He moves closer to me and holds my waist from behind.

"Hi Mami," he says as he kisses my neck.

I smile and close my eyes as I try to relax in his hold and enjoy the hot breath that hits my neck.

"I love you sthandwa sam, you are my everything," he says as he swings me to now look at his face.

I hold his hand tight. Why am I letting one silly stupid mistake ruin this?

"What are you cooking?" I ask as I smile genuinely this time.

“I am done, I cooked pap and beef stew,” he says as he switches the stove off.

“Wow, it smells nice. I hope you are also going to cook this whole weekend,” I say smiling at him.

“hau ngeke phela angi dlisiwanga mina. (No, I was not fed love portion). Oh, is this for me babe?” he asks as he looks at my gift bag.

“No, this is mine,” I say as I grab the bag.

“Where did you get this?” he asks.

“I got it from a co-worker,” I say smiling as I look at my mug and pen.

“Who is this co-worker, what is his name?” he asks his tone changing.

“Hus name is Mpendulo, he is such a nice guy. He said he is sure that when my contract ends I am going to get a new contract.” I say all excited to tell him about Mpendulo.

“So, wena you felt that it was okay for him to buy you a gift? This is where it all starts, it starts here.” He says more louder. He looks angry.

What did I do wrong? He clenches his fists on top of the kitchen counter.

“Love I think you are overreacting,” I say trying to calm him down.

He turns around and punches the wall, hissing from pain afterwards. He walks to the bedroom and comes back with his car keys and a leather jacket.

“Where are you going?” I ask worried. Why is he behaving like a child who has just lost his lollipop?

He has sunk deep to a place I don't know. I don't know him like this, and why would a small thing tick him off to this point? I can't even look at his eyes. They look scary. He is like a lion waiting to attack its prey. The person that I see and hear is not the Zweli that I know or love. It's like he has just become a totally different person in a matter of seconds.

“I don't report to a woman,” he says and he bangs the door on his way out.

His response sting in my heart.

The shower didn't remove my stress or the stinging in my heart but it sure took off all the tiredness from my body. I wrap myself in a towel and wear my flip flops and head to the bedroom. I sit on the ottoman and start applying some lotion on my legs. He has been gone for long and it is now dark outside. I hear his footsteps as he enters the bedroom.

He looks at me as he struggles to stand straight.

“Muntu wani! (My woman)” he shouts drunkenly.

I have never seen him this drunk. All his words are a slur. He smells like a brewery.

“Now tell me here mami, why did that man buy you a present?” he asks looking at me.

“It's just a well wish present my love, there's no big deal,” I say trying to tread carefully. He looks upset but I don't want to make him angrier.

"Why do you always let other man disrespect me? If he is buying you gifts what's next, will he want to satisfy you in bed? Because if he is buying you gifts he is trying to imply that I am not buying you, and he might be thinking that I am not satisfying you too. Why are you leading him on by accepting his gifts? Why do you let these boys disrespect me, why do you disrespect me?" He says coming closer to me. He grabs my hand too tightly and looks at me.

There is something dark in his eyes, pain, hate and disgust.

"You women are all the same. Always up to no good. Have you seen yourself?" he says examining me from head to toe, his eyes red. His lower lip is broken and bleeding. Was he in a fight? I swallow hard even though my mouth is dry.

"Don't you think he wants you? I mean who wouldn't want you? I wanted you the very first day I saw you. SO TELL ME WHY ARE YOU

LEADING HIM ON?" He screams to my face. "I am not leading him on. He is just a friend from work." I say, shaking like a wet leaf.

He faces the other way and staggers back towards the bed. When he reaches the side bed chest, he stands and exhales and rub his face.

"The things that women make us do as man. You make us twisted and scary and unbearable to live with." he says in his deep Zulu accent.

"Ni senza sibukeke nje ngeilwane, kodwa Siya nithanda. (You make us look like animals but we love you.)" He painfully says.

It's now starting to be cold and this towel that I have wrapped around myself is not keeping me warm because it's partly wet.

He drags the hem of his shirt and removes it. Something shiny grabs my attention at the back of his waist. I have never seen it in real life but I know it's real. He has a gun. A gun. It's a gun. Tshego died with a gun, at the hands of a man she loved. Run for your life Alu, run. My legs

kick into action when his hand goes behind his back to draw it out. My adrenaline kicks in and I run out of his bedroom walking through to the kitchen grabbing my phone on top of the counter. Where is my bag? I hear him scream my name, I forget about the bag and I open the door and run for my life.

CHAPTER 33

ALU

Come on Tumi, answer your damn phone. I have been calling Tumi for the whole 10 minutes now and he is not answering. What the hell, he might

be at a club somewhere dancing his butt off. I sit on the toilet seat as my head spins. Was he going to shoot me like Matimba did to Tshego? He has been calling me. My battery is now on 5% and it's about to die. I cannot go back to his place. I saw that shiny metal around his waist and I am sure he was about to draw it out. Who do I call now? I cannot call Vule, she said she will be in Bloemfontein this weekend. Lord what have I gotten myself into? My phone starts ringing and I drop his call. I can't walk into the garage shop looking like this, I am even lucky that the toilets are behind the garage, I don't want to wake up and find myself trending on Twitter.

I check my phone, it's now 09:55 and my battery is now on 4%. It's starting to get chilly and the toilet seat is becoming uncomfortable. I am lucky that I had this towel on. I only noticed that I was naked and only had the towel when I reached this garage. I just ran and ran without looking back. I have nowhere to go and even if I go to a hotel how will I get there or how will I pay? I

mean this is South Africa, even police wouldn't believe my story. Someone might even think I was caught screwing someone's man and that is why I left running naked and only in a towel. I dial Lebo and her phone is Off. Oh my God! My body is now numb as I run out of options. I don't have any numbers of my other colleagues. I take a long breath just to clear my head.

"In, out, In and out," I try to calm myself.

There is only one number left that I know by heart that I can call. Will he pick up? Will he even recognise my numbers, And if he picks up how will he react?

I no longer have options. I swallow my pride and call the only person I can think of left. It is ringing and on the third ring he answers.

"Baby girl?" He answers more in a question. He must be surprised, he is my last hope of surviving this night. Now will he save me?

40 minutes later I hear a soft knock on the toilet door. I start shaking. Could he have found me?

No, no I am dead if he did. It can't be him, did he follow me? But I ran so fast I didn't see anyone behind me. I start backing away from the door, my heels hitting the toilet. My phone is even off, maybe I should have just called the police.

"Lord, please accept my soul," I set a silent prayer in my heart.

"It's me, I am here. Open up," he says softly and that is when I recognise his voice. I walk back to the door and unlock the toilet. I hug him tightly, thanking God for his saving grace. I was scared that he might not find me and with my phone off I was doomed, but he followed the directions that I gave him.

"What happened to you baby girl?" he asks as he peels me off him to asses me. Why are you here wearing only a towel?" he asks.

"What happened?" He asks again.

I start to sniff back tears, he stops asking questions and removes his jacket and wraps it around my shoulders.

I breath in and out, and emotions flood me, my knees betray me and I sink to the floor in tears. Thili holds me up against his body, keeping me from reaching the floor.

“Hey,I got you. It’s okay, I am here now. It’s okay,” he says when he catches me, pressing me to his chest. He opens the door with his one hand and sweeps me off my feet, before I know it he is carrying me in his arms walking out of the toilets.

We drive in silence. Here I am scared to death and the only comfort I am getting is from my ex whom I walked out on. Funny how now I feel safest in his car sitting besides him. We are passing Centurion, and he passes the route that leads to his place, I panic and sit up straight, My eyes popping out in questions.

“I moved to a more affordable place, I kind of ran into financial problems, besides I wanted to start afresh, that place had so many bad memories,” he says looking ahead. He looks at

me when I lay back on my seat in relief. His grip on the steering becomes tight.

I thought he was taking me to my place, I can't go back there, at least not now. If I go back today, there are chances that I might find him there. He kept on calling until the phone switched off.

He is right, when I called Thili, I didn't even think about his old place and how I would feel, when I got there with all the bad memories. I am just glad that I don't have to set my foot there.

“Do you want me to drive you to your place?” he asks looking ahead.

“No!” I jump in more harshly as I panic. I don't want to go to my place, he might find me there.

He gives me the concerned side eye.

“No,” I say more softly this time. I swallow a lump in my throat.

“Can I stay at your place if you don't mind?” I ask, with begging all over my voice.

He nods in response but his mind is already miles away. His grip on the steering wheel becomes even more tighter.

When we get to his new place in Pretoria west I am already tired and feeling sleepy. I am also cold and this towel is not helping. He opens the door, there are boxes everywhere.

“Sorry about the mess but I haven’t gotten time to unpack my things,” he says as he tries to move some of the boxes to make way for me.

We enter his bedroom and it’s also a mess, there are boxes everywhere. He goes through a box and hands me his t-shirt and shorts.

I asses the shorts in my hand. The shirt will do but the shorts won't fit.

“You can wear this in the meantime. Do you want anything to eat or drink?” he asks.

I shake my head in response.

“Okay, let me leave you to change,” he says as he leaves the room and closes the door behind him.

THILI

It must be him; he must have done something to her. She was horrified when I found her in that garage. And why was she only in a towel? I stand leaning towards the kitchen sink. Oh, the glass is full and water has been spilling. I close the tap and drink my water.

I can't help but overthink. What happened? It pains me even more because of the thought that I am the reason behind her problems. If I had treated her right, she wouldn't be going through whatever she is going through.

Why did she look terrified when I suggest I take her to her place? What's at her place and what is that fucker doing to my girl?

“Can I also have a glass of water please,” she says from behind me.

I pour her some and she drinks. I only unpacked one blanket when I moved here, I don't know which box has the rest of the blankets.

“We will have to share the bed, but you can have the blanket,” I say as I look at her tiny body in my t-shirt. It is too big for her, she is only wearing the shirt but it is long enough.

She gets in the blanket and smell the pillow before her head hits the pillow. I remove my track pants, shirt and wear my shorts.

I climb into bed and lay down beside her on my back and look up at the ceiling.

Is she okay and comfortable? I want to know what happened to her but I can't force it out from her.

“Are you okay?” I ask, really concerned.

“I think so,” she says, her voice shaky.

“Baby girl I don't want you to think so, I want you to be sure that you are okay,” I say, turning

on my side to look at her back which is covered by the blanket. She tucked herself neatly.

She takes a deep breath, and I hear her sniffing. I hope I am not jumping boundaries, so I inch closer to her and put my hand over her and pull her closer to me for some comfort. I hold her over the blanket, and I will do it until she falls asleep. I close my eyes in anguish and anger. I slowly drift to sleep with a little hope that she is safe with me.

ALU

I am woken by my bladder which is ready to explode. He is no longer holding me, I turn to look at him but he has now turned to look at the other side. He held me until I fell asleep. He is still not inside the blankets and it is now cold. I get of bed and head to the toilet. When I come back he is still fast asleep. I get inside the blankets and extend the blanket to cover him

also. It is not fair that he gets cold while I sleep peacefully in his own bed. I close my eyes. I hear him turn and his hand circles my waist, I am pulled towards him and I am now closer to, against his front in his arms as he holds me. I once again relax in his hold and close my eyes. Sleep comes easily and I drift off.

CHAPTER 34

THILI

When I wake up, she is still in my arms but closer this time. There is no blanket between us, only my shirt that she is wearing and the shorts that I am wearing. My big guy is up already, it's difficult with her in the same bed but now she is

against me, in contact with my body. How do I survive that? She is facing the other direction with her back against my front. She seems so peaceful. I want to wake up but I can't get myself to get up, I just want to look at her beauty. I am afraid that after she wakes up all this will disappear, it will be as if it never happened. I want to hold on to her forever and never let go. A picture of her yesterday sinking to the floor in terror flashes in my eyes and it disturbs me. I just wish she could confide in me, what happened to her yesterday? She moves a little, her ass rubbing against my lower front part, my morning Glory gets excited even more down there, within seconds I am even more hard. I need to get out of this bed before my balls explodes and I die from a hard on. I slowly roll out of bed without disturbing her and head to the bathroom to fix the problem downstairs before I go make breakfast. I switch on the water and test it, it's too cold and still early so the cold shower trick to calm me down won't be ideal for today. I

put on the hot shower and get it. I apply some body wash on my hands, putting my left hand on the wall for some balance. Once I am in position I start stroking myself. With my eyes closed, the water cascading down my back, I think about her in my bed wearing my shirt with nothing else underneath, I held her so tight last night. I wanted to take her pain away. I need something more erotic than this, that image of her is not getting me where I want, I need something more erotic. A picture of her in the toilet at the gala night appears in my mind. The way that she was wet and ready for me that night. My body gets an involuntary vibration starting from down my spine reaching everywhere in my body when I think of the excitement of that day's climax. My finger flexes from the excitement of the thought. She is against the wall with me in between her legs, her dress bunched up her waist. I am buried deep inside her, driving into her as I drive her crazy. I increase my hold and increase my strokes, my knees are about to fail me soon. Her

cute mouth is open, forming an O as she moans out the pleasure. "Oh fuck," my head follows my left hand Which is against the wall. I am almost there, a picture of her arching her back in ecstasy flashes in my mind and it comes rushing like a flood and I find my release as I put my other hand and forehead up against the wall to balance my heavy legs.

That was not bad, for a do it yourself. I smile to myself when I think of how she even gets me off even when I am doing it myself. When I am done talking a bath, she is still sleeping.

ALU

The warmth is gone, and there is no more hand covering me and holding me. He is already up, what time is it? I slowly open my eyes preparing them for the brightness that is ready to attack my pupils. He is nowhere to be seen, so I wake up and head to the bathroom to pee. My breath

smells bad, I look at myself in the mirror and my face is a mess. I splash some water on my face and use a towel to dry it. There is a toothbrush in a cup. It's his. I take it out and put some paste and quickly brush my teeth. I slept very well for someone who was traumatized and scared. I thought I was going to have nightmares but I slept like a baby. I make my way to the kitchen and I find him plugging in the kettle.

"Morning. I see you still love waking up early," I say, smiling.

"Morning," he says as he assesses my form.

I am still wearing his shirt but nothing else underneath.

He saved me yesterday, he came through when I needed him.

"Breakfast is ready, do you want me to run to the shops to buy you some toothbrush?" He asks. I

didn't realise that I have been staring at him for too long.

I clear my throat quickly.

" No, I used your toothbrush," I say embarrassed.

He smiles.

"Okay, come sit. You must be very hungry, your tummy has been growling.

He is right, last night I couldn't eat, I was in too much shock and I was panicking.

" We are having eggs and bread, and of course there is tomato sauce and sweet chilly.

"So, when are you going to sort out this mess of boxes," I ask as I chew my breakfast.

"I wanted to do it today or tomorrow, but there is no rush," he says as he puts his tea cup down.

" I can help you, I don't mind," I chirp in.

He pauses for a moment then nod .

When I switch on my phone, it's flooded with messages and missed call. I respond to everyone else's message and leave Zweli's. I then switch my phone off. I am done packing the kitchen and sitting area, now I need to pack these clothes in the bedroom. He went to the shops to get some small grocery. I insisted on staying behind when he asked me to come with. I remove some shirts in the box and hang them in the wardrobe. I asses a suit bag that is in one of the boxes. I think it also needs to be hanged in I hang it but my curious eyes wants to see what is inside. I unzip the hanging suit bag, finding the suit similar to the one that he wore on the gala night. I draw closer, clossing my eyes as I take it to my nose to smell it. It's it, it still smell like it did that day. My stomach gets butterflies when I think of that night. Things are starting to heat up down there so I squisee my thighs tightly to try and calm the throb in between my legs.

"You are almost done," he says after clearing his throat. My hands jumps into action to zip the suit bag.

" Yes, it wasn't much to do," I say.

"This is for you. I hope they are proper,' he says as he hands me a big legit plastic bag.

There is two dresses, three underwear and three matching bra's, a toothbrush, face cloth, black pumps and some sandals. Wow, I thought he was going to buy groceries. He has the right size. He still remembers my size.

"Thank you," I say looking at him.

We spent the weekend unpacking and packing.

It was peaceful and wonderful. I am scared when I think about going back to my place, but I have to go back anyway. It's Monday and Thili has even packed me some lunch. I don't even have a hand bag but this lunch bag will come in handy. The black dress fits me perfectly, and goes well

with the pumps. I don't know how to thank Thili for being there for me. He was a gentleman, never did he in anyway try to take advantage of the situation.

"Are you ready to go? Come, let me take you to work. Do you want to pass by your place before work?" he asks.

"No, you can just drop me at work," I say.

He parks at the reception door and turns to look at me.

"Do you want me to fetch you after work?" he asks.

"No, I will be fine. I will go to my place," I say.

He sits still and looks ahead then nods in response. He then unlocks the door's.

"Thank you for being there for me," I say as I exit the car.

"Anything for you, baby girl," he says with a sad smile.

The day goes by smoothly, but takes a turn when it's almost time to knock off.

I am called at reception when someone comes looking for me.

It's Zweli, and apparently he doesn't want to leave with me.

I have my way down stairs, finding him having a state contest with the security guard. He immediately looks my way.

"Sthandwa Sam, I came to fetch you. Please let's go home and we will sort out issues when we get home," he says.

"I promise, it's all a misunderstanding," he adds.

"David, please show this man out. He is not welcomed here," I say to the guard and walk back to my floor, leaving him screaming and cursing. He is now being aggressive with David and other guards who are trying to drag him out the building. I walk on, disappearing into the lift.

CHAPTER 35

THILI

I have stopped myself from trying to call her so many times. I just want to find out if she is okay and where she is. Maybe I must check on her, I mean there is nothing to lose.

The battle in my heart whether to call or not to call continues. Shit, let me just go for it. I am a man I will take whatever I get strongly, like a man.

I dial her number, it rings then drops saying number busy. I call again and it does the same

thing. A sharp pain slices through my heart when I realise that I am still blocked.

She can get through me, but I can't get through her.

What did you think Thili, that all of a sudden you are forgiven and you will live happily ever after? Wake up and smell the coffee, this is not Disney Land. I curse myself inward for the false hope that I created in my heart, that is now turned into hurt and pain. You have tried it's enough, protect your heart. My chest is hammering, and my heart aches.

What I feel in my chest hurts. I try to console myself with the fact that even though she has blocked me, atleast she can still get hold of me. I did what any man in my situation would have done, or was supposed to do. I just hope I knew what is it that happened to her, maybe I can do more to help. How does a woman get to the garage only in a towel at that time of the night.

Did they have a fight and did he just leave her there? My mind tries to make up all kinds of scenarios that might have led her to that garage that night, and the more I think about it, the more frustrated and angry I become.

I push the thoughts out of my head.

I miss my old man, he is still a little bit cross with me for the stunt that I pulled. "A Mulaudzi man doesn't trap a woman into marrying him, we must allow a woman to love us," his words ring through my ears. I can't force her to love me. The thought pains me more. I exhale and brace myself for my father's harsh words as the phone rings.

"Mulaudzi" he answers.

ALU

THILI gave me R200 for transportation when he dropped me in the morning.

I had to call taxify because I was not comfortable with walking to the bus stop after the stunt that Zweli pulled.

When I get to my place everything looks normal, I use my spare keys that I leave under the big flower pot to get in. The lights are on, did I forget to switch off the lights on Friday? I must have been in a hurry. I lock the door and head to the kitchen. I look into the fridge and there is not much to eat, so I settle for two minutes noodles and some ice cream for dessert.

My phone vibrates inside the lunch box bag. I forgot to take it out.

"Hi sis," I answer.

"How are you Nana?" She asks.

"I am good, are you back from your trip?" I ask.

"Yes, I came back today. You are so evil you didn't even check up on me. It's only Zweli who did," she says.

I swallow, even though my mouth is dry. When did he call her, and what did he say?

"He did?" I ask

"Yes he did. He even sent me R300 Rand for cold drink. He is such a good man, he is kind and so sweet," she says dreamily.

I laugh in response. Do sweet men carry guns behind their back? Do they raise their hands on their woman? Are they paranoid like he is? I mean it's like he doesn't trust himself, or is it me he doesn't trust.

"Please don't ruin this relationship, try to make it work. He is the one and besides I like him," she says.

"Did you speak to mom?" I ask, trying to change the topic.

"No, let me call her right now. Say hi to Zweli for me. Tell him he is my favourite future brother in law," she says excitedly then ends the call.

Favourite future brother in law my foot. If she likes him why doesn't she take him for herself. My chest becomes tight from anger as I replay her words. I love my sister but she always finds a way to make me angry. If I hadn't listened to her and Tumi I wouldn't have been here, thinking like this. I wouldn't have made any premature decisions.

I switch on the television, and there is nothing interesting on the tv, just a bunch of crappy soapies. Let me read, reading always takes my mind off things. What I need now is an escape from my thoughts. I go through my novels basket. It's been a while since I read. This one is about some polish woman who was trafficked to another country but managed to escape and find

love in the process. I start reading. Now I love watching movies but reading is the best, I see all that I read, when I read I am that kind of a reader who sees pictures, hears sound and all kinds. I can tell my kind of book from the first chapter. My mind sinks more deeper into the romance novel taking me to the streets of London. My body and mind relaxes and before I know it, I have sunk into a deep sleep.

There is something unsettling that brings me back to consciousness from my sleep. There is someone towering me. Who could that be. I will kill him, Tumi knows that I can't sleep when someone is busy walking around the house, let alone towering me. My sleepy eyes try to open slowly, trying to adjust to the light that confronts me. My eyes pop out wide when I register who is standing above me. I sit up straight, my novel falling from my hands. What is he doing here? How did he get in?

He is in his tracksuit pants, a blue shirt and his red sneakers. He is staring at me, still standing above me.

"What do you want?" I ask clearing my throat. My heart rate has increased from fear. How did he get in here, I locked the door. I try to scan the room, and I see a small gym bag. What! is he here to finish me off and dispose of my body?

He bends down to come face to face with me. Today he looks normal and not drunk.

"I want you, baby you just ran out on Friday. I think you misunderstood me,' he says as he tries to get more closer to me, his hand reaching out to touch me. My body gets into action. I jump off the couch, getting far away from him.

"How did you get in here? Get out," I say, now pointing a finger at him as I back away further from him. I know I locked this door, I did-didn't I?

"You don't mean what you are saying. That gun is not even mine. It's my friend's gun. You read the situation all wrong. I would never hurt you baby," he says.

"GET OUT," I shout.

"Relax, sthandwa Sam," he says walking towards me.

I panic and turn trying to run but I trip from a bag that is now on the floor. I feel his hand grab me on my shoulder, his other hand landing on my mouth to stop me from screaming. I start shaking literally, and tears start to stream down my face. His face comes closer to my neck, his body is against mine as he holds me down making sure I go nowhere.

CHAPTER 36

ALU

"Shh.., I won't hurt you. I just want to talk," he says trying to calm me down.

I struggle in his hold but get nowhere.

"I am going to let go of your mouth, but don't scream, Sthandwa Sam I just want to talk," he says as he bends a little, his face is now in my view, his eyes pleading.

"Will you scream?" He asks me.

I shake my head in response. He lets go of my mouth and looks at me. He adjust me into a sitting position properly on the floor.

"Why did you run out on Friday?" He asks.

"Because you had a gun, I don't want to die, not this Young," I say starting to panic, the thought still frightening.

"So you see a gun and immediately think of me killing you? Is that how you see me, as an animal who would kill a woman?" He asks as he sinks further on the floor.

"What would you think if your man storms out angry and comes back hours later drunk and looking like a pissed demon with a gun behind his back?" I say.

"That gun is not mine, it was not even loaded but you would have known if you trusted me as your man, but instead you assumed the worst of me. Why did you assume that I am a killer? Is it because I am Zulu? Because if that's the stereotype you are going with, I guess in your mind I am violent, go around pointing guns on people's heads." He says looking at me. His jaw is ticking.

He breathes heavily.

"I am not a killer and I will never be, that gun belongs to my friend, I only took it because he got into a fight, so he wanted to use the gun. I

had to take it from him. I took the gun and left him with the bullets," he says.

"Why are you here then, do you want to hurt me more?" I ask.

"Don't be stupid, how can I hurt you when I love you?" He asks.

"Then leave, leave my house, "I say louder.

"I am not going anywhere, not when you ran away from me, not when you see me as a killer. I came with my bag. I will stay here until we fix our issues. I am not giving up on us or you." he says as he stands up, he grabs his bag and heads to the bedroom.

I head to the door and try the lock, the door is locked and he took the key. My phone is nowhere to be found. He comes back settling on the couch next to me.

"Hauw, can you stop being crazy, how can I kill you?" He takes the remote and starts watching soccer as if nothing happened.

If he thinks I am joking he has another thing coming, he will leave.

THILI

My cousin called me, she said she is coming over tomorrow after work to see me. She ordered me to buy some of her favourite products to cook. I will go to the mall tomorrow after work. She is a good cook, but even though she cooks better, I still prefer Alu's eggs and pap menu. Who knew I would love such a meal for dinner. Let me drive to the garage and buy some takeaways.

When I get to the garage I take what I want and on my way to the counter a box full of sim cards grabs my attention.

" My man, are these sim cards Ricard?" I ask.

"Yes, and they are free" the guy selling says.

I take one SIM card.

Maybe she will pick up. I also buy R29 airtime.

When I get home I remove my sim card and insert the new sim card from the garage and I get a bunch of messages, with the cell number and some service provider messages. I recharge the Airtime.

I dial her numbers and it rings.

I take a deep breath as it rings, then it drops.

I call again and it rings, I just need to know that she is fine. It goes through but she is quiet. Oh thank God she answered.

"Hello? "I say, relieved that it went through.

"Yebo, can we help you bhuti? Why are you calling my wife at this time?" A deep voice says in Zulu, with arrogance.

It must be that mother fucker she was with on that gala dinner night. The bastard, why is he answering her phone? Now that I have his face in

my mind anger brews in me. I never liked that fool.

" Can I speak to the owner of the phone," I bark back, I will not back down on this. He sounds like the controlling type.

"Please don't call my woman again," he says then drops the call.

I call again pissed, but the call is dropped.

I call again and it goes to voicemail. Damn it, I should have insisted that she comes back here, where will I start looking for her. Is she fine where she is, and why is he answering her phone? I pace around the house frustrated, a message pops on my phone, it's her. I open it.

"I don't appreciate you calling me at this time, it's disrespectful to my man, we are trying to sleep. Don't call this number again," Alu.

My heart almost drops to the floor, My chest becomes very tight and furry rises in me. Just like that? I guess she is fine now and doesn't need me anymore. I dial her number but the phone is off this time.

I am sad and furious at the same time.

I am a sad that I hoped too much.

"I am sorry for trying to check up on you after what you went through. Don't worry I won't bother you anymore," - sent.

She will see it whenever she switches her phone on. I remove the Sim card, throw it in the bin and insert my old sim card. I am angry, my breathing is laboured from the anger that is brewing inside me. Maybe it's time I stop trying, for my heart's sake. I am tired of fighting. I admit defeat.

I go to bed, I lay on my back, staring into the ceiling, contemplating what my life will be onwards without the woman that I truly love.

ALU

I wake, and he is already up, cooking, I guess because it smells nice. I lost it last night when he snatched my phone and answered it. The nerve he has. I just found myself shouting in my own mother tongue as he kept on pressing my phone like it was his. He later switched it off and handed it to me. He slept on the couch, he knows that he is unwanted but he is still forcing himself here.

After I finish taking a bath, I take my bag and phone to leave for work.

" Mami, breakfast is ready," he says all smiles.

"Leave my house. When I come back you must be gone or I go to the police," I say as I pass him, heading to the door. He grabs my hand, pulling me towards him. He grabs my waist and kisses my lips with a smug, letting me go after I push him away from me.

" I love you more when you are mad. My Venda princes," he says with a smug.

I get annoyed and grab my key behind the door and leave.

My day gets even worse when I get to work. The HR says they won't renew my contract for now, so at the end of this month I will be unemployed, part of the statistics. They say the budget has not yet been approved, hopefully as time goes it will be and probably they will call me. I just want to cry. I need to talk to someone. I search my bag for my phone. I even forgot that it was off.

When I switch it on a message pops up.

"I am sorry for trying to check up on you after what you went through. Don't worry I won't bother you anymore,"

I don't know this number, but my heart kicks hard as I read this. The message was sent last night. Was it him who called yesterday? This can only be Thili. I dial the number but it goes to voicemail. I dial Thili's actual numbers and the phone goes to voicemail.

My heart sinks as the thought that he thinks I sent the message cross my mind.

When I knock off, I catch a taxi to Pretoria west. If he is not answering my phone then I will go to him. I need him to know that I did not send that message. I just hope I remember his place. When he drove here that day it was dark. Maybe if I talk to him about everything he will help me out.

I breath in and out before knocking.

The door opens and a tall lady in shorts and a crop top opens the door.

"Hi," the tall lady says.

I open my mouth, still gathering words to say and close my mouth again, looking at her.

Am I lost? This is the right place. Who is this woman? Looking like she owns this place?

"Are you looking for Thili?" She asks as she asses my form. Her voice is too energetic.

I swallow, even when there is nothing to swallow in my mouth.

" No, I have the wrong place." I say as I turn back.

Why did I just come here? Of Course he has moved on, what were you expecting?

THILI

I can never say no to Thendo, she loves ordering me around. I have bought so many unnecessary things just because she said she needs them. Out of all my cousins, she is my favourite. We get along. When I come back from the shop she has already made herself home.

"I see, you are already owning my place," I say as I shake my head as I look at her opening and closing my cupboards.

"Yes, I am the boss. There are was some cute girl who came by, but I think she was lost," she says.

"Did she tell you her name?" I ask

"No, she barely said a word," she says.

"Okay, enough, let me spoil my cousin. Look at you, you are so thin," she adds.

Here she goes with her craziness.

I need this though, it will help me heal from my heart aches. I unlock my phone and there are missed calls from Alu. Is she testing me?

I try to call back but I am still blocked. Why did she call me after telling me not to call her again? Maybe she wants to emphasise how she doesn't want me. My heart still ache but my cousin's presence gives me some comfort.

CHAPTER 37

ALU

I sit on the bench, waiting for my turn. This place is open, how are we supposed to talk openly in here with everyone else looking at you?
“Next!” the female officer says.

The woman wearing a red scarf covering her face in front of me approaches the officer.

Her face has been battered, I saw her broken lip when she was coughing, I wonder what happened to her.

“How, can we help you ma’am?” the officer asks.

The woman speaks, but I can’t hear what she is saying, she is speaking softly.

“Tjo, let me see, so your man did this to you? Captain, we have a domestic violence case this side. You need to come and take a statement,” she says.

“Tjo, leshwelang basadi (What are you dying for woman)? Yona voroso fela, oli montle so! (Is it the sausage, when you are this beautiful?)” she adds.

This is not okay, every one sitting on the bench starts whispering amongst themselves.

The woman leaves with the other male officer.

“For sure, she provoked him, basadi ba tena sometimes (Women are troublesome sometimes). Our poor brothers end up in jail for things they didn’t do,” she says to the other officer who is busy certifying documents, as she checks her phone.

“Next,” she says.

“Hau! Ausi, I said next. Are you here to get help or you just want to warm up the bench?” she asks as she eyes me suspiciously.

I didn’t realise that I was next, this officer is something else. I don’t feel comfortable after what she did to that poor woman, now everyone here knows her business.

“Hau, sesi wee, your problems are big neh?” she says as she asses me.

I stand up and leave, this was a mistake.

“La bona, kausane otlo bowa bamu papatlile (You see, tomorrow she will come back when

they have beaten her up),” I hear her say as I leave.

Maybe I am just over reacting, what if I ruin his career because of one silly misunderstanding, I mean, he didn’t point the gun on my head. I just saw the gun and panicked.

When I get to my place he is still there, he is wearing blue shorts, a black vest and he is cooking. He must have fetched more clothes after work.

“Why are you still here? I told you to leave my place,” I say, annoyed by his presence.

“Stop being like this, I thought your madness would stop. Are you on your period?” he says as he continues to stir the beef stew.

“I went to the police station, it’s only a matter of time before police come and fetch you here,” I say, I have enough stress to deal with.

“Let them come, they will find me here. I don’t need to run away from police. Now can I cook for you in peace? Since you are adamant on being crazy,” he says.

He turns to the sink to wash his hands.

“Ngi fela ukuba um-Zulu mina la (I am only dying for being Zulu here,). That is why you see me holding a gun and all you see is me killing you,” he says as he continues to wash his hands.

“If you are who you say you are, then respect me and leave my place,” I say.

“Don’t get me wrong, I do respect you, sthandwa sam, but I don’t respect the fact that you want to end our relationship based on your assumptions and not facts. You are judging me based on my past mistakes and that is not fair,” he says.

Zulu man are stubborn, I settle on the couch and switch on the tv.

He looks at me and smile, why is he smiling, whom is he smiling with?

His face even annoys me, I stand up and switch off the kitchen lights and the sitting area light, now it's dark and only the tv lighting up the sitting area.

Let's see how he will see the damn stew that he is busy cooking in my kitchen with my pots.

He laughs.

“Yes, periods, my gender is in trouble, I feel for my brothers,” I hear him says, then he lights his torch on his phone as he stirs.

I increase the volume of the tv and he laughs.

I know I am taking a risk with my life but his friend vouched for him. He said the gun was his and not Zweli's. He said Zweli took it after he got into a fight with another guy at the club. So I

took him back, He has moved out of my place, so now I can breathe without him around.

I am now part of the unemployed statistics, painful right?

He has been supportive through out, I never thought I would struggle for a job since I went to school, but I guess I was wrong. I am happy for my sister though, she finally got the job in Bloemfontein.

My mom and sister are going to be helping me with money for rent.

This fridge is full of alcohol and no sweet stuff. I want some ice cream; I bend over a little to assess the small container, when I feel him behind me. I stand straight and his hands snake around my waist.

"Hi sthandwa, u muhle mama, (Hi my love, you are beautiful," he says as he runs his nose on my

neck inhaling my scent. He slips his hand in my skirt and I close my eyes trying to bear his touch. I feel weird, I can't do this, I turn around to look at him causing him to remove his hand from my skirt. Before I can utter any word he connects our lips, grabbing my ass to bring me closer to him. He is kissing me and groaning while I just lay there waiting for everything to stop. He continues until I can take no more.

"Babe, not now. Can we take a break from sex please," I say as I break our kiss.

His eyes open wide in shock. He is still in the zone and his eyes are red.

"What do you mean take a break from sex?" he asks in horror.

I walk to the couch and he follows behind me settling next to me.

"I just, want..." I am stammering. I am not sure what excuse to give. I need to think fast, I just don't want sex. I want to breath from sex.

"I want to save myself for marriage," That's the only excuse I think of, hoping that this will shut him up.

He looks at me, his expression has changed and his jaw is ticking. He brushes his thighs as he looks up and closes his eyes. His hands form a fist on top of his thighs. He breathes in then looks down. After a few seconds he stands and head to the bedroom without saying anything.

What is he thinking, what is he going to do? He looked so pissed off with me. Am I going to get a beating? I sit in silence as I prepare myself for whatever that is coming my way. He comes back now changed to his shorts and vest. He grabs a beer in the fridge and sits next to me.

"We are getting married, tell your family that my uncles are coming to see your family in in two weeks." He says as he gulps his beer like water.

I choke on my own saliva. What does he mean we are getting married?

"What?" I ask shocked.

"Ungi zwile, abo Malume bami bazoza kini bazo kuxela(You heard me, my uncles are coming to ask for your hand in marriage), we are getting married," He says.

"Don't I have a say? What if I don't want to get married?" I ask.

"How! Njani? Kanti si jolelani la? (How can that be, what are we dating for here?)" He says looking at me as if I am acting strange.

"I mean, we don't know each other very well, we hardly have a full year dating," I say.

" Hai, unga wari (Don't worry). You have all the days before our wedding to know me. You can even ask my sister, Dudu everything you want to know about me," he says confidently.

"But, I am not ready for marriage," I object.

"Who said a woman must be ready? When the man is ready the woman must also be ready, beside sthandwa sam this a good time for us to get married while you still have time. When you

have a job it will be difficult and besides, this is a good opportunity for me to take care of you since you refuse to move in with me now that you have no job," he says and plants a kiss on my lips and stands. He goes to the kitchen.

This conversation is not over, I am not getting married. I mean I am still young, unemployed and I am not ready.

CHAPTER 38

ALU

"This is juicier than I ever thought, how does he drop such a bomb on you like that?" he asks as he sits on the kitchen counter.

“He is unbelievable, he has been planning this for the whole month, my sister told me that he asked her to help her out and she agreed,” I say, annoyed as I drink my juice.

“You are so lucky, every man wants to marry you, I can’t keep a man to even save my life and here you are with marriage proposals left- right and centre,” he says as he laughs.

“Tumi stop it, marriage is a big step, why can’t we just date for now? Why does he want to complicate things with marriage? I mean I am still getting to know him,” I say.

“Haha, isn’t the reason we all date for marriage?” he says.

“You are starting to sound just like him,” I say.

“So, what are you going to do this time? At least now you know, he didn’t drop the surprise bomb on you like Thili did,” he says.

“It makes no difference, I will make him see reasons. Where will we find money for the wedding?” I say.

“I must also come see your grandmother in Limpopo, maybe I will get the kind of luck you have, people and their grandmothers in Limpopo,” he says, and we all burst in laughter.

“What grandmother? this is not a good thing. You are supposed to be helping me out, not encouraging this,” I say.

“ But maybe this is not a bad thing, if you love him what difference does it make if you get married sooner rather than latter? Do you know how many women out there wish their boyfriends can marry them but they are not getting that? Such luck doesn’t come very often,” he says.

Would we be having a different conversation if he knew that he once raised his hand on me?

“Then, what if the person has done bad things in the past, do you still give the person a benefit of the doubt?” I ask.

“Let he who has no sin cast the first stone,” he says to me. I can’t believe he is quoting the bible to me.

But he is right, even I have my own sins, and if Zweli was to find out, it would change the way he sees me.

I settle on the couch as I scroll between channels.

“Hi, sthandwa sam,” he says as he gives me a kiss.

“Hi, we need to talk about the marriage thing,” I say immediately.

“Oh, about that, don't worry, my sister Dudu is coming with my uncles, so anything you want to

know about me you can ask her,” he says, assessing my face looking for a reaction.

I am not going to entertain this, how does one decide to get married without the permission of the other.

I stand up and take my bag and phone.

“Good night, I will call you when I get home,” I say as I turn to leave.

“So you are not staying?” he asks as he searches for food in the fridge.

“No, I need my bed today, don't worry I will get a taxi, it's still early,” I say.

“Okay,” he says.

Okay, so that is all he is going to say to me? Okay? I thought he was going to talk me out of leaving but its okay! I am out of here.

One month later.....

Did I not sit there and look at my family and agree that I know Zweli's family and why they were at my home? Yes I did!

I sat there and told my uncle that I wanted to be his bride. I smiled along as I stole some glance at them. I said yes again when my uncle repeated his question incase I didn't understand him. Why didn't I say no? I don't know!

Maybe it was because I don't know what the future holds for me, I don't know if there is someone out there who will offer me love or make me feel loved like he has tried to. I am scared of being rejected by the next person or being less loved, I am scared that maybe this is the last chance I will ever find at love again.

Maybe I said yes because I couldn't bear the thought of disappointing Zweli and my family for the second time. Maybe it's because I sat down and counted my own sins and figured if I can love myself with all the wrongs I have done, maybe he deserves another chance. Or maybe I

am just naïve and trying to make excuses to myself and for everyone in my life, Maybe I refuse to see what is right in front of me.

Everything went well, my family has given his family a date to come and proceed with the negotiations. So I am a makoti in the process, I have met his uncles and they were happy to meet me. I thought they were going to run away after the whole process but he is still here. Today I am meeting his sister. I sometimes get excited then come back to my senses and remember that everything is going too fast, but who am I kidding, we grow very fast. I almost said no, but everyone was so excited and I didnt want to be a disappointment again, my sister was super excited, she even helped with the cooking on that day. I will learn to live the life that I am choosing, I will be happy, at least I must try.

This is so weird; his sister has been looking at me then her food simultaneously. What am I supposed to say to her?

"So you say you love my brother?" she asks pointing at me with her fork.

I shift on my chair and clear my throat as I pick up the fork to eat my chips.

"He said he loves me then I said yes," I say. Does that sound weird? How does she want me to respond?

"You better be sure that you love him because once you marry him, you cannot leave him," she says looking down at her food.

What does she mean I can't leave him? I guess she means no divorce.

"So what type of a person is he?" I ask. Hoping with all that is within me that she will be honest with me.

"He is just the way you see him, I mean he is human and he told me he loves you. He loves too

much," I am not sure if this is filling the holes I have about Zweli. I need to do something that will make her talk, Tumi can help. He always knows how to make me talk.

My friend and I have a child today, would you like to join us? We can get to know each other well" I say as I force a weird smile.

"If there is meat, yebo, I am in," she says.

I immediately text Tumi.

'Friend, I have a situation. I need some information, but mzala won't talk, I need you to crack this one. I need this one to spill all the beans.' sent

'leave, that to me, the party is at my place," he texts back.

This idiot is not asking what I want. He is busy asking about how Zweli's body was when he was growing up, and he is also tipsy together with my

soon to be sister in law. He was supposed to do one simple thing, ask about Zweli and any secret he might have.

"The alcohol is almost out, let me go across the street to get some, I also need some smoke," he says as he jumps over Dudu who is seating on the floor leaning against the couch. There he goes! He has an assignment here. I have been listening to them talk loudly above me as if I am not around. Few minutes after Tumi has left, Dudu looks at me and smiles. She is drunk so I smile back.

"Shame, I pity you. Enjoy the freedom while it last," she says and her words are like a razor cutting deep through my heart.

"What, do you mean?" I ask confused and feeling unsettled.

She smiles again and tip the bottle in her mouth.

"I mean married woman don't have freedom," she continues.

"So, how is he?" I ask.

"He is just like our father, but maybe he can be saved," she says as she sips her drink, spilling some in the process.

"Can you speak things which makes, sense?" I say, starting to get frustrated.

"You make him a better person, he went through a lot, he almost lost himself and...,-I don't blame him though," she says.

"What did he do, what did your father do to him? What happened to his previous girl friend?" I ask all at once, hoping to get some information. I am desperate, I have so many questions.

"Things just didn't work out with that girl, the poor girl became....," before she can finish Tumi comes in.

My stomach is performing flips, I feel nauseous.

"Yes, more alcohol, lets drink to this new union," she says.

I want to kill Tumi, I was about to get her talking things that finally make sense. I give her a death stare.

“Did you get anything from her?” he whispers into my ears.

“No thanks to you,” I say as I grab a bottle of savannah from his hand. If you can't beat them, join them.

It looks like my soon to be official sister in law is a drunk.

She is busy dancing for us.

“Babe, have you moved on from your past?” he asks out of no where as we sit watching Dudu who is sweating as she dances.

“Why are you asking me about that all of a sudden, ofcourse I have moved on, I am getting married, aren't I?” I say.

“I am just asking, its just that, you went through a lot and I don't think you dealt with what

happened properly, one moment you were sad and the next you were just happy,” he says.

“I did move on, it’s just that, I sometimes ... I kind of cheated with Thili this one time, I feel bad about it already, so don’t judge me,” I say embarrassed.

His eyes opens wide in shock. He clears his throat.

“There is nothing to be embarrassed about, as far as I am concerned you are only human. But I am just afraid that there is still this hold between you and your past and it worries me when I think that you are about to jump into marriage while your heart is saying a different story,” he says.

“Its just that there is always this spark with Thili that I don’t get with Zweli, Its frustrating. My body just ignites in sparks of flames,” I say.

“ It cant be real, can it? I mean somehow that feeling is bound to disappear,” I say.

“Come here you poor thing, I think maybe you should have told Thili how much he hurt you, you should have screamed at him until you felt fine, but its not too late you can still deal with that,” he says.

“You think so?” I ask as I continue to drink.

“Yes, I attended this workshop and they were talking about such things, they said you can actually write letters to the person who has wronged you and read it out loud to yourself then tear the letter, apparently it helps, you must try that,” he says.

“You know what I do when I want to forget an ex?” he says.

“What do you do?” I ask.

“ I just think of all the times that the sex was bad and I move on,” he says as he winks at me.

I smile at him. He has given me a lot to think about.

He nudges me with his elbow.

"Look at you slowly turning into a drunk, don't get used to it, it will give you wrinkles," he says and we laugh.

We continue to drink and watch Dudu as she dances.

"I am leaving, I need to do something, please make sure that this soon to be drunk sister in law of mine doesn't go anywhere," I say.

"Where are you going?" he asks as he opens his eyes wide.

"I am going to fix my heart," I say as I stand up, staggering now.

"Sit down, you are drunk," he says.

"Try stopping me and see what happens to you, I need this, I need to do what I am going to do. I need to get it out of my chest, I need to exhale without feeling any stinging pain in my heart. I need to think clearly but I can't if my heart is still holding on to my past pains," I say.

" Can I have R100 please?" I ask and he gives me.

"Okay, Maya Angelou, just come back without a scratch, I don't want your man attacking me, you know how to pick them psycho," I pinch his hand, as I put the bank note behind my phone pouch together with the R20 I had and grab my half full savannah bottle. I need to do this for myself.

"Short left!" I say. That was a quick ride.

By the time the driver pulls over I am done drinking, I open the door, tossing the bottle out first. The lady sitting next to the window looks at me with judging eyes.

"Sesi (Sister), are you going to be fine?" the driver asks.

"Yes, I am super fine," I say and he drives off.

I stagger on in the slightly lighted area. My mother would faint if she sees me like this. I try

to walk up straight when I think of her finding out about me being drunk but it's not helping.

By the time I get to the door, I have prepared myself enough, I am here to cough up all my pains with no mercy, I need to get all the anger and pain out. Alcohol is my back up. I brace myself as I hold onto the frame for some balance and use my right hand to knock.

CHAPTER 39

ALU

He is standing at the door, his head bows when he realises that it is me at the door. His eyes are

red. Was he crying? All the energy that I had to insult him evaporates immediately.

Why would he cry, what's wrong with him? I lift my hand to touch his face pushing his chin up. I have seen him cry but this is different.

His eyes look hollow and sad. He looks empty and frustrated. I take a hold of his hand and I feel his whole body vibrating. What is this, why is he like this? I push my way into the door and close it behind me and lead him to the couch, I kneel in front of him as he sits on the couch and look up at him.

“What is wrong, what happened?” I ask, wondering what it is that left him in such a state. It cannot be because of me, can it?

He sits still and looks at me, I see his eyes become more red.

“Come on, talk to me, what is wrong?” I ask, willing him to talk to me. As much as I had thousand words to tell this man off, now I care. He was there for me when I needed him. My

heart pains from the thought that I do not know what it is that is eating him up.

“He is gone,” that's all he manages to say.

“What do you mean he is gone? Who is gone?” I ask.

He starts shaking again, a tear drops onto his thigh. I reach out and rub some comfort on his thigh.

“Who is gone, come on tell me what's wrong baby,” I say, I realising that I just called him baby, but right now I need to know what is it that has shaken this man to such a state.

“It's my father Alu, he had a stroke and passed on,” he says as he sinks to the floor next to me. I get closer to him and let him bury his head on my neck. This is foreign, I have never given a man such comfort. He lets it all out. I never got the chance to know his father but I know from the way he used to talk about him that he loved him. He loved his father so much. I don't know where I was going with my drunk ass. After a while

when he has calmed down, he looks at me and his eyes are still red.

“I'm sorry you had to see me in such a state. When you came in I had just received the news. I am not a cry baby,” he says trying to make me smile and himself too.

“Stop that, you know you can be real with me. I know the pain of losing a parent or not having one. I never had the chance to lay my eyes on my father,” why am I being emotional all of a sudden.

“Oh, come here,” he says as he pulls me closer to him for a big cuddle.

"Have you eaten?" he asks.

I shake my head in response, If I was standing, I would be on the floor by now.

He stands up without saying anything and heads to the kitchen. I hear the microwave sound and after some few minutes he comes back with a tray of food. There is chicken drumsticks on one

plate and pap on the other plate. He also brought some sweet chilli sauce, my favourite. He goes back to the kitchen and comes back with a wet cloth and hands it to me to wipe my hands as he sits down on the floor next to me. I am so hungry, in my project of drinking alcohol with Tumi trying to fish some information from Dudu I forgot to eat. I place my hand on the pap and it's cold, just the way I like it. He remembers that's why he didn't warm it up, he only warmed the chicken and gravy.

I dig in and in between my chewing I notice him looking at me. I miss this, Zweli hardly ever share the same plate with me. He said he can't tolerate the way I eat. He loves his food hot and in a specific way, where's I love mine cold or just warm.

"You were drinking!" he says as a matter of fact.

I keep quiet and continue to dig in. Today I am eating like a man. This alcohol I was drinking has

made me hungry, so I am eating for all those days I didn't eat.

He goes back to his food. He has dished up three pieces each and today I am not complaining like I would normally do. This Venda man here loves his meat, he never eats less than two pieces of meat.

"Where is your girlfriend?" I ask him as I look around.

He laughs. Oh he finds this funny.

"What girlfriend?" He asks.

"The one that was here in shorts a month back," I say as I crank my nose in disgust.

"She is not my girlfriend, she is my cousin. She did say someone came though, so it was you?"

He asks.

"Kind of," I say.

He looks at me and smile.

" I hate it when you drink," he says.

"Keep on hating," I say scornfully.

When I am full I lean against the couch and lick the sauce off my fingers. He hasn't eaten that much and now that I am full and looking at him and our plate I feel embarrassed that my drunk ass was so much focused on herself instead of talking him into eating. Before I can say anything he hands me the cloth and takes the tray back to the kitchen, I throw him the cloth and he smiles.

Oh, there is some sauce on my shirt, I try to scoop it with my finger and lick it but somehow, some bit's land on my eye.

"auw,auw...., please bring me some warm water, ouch!" I say to him. I rub my eye with the finger that I used to scoop the sauce by mistake. He comes running with a glass of water. He pours some on his hand.

"Bend your head a little," he says

I try to do as I am told, laying my head on the couch a little.

When the water hits my face, I jump up, causing him to spill the whole glass on my chest.

" I said warm water, you idiot," I scream.

"Cold water works well than warm water," he says.

I try to stand but it's difficult. I think my legs are now registering that I am drunk. How did I get here like this?

"Give me your shirt," I say once I manage to stand up.

He looks at me in horror.

"What? I can't stay in a wet shirt, its cold and I will get sick," I say looking at him.

He rushes to the bedroom and comes back with a blue shirt. I remove mine and toss it on the couch and put on the one he gave me.

"Where is my bag I need to leave," I say looking around for my bag.

"No ways, you are not leaving here like this, You were drinking, how did you even manage to get

here when you are like this?" he says ,his voice coming alive now.

"And who are you to tell me what to do and what not to do?" I ask

" I am..., I am...I am your friend," he says.

I laugh out loud prompting him to raise his eyebrows.

"Please stay, you will sleep in my bed and I will sleep here on the couch. If anything happens to you, I won't be able to forgive myself," he says, now blocking my way.

"Give me my bag, I am leaving," I say taking my wet shirt from the couch and my phone.

"That's it! You didn't even have a bag when you came here. You had only your phone and a R100 note behind your phone pouch. Now sit your ass down," he says harshly.

He walks to the door and locks the door.

" It's not safe for you to travel at night like this, besides it's going to rain soon. I promise I won't

bite. Now stop being stubborn and do as you are told," he says sitting on the couch.

I smile. Ladies and gentleman there is a smile on my face after that harsh call off and I also felt something inside move.

" Now, what did you want to tell me?" He asks as he directs me to the couch and I place my wet shirt and phone on the table.

All that I wanted to get off my chest is gone, it's all gone. I have no energy to fight with him. Not when he is going through a lot.

"Nothing, it's not important," I say.

"There is no such, you looked pretty determined when you came in earlier, you can't travel this late, this drunk just to have nothing to say" he says.

"It's nothing I promise, I am going to bed, you can sleep on the other side, it's fine but keep to your lane," I say as I stand and stagger all the way to his bedroom. I am lucky I made it here,

how did I climb down the stairs at my place? I am so drunk, and right now my head feels light. If I wanted to laugh it would be so damn easy, I love this high feeling.

I remove my leggings and leave his oversized shirt on and climb in bed. It starts pouring with thunders. I even forgot my phone somewhere in the sitting room. I will find it as soon as I wake up.

"Is it safe for me to enter?" He asks from outside the door.

"Yep," I respond.

He comes in and later on I hear the bed sink lower. He makes sure that we don't touch. I try to close my eyes but my drunk mind is over working.

"Are you still crying?" I ask, trying to make conversation.

"No," he says.

"Men don't cry," he adds.

I respond with a laughter. I hear him turn to my side to look at me.

I also turn to his side and look at him still laughing. He pinches my nose and I smile.

"Thank you," he says now seriously looking at me with sad eyes.

Why is he thanking me? The only thing I did was eat his food, wear his shirt and take half of his bed. My hand lands gently on his face and he closes his eyes as he leans further into my warm palm.

"You don't need to thank me," I say and he opens his eyes and smiles at me, and there he is.

CHAPTER 40

ALU

This right here is the man that I fell in love with. This is him right here staring at me with a smile. I inch closer to his face and my lips brush over his. He brushed his teeth, I can smell the toothpaste from his breath. I kiss him, slowly closing my eyes. He returns the kiss and it's out of this world. He tastes good, his saliva tastes good, his tongue too. I slip my hand under the blankets and slip my hand in his shorts. He is not wearing any shirt, just his short. As soon as my hand finds what it is looking for, he disconnects our mouth and his eyes open wider as he looks at me.

"No, let's not do this," he says breathing fast.

"Why?" I ask.

I am such a whore for asking that but once you are hot you are hot and need relief and if you were me sharing a bed with this man you would ask why if he told you no to sex.

"Because you are drunk. I don't want to take advantage of you," he says looking at me.

I know he wants me so bad, so why is he trying to resist. Maybe this will actually make me forget about him. Maybe if we have sex and I don't enjoy it as Tumi said, I will finally forget about him. I know I am drunk but I know what I am asking for. I want to end it once and for all. It can't be all bliss and sparkly. Maybe today the sex will be bad and I will finally move on and forget about him. There can't be anything special about him, can there be?

"Don't worry, I am the one who is taking advantage of you," I say as I climb on top of him. The itch between my legs needs some relief.

I bend and capture his lips as I grind on top of him In between our kissing. He groans now and again. He removes my shirt and our body comes skin to skin and his warm body ignites some sparks in me. I sit up on top of him and he slips

his fingers on my panties waistband and tries to remove them.

"Ass up," he says as he instructs me so that he can remove them.

When he is done I don't give him a chance to remove his shorts. I am the one driving this plain today. I slip the waistband of his shorts down revealing. Yes, it's still there and wanting. He is twitching. I lift my ass up and slide down on him. I hear him hiss a little. I don't let him go all the way in, so I pause in the air taking him half an inch. He is looking at me with shock. I smile down at him wickedly and twerk a little on top of him, making sure that I don't go all down on him. He holds on to my waist tight as he groans and closes his eyes.

"Remove your hands from my waist! I know what I am doing. I don't need a conductor. So please don't ruin my party," I say looking at him annoyed.

I slide further down, holding onto his chest as he lies down flat.

"Oh..., shit Alu...ah..." he says, he looks like he is about to have a stroke.

I bend my body over his, ass out and hold his hands above his head leaning my body to shadow his.

My lady's tricks have never disappointed me but today my body is doing its own thing, he is busy groaning in pleasure. I think I am busy dancing shibelani (Tsonga dance move) on top of him instead of twirling, I need to find a way to get off quick, I am tired and this is about me not him. I release his hands.

" Lean up and hold me tight. Don't let go till I do or I say you can let go," I order him.

He holds me the right way, in a hug leaving little space. I start to move in circular motions, this feels so good. I look up as I enjoy the sensation.

"Shit, what are you doing?" I ask as he lets go of me and holds my waist directing me up and down on top of him.

I know what he is trying to do, I won't let him win today, I will beat the master at his own game. I close my eyes and slip my hand to my clitoris and rub gently, then it hits me. My toes curls and a heatwave washes over my body and I pause moving and fall on the bed beside him, my hands pausing also. That was not how I wanted it but at least I came. My eyes are heavy; I close my eyes.

"Babe, I didn't come, can we finish this," he says, trying to caress me.

First of all who is he calling babe? And secondly who said he was supposed to come?

"Go to sleep. I am tired," I say as I sink into sleep before he mumbles something inaudible.

Why is Zweli holding me so tight like I am going to run away? And why is he not wearing anything. He always sleeps in his pyjamas trouser. I try to detach him from me but it's when he grumbles on his sleep that I realise it's actually Thili's naked body that I am literally attached to like a super glue. His head moves closer to my neck and when his hot breath hits my neck it sends sensation down my core. What did I do last night? What did I say? How did I end up in his bed?

I close my eyes and try to remember what happened. I remember coming in, he cried last night. We ate meat and I said he could share the bed with me. Oh my God I, I.., Before I can actually fathom all my deeds, he steers awake.

"Morning, baby girl," he says as he sinks his face into my neck from behind me. He kisses me and I look at him with wide eyes. He swings his waist towards me and I feel his arousal nudging my back.

"You owe me, last night you zoned out before you could finish what you started," he says as he tries to part my thighs. I roll myself out of bed landing on the floor. Now I remember everything. How I was confidently fumbling on top of him last night. I need to get out of this place. Oh my God, I did this again. I betrayed Zweli. I grab my leggings and wear them hurriedly. I am not even wearing any underwear; I don't even remember where they are. I locate my shirt on top of a chair. It is now dry. It has stopped raining but it's still cloudy and promises rain.

"Hey, where are you going? Are you not going to have breakfast and take a bath at least?" he asks as he goes into panic mode.

"No, I need to go. I still have a wedding to plan," I say harshly.

Telling that to my loose ass too. After I locate my pumps I run to the sitting room and start searching for my phone.

" You what?" he asks shocked.

"I am getting married okay," I say.

"With him?" he says as he now focuses on me.

"He is going to finish up the lobola and we get married at church and then we have our traditional wedding at KZN," I say.

He sits and buries his head in his hands.

" Do you love him?" He asks his head still in his hands.

"What do you think? Do people marry for love? He has never cheated on me," I say.

Why am I getting angry all over again?

He sighs and rubs his forehead.

"Okay, let me drive you home then," he says.

"No, I will catch a taxi," I say as I work fast on fixing my head.

I open the door and look at him one last time.

"I hope it will be enough for your ride," he says handing me R200.

" I am sorry about your father," I say as I walk out and close the door.

.....

When I get home, my phone has already switched off. I plug it into the charger. I head into my blankets and sleep. I can't believe this. What was I hoping to prove by sleeping with him? I thought I would be able to get him off my system. I still smell of him. I don't want to take a bath; I want to smell him on me. All this wedding thing is stressing me. How does one plan a wedding at such a short notice?

The day is drawing closer. When I think about it too much I get panic attacks. It feels like the wrong thing to do sometimes. I was starting to feel at ease until I spoke to his sister Dudu, I feel worse now. I feel like she is hiding something from me. How does he expect me to believe his sister? I mean it's his sister we are talking about.

She is bound to hide all his shady business if there are any. She is hiding something from me, him too. The thing she said about him being like his father. Why does she think I can save him? how do I save him?

“You make him a better person, he went through a lot, he almost lost himself,” her words repeat in my mind.

What happened to him? maybe he is not bad, maybe he just needs more love from me. Maybe it is not a bad thing that I am marrying him.

CHAPTER 41

ALU

"Are you ready to get married next month?"

I gulp the rest of the Savannah at a go and smile nervously at him. Am I ready to get married? am I? Tumi looks at me with concern in his eyes.

"Baby girl are you okay?" he asks.

"Don't call me that!" I say harshly than I intended.

"Why?" he asks confused.

"Because you know who calls me that and I am not supposed to be thinking about him a month before my wedding," I say as I open my second bottle. Tumi has taught me well, I even know how to open the bottle cap using my teeth. I am a pro at this.

" But love, are you sure you want to get married and by this man? Because once you get in there is no turning back. So what I am asking you is, can you live with him for the rest of your life and live a happy life under any circumstances that life will throw at you? Is your heart not having

doubts?" he asks, his eyes wide now as if looking for answers in my eyes.

Is my heart fully decided? Is it content with what I am about to do? Everything happened so fast, but Zweli has been a darling throughout.

"I am not sure; my heart won't forget Thili. Every time I think of him the fact that we are no longer together pains me. The fact that he doesn't know how much he has hurt me hurts me and the fact that I still love him stings and pains me even deeper. I don't know what to do" I say looking at him with wide eyes expecting answers from him.

He swallows hard.

" I am sorry baby girl I don't have all the answers to your questions and problems, I wish I had. Venda man must sure know great inyangas, after all, you still love him," he says and gulps his beer getting off the counter heading to the fridge to get more alcohol.

"Am I making a mistake here?" I ask Tumi.

He rubs my hands and sits down on the floor next to the counter with me.

"Love, I can't give you the answers, it's only you who knows what you want and who you want. You need to figure yourself out. You cannot lie to yourself. You have the answer." he says squeezing my hand.

I sigh.

"Just drink with me, wine solves everything," he says.

" Not everything. I am not even 25-years old, I am already tying myself to someone who I don't know if I love, I am also unemployed, this is not how I wanted things to be. I wanted to be independent," I say as I take the wine glass from Tumi.

Tumi starts talking about his relationship and work as I listen.

"Okay enough drinking, so I want to go fix myself, I know what to do," I say out of nowhere.

I need to tell him how much he has hurt me and forgive him then move on.

"What are you going to fix?" Tumi asks concern written all over his face.

" I need to fix myself, I think I know how," I say as I press my phone to request for an Uber, then I remember that I don't have the luxury anymore. I need to save. I will just catch a taxi, I hope I won't get lost.

"Okay, anything to fix you up, although I don't see any problem with you. Just don't do anything stupid, and call me when you come back we need to go fitting at three and your sister is already on her way, don't get us into trouble with her, please. You are lucky that your soon to be sister-in-law is also a drunk or else she would have disapproved of you," he says as he looks at me.

Today it wasn't difficult as it is daylight. I think I knocked too hard because my hand is in pain. I move back a little and hold on to the door frame to get my balance back. As I am still rubbing my knuckles the door opens wide and there he is.

What am I going to say? what do u want to say? I have rehearsed so many words on my way here but now I have lost all words.

"You have hurt me," that is what I manage to utter as I push my way through past him.

I hear the door closing behind me and I turn and look at him, my finger now pointing at him.

"You said you loved me and you hurt me. It still hurts but I want to forgive you. Did it give you some satisfaction when you saw me broken?" I am not crying, the alcohol has sunk in and I have the guts now.

"I am sorry," that is what he manages to say as he closes his eyes slowly.

"I am sorry for all that I have put you through, I am sorry for being selfish," he says coming closer to me

"No, you don't get to be sorry. Why are you sorry now? Do you know the pain of sleeping with a broken...?" before I can finish my words his warm lips are on mine and he is breathing hard, his right hand holding my head and the other hand holding onto my waist tightly. I close my eyes as I feel him against me. I smell his scent and it's all soapy, I think he just had a bath. His tongue penetrates my small mouth and our bodies crashes together.

He holds me up against the kitchen counter. His body towering mine, pressed against mine.

"You, feel it too, don't you?" he says in between the kiss, breathing hard on me.

He swings me around to face the counter, while he stands behind me. He is breathing against my neck.

"Ah..," I moan as he plunges deeper into me with his finger.

"I tried to run away from our connection too but I couldn't," he says in my ear.

He removes his fingers and slips my panties to the side entering me from behind. I feel him inch by inch, slowly slipping inside me.

He starts to drive into me

"Why are you marrying him?" he asks as he thrust into me slowly.

"I..I..uhm...ahh...I don't know," I say, my brain has taken leave of absence.

His strokes change and it's different. He is not touching my right spots as usual. He is no longer holding me tight and he knows that I love it and get off easily when he is holding me tight. I pull his hands to direct them around me but he resists. He slips his hand onto my clitoris and starts rubbing.

“Tell me, why are you marrying him?” he asks again.

He is rubbing faster, when I almost reach my peak he goes slower killing the build-up. This is frustrating. I want to come now but he is restraining me.

“He has been so good to me, I don’t want to hurt him,” I say.

He starts to drive into me, increasing the speed and I hear him bark behind me until he can no longer support himself and falls onto me as I balance myself with the kitchen counter. He just came and left me hanging with an itch in between my legs.

"Now we are even," he says in my ears as he slips out of me.

He is angry, why is he angry.

"You are such an idiot. How can you use sex to settle your scores?" I say all emotional as I push

him off me. I want to cry and scream at him for not giving me the relief that I wanted.

"How can you be marrying him?" he says loudly as he pulls his shorts up.

"This is why I am going to marry Zweli and not you. It's because you are just selfish. You only think about yourself," I say, my temper is blowing off the chart.

"This is why I am going to marry a man who..a man who.." I can't finish my words. Why do I always blame Zweli for the same mistake he did, sure he might have a temper but he has been sweet ever since. Fuck this.

I fix my skirt and grab my bag and leave his house.

I get to the road and wait for a taxi. My bag is vibrating.

"Where the hell are you? We are supposed to go fitting its 02:30" he asks.

"Shut up, I am coming," I say rolling my eyes, I am still angry.

"You little whore, were you having sex?" he asks, I am sure his ears have extended. He loves to gossip.

"Is that your way of telling me that you got some?" I ask. He laughs out loud.

"You know I don't shy away from the juicy stuff. I know you girl. Right now from the sound of your voice, I am sure you didn't come, shame poor Zweli, he must be underperforming because of the wedding stress, you must at least come somewhere, so baby are you coming for dress fittings? Your sister will meet us there," he says laughing.

When other people were choosing normal friends why did I chose him?

"Kere baby are you coming?" he says again breaking into a song.

""Voetsek!" I say and I hear him laugh on the other side and I drop the call and get in the taxi that is now standing in front of me. The perks of being broke, I would have taken an Uber if my finances were okay.

One months later

We had to rule out the whole big wedding idea, so we are only doing the matrimony part at a church with less than 100 people, then we head to his home for the "actual wedding" he said.

So we didn't spend a lot of money, he wants to spend an arm and a leg on the honeymoon though. I almost confessed all my misdeeds when he told me about where he plans to take me after the whole coronavirus issue calms.

My dress is beautiful and underneath I am wearing my white sneakers, he insisted.

My bachelor party was wild and ratchet, my sister and Tumi were drunk, my sister in law, how do I say it, she was finished. She showed me some dance moves, I am beginning to like her. We chose to get married at this church that we have never laid foot to, but they were ready to take the money and assist.

I don't know how he did it but he paid for almost everything. My family helped there and there and I made sure that I went for affordable things. He wanted to go all out and I refused and he eventually agreed to go small when he heard about what has been happening with the coronavirus. He wants us to do it in community of property, so I have to change my surname to his when we go sign at home affairs. My parents are booked at the BNB close to the church and some of his family too.

Tumi has been helpful, he has been trying to make everything look perfect. He didn't really understand the sneaker part but he got over it.

CHAPTER 42

ZWELI

EPILOGUE

I Killed her, I killed the only person that would have been my last hope of being a better person. I would have tried with everything in me to protect her, to love her and be better for her. She would have been my princess, the centre of my world.

I look at her; she is still weeping on the floor.

“You killed our child, I hate you,” she says with hate in her eyes still on the floor clutching onto her towel.

I know that we as men act all tough when we cheat but when a women cheats back on us it hits us hard, It changes us. We are not strong enough to handle such things.

I had to witness him, fucking my women, the love of my life. I wanted so much to react differently but I just reacted. My hands just went into action. I just started punching without stopping.

I stand, bleeding where she bite me. I look at her as she continues to cry silently.

“So, you want to kill me? Kill me then, finish me off. You have already done your worst” she says.

I look at her and say nothing.

I am still trying to recover from the revelation that I killed my own child. How did I do that?

How could I do that. How do I kill my own blood.

“I have endured you for a long time Zweli and I can’t anymore,” She says.

I burry my face in my hands. My chest feels so tight, it’s like it wants to burst open. I want to release the pain that I feel inside me. I clutch my hands into a fist.

Why do I always do this, everything is slowly coming back to me. I was so angry and furious at her. I have become like him. I have fought so hard not to be like him but I have become him, I am him, his splitting image.

My father taught me to be a tough man, a man commands respect and it is given to him. A man is above a woman. A man makes orders and the women follows. I tried to be different from him but I always found myself being him in some moments. I saw what his anger did to my mother, it drove her to her grave. She finally

succumbed to her pain, she was always in pain. I had always sworn to myself that I will be different but I am exactly like him.

“Look, this is how you deal with a disrespectful woman,” he would say while he pressed her to the wall....

ALU

“There goes the bride with sneakers underneath,” Tumi says as he finishes tying my shoe laces.

I sit and stare at myself in the mirror, oh, how times have gone by so fast. I look beautiful, the makeup people really did a good job. I smile at my reflection in the mirror.

"My daughter, are you ready?" My mom asks as she lays her hand on my shoulder.

“I think so,” I say as I start to panic.

“You will be fine, if you love him truly then there will be no doubt in your heart about this day, you will see this day as a blessing granted by the lord. Just remember that love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres and it never fails,” she says.

I look at her with a smile, and she looks at me with a sad smile.

“Why are you trying to ruin my reputation? you are ruining the makeup,” Tumi comes in with her drama.

“Let me leave you my children to finish up, I love you my daughter,” she says as she leaves the room.

“I love you too,” I say.

“Am I doing the right thing?” I say that to myself, realising after that I said that too loud for Tumi to hear.

He turns to look at me in shock.

"What? You are asking that now? After all the cows which have been slaughtered, your aunt's are going to murder you if you don't get married today. Especially that one who is always serious like Bruce lee," he says.

"Yes, you are right. I must get married," I say trying to talk myself into relaxing.

I am just a little bit scared like any other bride, I mean I am new at this after all.

He fixes a wayward strand on my face as he shakes his head.

“It’s normal to feel nervous, I think all brides get that, I mean you are attaching yourself to one person for the rest of your life, forsaking others. Look at you, now you are giving me pressure to get married,” he says with a smile on his face.

My best friend is happy for me. His smile turns sad though.

“I wish Tshego was here to see this day, she would have been happy for you too,” he says.

“The cars are ready, let’s go, your husband to be is already waiting for you at church,” my sister says as she comes in rushing.

“Look at you, you are so beautiful, now get up, let me go check if the rest of the crew is ready to leave. You two better get your ass outside,” she says as she leaves the room.

“I think you are going to need your phone for selfies, so put it in your breast, make sure you are armed down there,” he says handing me a box of tampons.

“Already did that,” I say.

I am starting to feel uneasy, it’s getting hot in here. I run past Tumi, heading into the toilet. Shit, shit, my dress! I manage to get the lace out

of the way and throw up in the toilet. Tumi is now behind me.

“What is wrong, what did you eat?” he says behind me.

Before I can answer him, I throw up more as he tries to help me hold my dress.

“No, no, don’t mess up the dress and the makeup, shit!” He says.

After some few minutes we are in front of the mirror as Tumi tries to fix me up again.

“Did you eat anything that upsets your stomach? If I didn’t know any better I would say you are pregnant,” he says pouting as he puts on some finishing powder on my chin.

“I am just nervous, I...I., never mind,” I say.

How do I tell my friend that I am about to marry a man who sometimes scare me. He is all sweet and romantic but scary when angry.

“Love, what is it?” he asks halting the moving make-up brush.

“Zweli, It’s just that he is not that perfect, and I don’t want to judge him because I also have my own faults but he.., he..,” before I can finish Vule comes in.

“Hey, we must leave now. Now people are waiting for us. come on remember were given a time limit,” Vule says as she starts to close windows.

“There you go, you look as good as new, now let’s go before Vule kills us. We will talk after the wedding,” he whispers.

I haven’t seen him but I know he will be looking handsome. Maybe this is really gods plan. He made this day to be this way.

I hold onto my uncle’s hand firmly and wait for my cue. How I would have loved it to be my father walking me down the aisle. This is it, no turning back, today I walk on a new path.

Nguwen' obengimcela kumDali wam
Mangikhuleka ngingedwa Ngicel' uthathe isandla
sami

Unginikuqobo lwakho kuzekube ngunaphakade

Lira's song fills the hall, everyone stands looking
towards our direction and we start to walk.

I know he doesn't get all this white wedding
stuff and that to him it's meaningless but he
wanted to impress me. For him the real wedding
will start when we get to KZN and I am
introduced to his ancestors.

He is wearing a navy blue suite and he looks at
me and smiles. Dudu is standing right next to
him, she is sober, and beautiful. Zweli Zulu, the
man looks handsome, Zulu man are the
Woolworths of South Africa, I tell you. When I
reach him he holds my hand, giving it a squeeze.

“I can’t wait to see what is underneath that veil,” he whispers to me and I smile.

I can’t believe that this day has arrived, Today I will be starting a new life, joining a new family and taking on a new identity. So it all led to this, all the events of my life all lead me to this moment here. The pastor starts to speak, opening his bible to read some scriptures. My aunts look genuinely happy but I am sure it has something to do with the Lobola money that they think they will have a share in. They better not be thinking of milking Zweli dry like I was told they used to do with my father.

All of my aunts are here, wearing their traditional outfits, they are busy whispering amongst each other. My mother is crying, my sister smiling. Well, Tumi is just himself, although he keeps on looking to the door. Is he expecting someone else? I look at him with

questioning eyes and he smiles at me. Who is he expecting?

“I stand here today offering myself to you as your husband, I will love you and protect you. Cherish you and respect you. I will make you feel safe all the time. I love you sthandwa sam. I will forsake others and be fully committed to you,” his vows really gives me a lot to think about.

Protect me, respect me?

“Now its your turn Alu,” the pastor says.

I smile. I look at him and he is excited as he waits for me to say my vows. My stomach is starting to react funny. I open my mouth to try and speak but nothing comes. Why am I forgetting my words?

“I..I..,” I close my eyes slowly to try to calm myself. When I open my eyes I look at him and there is still a smile on his face as he waits for me to tell him how I will love him. My I can here my

aunt's whispering. They are becoming unsettled.

"Give her time, it's her day today," the pastor says trying to rescue me. The heat is too much, my head is becoming light, do I do this? Must I do this? I try to look at Tumi for some reassurance but Tumi's eyes are rooted to the door..

ZWELI (PRESENT DAY)

Today it happens, I have waited so long for such a day. The last time I thought I would reach here it became a different story. I almost killed her, I was so angry, My anger just kept on boiling until I can keep it in anymore. But this is different, that was my past life. I stand smiling as I wait for her to say her vows to me. I tried to copy what other romantic man do. She seems to be struggling. Is she over excited? She slowly opens her mouth to speak but nothing comes out of her

mouth, she closes her eyes and takes a breath then open them again. She looks calm now. Say yes to me, I will try to be better for you....I know I have been failing but I will try harder...

THE END