



A RAINBOW FOR GOOD LUCK

INTRO

RAINBOW

Noun

(Plural: rainbows)

1. A multi-coloured arc in the sky, produced by prismatic refraction of light within droplets of rain in the air

That's what the dictionary says a rainbow is. But I found a more meaningful meaning on some website. It says;

In many cultures, rainbows are a sign of hope. They appear as perfect arcs, often during

rainstorm when the sun shines onto water droplets, shattering its white light into an array of brilliant colours.

Everytime it rains I always look forward to seeing that phenomenon. I always wait and search for a rainbow – but - rainbows are a rare thing. They are like four leaf clovers, not common and special to those who believe in their power. Today is one of those days, It's been raining cats and dogs since morning and I've been waiting for that phenomenon but at the moment all that's in my head is that I need to get home. I have 15 minutes to spare and this traffic will be the bane of my frustration. When I get this scared I usually lose sight of everything but the main goal and that is too get home before it's too late.

BOOM!

My car came to an abrupt stop. I think I'm in an accident. My armpits are itching, my hands are shaking and I am freezing cold.

"Shit shit shit," I cried banging on the steering wheel. I got out of the car to assess what actually happened. When I say it's raining cats and dogs, I mean it's raining cats and dogs; I haven't been 5 minutes under the rain and I'm already soaking wet. I hit a taxi. I saw the driver assessing it and in my head I already knew that this accident wasn't my fault. Taxi drivers are reckless and selfish drivers; they disobey the law every single chance they get.

"Excuse me!" I shouted as the driver approached me. "You need to be more careful how you drive. Do you know how much it'll cost

to fix this car?" I asked. "I can actually sue you!"

"I need to be more careful?" said the taxi driver, why does he sound baffled? He is a taxi driver it's always their fault, "Miss, you hit my car!" now I understand the note of confusion in his tone, he thinks this is my fault just like I think its is his fault.

"Gosh, stupid taxi drivers," I grunted under my breath. This guy is just wasting my time.

"Excuse me" exclaimed the taxi driver, "you damaged my car and you're insulting me. Who the fuck do you think you are?" he says.

"Listen, guy...I don't have time for this. I need to get home..." I went back to the car, he followed

me. I can't be late, if I have to take the fall for this then I will.

"No, you don't get to go home. You hit my car crazy lady..." I pulled out a card from my handbag.

"Here, call me and I will give you anything you ask for; but right now, I need to get home," I started the car

"What do you need from me?" he asked. Excuse me? He's a taxi driver, what can he possibly give me.

"You're a taxi driver, I'm sure my husband can replace your taxi and my car without a sweat," I moved the gear to D.

“fine” he returned to his taxi. The cars are moving on this side of the road, I need to step on it. When I passed by the taxi, the stupid driver gave me the middle finger. I don't have time for this imbecile.

I'm here; home. This is not a home really, it's a house. I'm in the house. The time is 16:50, I'm 20 minutes late. I need to get started with supper. I went straight into the kitchen and hurriedly took out pots. I don't even know what I'm going to cook, I just need to look busy for when he comes in. he needs to find pots on the stove boiling, that'll paint the idea that I was here on time. I took out spices and some vegetables and scattered them around the kitchen. I started chopping my onion. Dear God, help me.

“Tumi,” I jumped nearly cutting my finger, I could taste fear rising up at the back of my throat. “I’m in the office,” he’s home. He is here. Still soaking wet; I toddles to his office.

“May I come in?” there’s a glass door, he can see me.

“You’re wet, go and change,” he ordered, his eyes are glued to the laptop screen.

“Okay, I just...” I stammered trying to explain why I am 20 minutes late.

“Tumi, upstairs, change, now...” I rushed upstairs. At times like this I don’t know what to wear. Sweatpants, tights, a night dress, tracksuit, takkies, a mouth guard, shin pads. I took a quick shower and put on the black lace

underwear and bra and threw on a matching gown that is just below the butt cheeks. He got me this ensemble as a gift, said I looked good in black. I went back to his office and knocked. He looked up and his face lit up.

“Come in baby,” he stretched his hand forward, I took it. He pulled me closer. “Sit,” I sat on his lap. “You were late tonight,” he stated the obvious.

“I know, I’m sorry; there was traffic and the rain...” I stammered trying to explain.

He tightened his grip around the waist, I winced, “Don’t let that shit happen again,” he says. I nodded. “Now, make me something to eat. Something light and quick please,”

“I’m on it,” as I stood he got a hold of my hand. He stood up carried me like a little child and put me on top of his desk. He pulled my legs open and got in between.

“You look sexy,” he said kissing my neck and breathing heavily. I rolled my eyes when he couldn’t see.

“It’s all for you baby,” I played along. He pulled my underwear down. I moaned as I felt his manhood going inside of me. He went in and out and in and out, his pace increased by the second and I protected his pride and ego by screaming louder and louder.

“Tell me you love me,” he said panting.

“I love you,” I said. He had a go at it for the next 5 minutes and I tried to be as convincing as possible that I was enjoying it. Finally he stopped and zipped his pants.

“Now, go and prepare that supper, maybe roasted chicken, squash and a salad,” I know that sounded like a suggestion but in all my years of living with man I’ve learnt that it’s never a suggestion but an order, a command.

“You got it honey,” I picked my underwear and put it on. He spanked my ass as I went around the desk. Sex has become a survival tool for me, so is obeying and admitting I am wrong every single chance I get. My phone rang; it’s an unknown number....

“THIS IS RAINBOW,” I picked up. It’s probably work,

“I’M LOOKING FOR TUMELO,” said the man on the other end of this phone call.

“THIS IS SHE, WHO AM I SPEAKING TO?” I opened the fridge; I need to feed this animal before seven. He hates having super after seven.

“THIS IS LUCKY, SHE GAVE ME A CARD THIS EVENING. SHE HIT MY CAR AND SAID HER HUSBAND WILL REPLACE IT, WELL I WANT IT,” he says, so rude and demanding.

“OH, IT’S THE TAXI DRIVER. I’M THAT LADY,”

“WHO’S RAINBOW? THIS CARD HAS TUMELO’S NUMBER ON IT...”

“GUY, I SAID...”

“MY NAME IS LUCKY,” he corrected me.

“LUCKY, I WILL SEND YOU MONEY OR BUY YOU A NEW TAXI, CAN YOU CALL ME ON MONDAY?”

“Who’s that?” Jesus! When did he get here?

“CALL ME ON MONDAY AT 10...OR I’LL CALL YOU,” I hung up.

“Who is that?” he asked again.

“That was Lucky?” I placed my phone on the counter behind me.

“And Lucky is?”

“I had a little accident on my way back. I hit his taxi so I gave him my number...” I explained.

“So you lied to me? You said there was traffic,”

“Yes, there was honey and it was raining. I was panicking trying to get home on time and...it all jus...” I couldn’t finish explaining, he sent a slap flying across my face which caused me to fall.

“I’m sorry,” I whispered. I learnt that apologizing early and admitting I was wrong minimizes the damage and reduces his anger. It makes him

feel like he's a man, that he is in control and that he has all the power over me.

"You lied!" he yelled. Even with the loud beep sounding in my ear I could hear his voice falling over me.

"I'm sorry, I was wrong. I should have told you the truth,"

"Stand!" he demanded. I stood on my feet, though it felt like the ground beneath me was about to fail me, I had to stand before him with my head and shoulders down I don't want to do anything that might suggest that I'm disobeying him in any way. "Look at you, so pathetic, why must you ruin everything Tumi? How are you capable of fucking up every single thing? Why can't you just respect me as your husband..." his

words cut through my soul like a knife through the heart.

“I’m sorry Ndumiso, please please please forgive me,” I rubbed my palms together pleading for forgiveness. He pulled me closer and hugged me. I am shaking; I am scared, I have a lot of fear gushing through my veins. My body is still painful from last week. He kicked me repeatedly while I laid on the bathroom floor because I woke him up late for a meeting. The bruises are fading, but they’re still very much visible.

“Go to bed, I’ll meet you there,” he said and I obeyed.

I looked at myself in the mirror as I cleaned my face. I don’t know the girl I’m looking at. This is

a stranger, Ndumiso's creation. I hate myself because I'm pathetic and worthless and weak. I'm stupid and all I do is ruin things. Why the hell didn't I tell my husband about the accident? Ndumiso is my husband and I have to tell him everything and obey him and we will be happy. He is my leader, the head of this household. His word is final and he is never wrong.

It's Saturday morning, and on weekends he wakes up at 7:00. It's 5 o'clock now. I always wake up earlier than him. He has his arm on top of me. I tried to move it away but he held me tighter.

"I need to pee baby, I'll be back," I said.

"Hurry, I'm cold," he mumbles.

I peed, washed my face and brushed my teeth. I joined him in the bedroom. He's staring at the ceiling. I climbed on the bed. "Sit on top of me," he said and I obeyed. He smiled.

"Good morning," I said. He lifted up his knees so I rested my back on them.

"I'm sorry about last night," he caressed my thighs.

"I forgive you," I leaned forward and kissed him.

"I don't want you to be scared of me; I just want you to respect me; that's all"

"I know honey, and I'm sorry I haven't been

giving you the respect you deserve.” I submitted.
“You’re a good man”

“I’m sorry I get angry, baby I love you so much and I don’t want to lose you. You make me a better man,” I like it when he makes it sound like I matter to him. Like when he says I make him a better man and how much he loves me.

“I love you too Ndumiso,” he sat up and kissed me really hard. He tightened his grip on my waist.

“Ouch, easy honey,” I cried. My body is still painful.

“What is it?” he asked lowly. How do I tell him that my body is still painful from when he

kicked me mercilessly on the bathroom floor?

“It doesn’t matter,” I kissed him, that’ should abate his curiosity.

As usual, he humped on top of me, turned in every position he desired, sweated, groaned, huffed and puffed. I cried like he was actually satisfying me. I faked an orgasm, I didn’t last night so I definitely needed to fake one today. He showered while I prepared breakfast for him, after eating he went into his office to gather his things. Before I can do anything for myself I need to sort him out first and bid him wish him a good day.

“Baby,” he says approaching me.

“Have a great day,” I said. I don’t work on weekends, it’s a little bitter sweet.

“You will go and visit your parents, right?” he asked.

“Yes my love,” I fixed his tie.

“Okay, I will pick you up from there. Tell me when it’s time to leave; I’ll call you a driver.”

“Perfect,” I stood on my toes and kissed him. He wrapped his arm around my waist to give me a better balance.

“Tell me you love,” he said.

“I love you,” he planted a baby kiss on my lips.

“Tell me again,”

“Ndumiso, I love you,” I giggled. “Don’t forget my gift,”

“I got you baby,” he kissed my cheek and ran into the garage. I ran upstairs into our bedroom and watched him driving out of the gate and then disappearing into nothing but a sound of the engine which also eventually grew into no sound at all. He is gone, I exhaled. I have a few hours to myself, a few hours of guaranteed safety.

This is how my life has been for the past 3 years or so. I live everyday with fear and

trembling in my bone.

My name is Tumelo Gumede, I am 25 years old and I am married to a monster. I wasn't always Tumelo Gumede, I became a Gumede when I got married, but I became Tumelo Jaxa when I was 10. Confusing right? Before that I was Rainbow Jaxa, Tumelo Jaxa was my brother, he was 12 when he passed away and my mother went insane. He was sick...he had cancer. It started when she would call me Tumelo, or look at me and see him. My father told me to answer when she's calling me Tumelo, just so she could get closure. I did, I obeyed my father and I'm sure he thought she would eventually be fine and accept that Tumelo was no longer alive.

When my mother shouted her son's name, her daughter showed up. She'd talk to me like I was Tumelo, and I played along because daddy said

so. One day; daddy called me into his office.

“My sweet daughter,”

“Yes daddy,”

“Your mom wants you to change your name,” he said.

“What do you mean? She already calls me Tumelo and I answer daddy, I pinky promise. I’ve been a good girl”

“I know, but she means for good sweetheart”

“As in, on my school books, at school and on my school bag?” I looked into my father’s eyes

seeking help.

“You are a very smart girl,” he gave me a complement as compensation for the terrible news he was telling me and for failing to be my father.

“Well, then...who’s going to be Rainbow?” I asked.

“We’ll pretend like rainbow never existed. And you will be Tumelo, you’ll have a little piece of your brother with you,” he smiled.

“But I love my name; Tumelo died daddy not Rainbow,”

“Baby do it for mommy, she’s really having a tough time dealing with your brother’s passing,”

And just like that I became a dead person to my mom. She exchanged Rainbow for Tumelo. It was difficult for me to adjust. My school mates were asking me questions that I had no answers to. Like, am I my brother now? And honestly, I didn’t know who I was anymore. At 10 years old I was confused about whether I liked Barbie bed sheets or the Spiderman that my mom bought for me. I stopped using pink to colour in most of my drawings; I used green and red mostly.

“Why don’t you try using green Tumelo,” my mother would say.

“Yes mother,” I didn’t want her to have a break

down again. Frankly, a green unicorn is not pleasing to the eye; especially the eye of a 10 year old girl. And just like that my mother forgot about her little girl, she forgot about Rainbow; everybody did but me...

INSERT 1

HOME

Noun

(Plural: homes)

1. The abiding place of affections, especially of the domestic affections

2. A place of refuge, rest or care; an asylum

Four years after Tumelo's birth, my mom fell pregnant but unfortunately had a miscarriage and then after that turmoil, I was conceived; hence the name Rainbow, I loved that name. Everybody loved it...it made me a happy, bright and colourful girl. My art teacher called me 'flower girl' and my mother took that away from me, I hated her for that and I hated my father for allowing her to take my happiness away. The day before she took me to Home Affairs; I decided to talk to her, I thought maybe she'd see that I'm her child too and decide to not change my name.

"Mama," I called. She was in the kitchen cooking, which was an unusual sight.

"Yes Tumi," she responded with a calm singsong voice.

“Mama, please don’t make me change my name, you can call me Tumelo but please don’t take Rainbow away...it also means something,” I begged.

“Don’t mention that name little girl, you are now Tumelo. Can’t you do this one simple thing for your brother and for me,” she shouted almost losing her breath.

“Tumelo didn’t say I should use his name, you know he hated it when I used his things,” I also raised my little girl voice to my mother.

“You are young; you don’t know what your brother would have wanted. I am his mother...I know what...”

“You are my mother too,” I wept before her. She left me standing there alone crying. That night she didn’t have dinner with us, she had a headache. It lasted for a week. We didn’t go to home affairs the following day but I eventually I did and that day I came back a different person. Eventually it stopped hurting and people got used to it and so did I. I stopped being angry at my mom but I just disliked her.

“Mama, I’m home,” I said opening my arms to embrace her.

“Tumelo, look at you. How’s my son in-law?” she asked. Geez mom, how about asking how your daughter is doing? You want to know how your son in-law is doing. He has been working out, using me as his punching bag, that’s how

he's doing.

"Ndumiso is great mom, he's at work." I answered and consciously willed myself to not regurgitate at the mention of Ndumiso's name.

"Did you ask him before you came here?" she asked.

"Yes mama, he's picking me up later after work," I said.

"Good girl, let's go to your father; he is upstairs in his office," she took my hand and led the way.

"Hello daddy," I said. I'm always happy to see my father; he always looked at me like I was still

Rainbow. But he doesn't treat me or talk to me like I'm Rainbow, I guess mom finally managed to brainwash him. Kudos to her!

"Tumelo, how are you darling?" he hugged me. My father is a giant. Growing up, no boy ever talked to me because of how scary he was and also because he was the principal of the school I attended. He still is, he built the school from scratch. It starts from grade 1 up until 12 and it is also a boarding school. I arrived in the morning with him and left with him after school so there was no chance to entertain a boy.

"I'm fine, how are you big guy?"

"I'm as strong as an ox. How's the husband?" there he goes making everything about him. It's like when they see me they see him.

“He is wonderful sweetheart, I just asked her,” my mom responded on my behalf. We’re both sitting in the visitors’ chairs in front of my dad.

“Actually, mom, dad...there’s something I’ve been wanting to talk to you guys about,” I uttered.

“What is it darling? You need some money? A new car...a new wardrobe?” my dad threw ideas around and unfortunately none of them got me to nod my head.

“No daddy...I”

“You want more clothes for your store? You want to expand. I know how you fashionistas

are, always thinking outside the box..." he interjected.

"I don't want be married anymore," I announced loudly and sharply cutting right through their voices. I'm sure that gave them a mini heart attack; especially my mom. "I want a divorce," I squeezed the chair handle. I always do that to stay calm. I squeeze a pillow, my wrist, my leg, a piece of clothing, anything just to channel my energy into whatever I'm grabbing. That gives my mind the space to stay present.

"Tumelo that is madness!" She cried.

"You know your mother is right, if something is wrong you can work it out,"

"Daddy you don't understand. He..." I paused as

I let out a quivering exhale, “he beats me daddy, I am scared of him,” I looked at my mom with tearing eyes. She had no worry in her eyes, she was just angry.

“Tumelo, you need to think sometimes, use your stupid brain. If we lose Ndumiso we lose the school,” she says looking at me from the corner of her eyes.

“If I stay with him I will lose my life mama, I am your daughter. What’s more important to you than the life of your own child?” tears ran down my cheeks and I quickly wiped them off. Mama hates it when I cry.

“The lives of those other children that will have no school just because my own child failed to be a proper wife...” she let out a loud scoff in

dissatisfaction. She then glanced at me again, “and stop crying...”

“A proper wife? Mama are you listening to yourself?”

“I think what your mother means is that, just hang in there a little while longer, just until I am sure the school doesn’t need his money anymore. In the meantime; just respect him and do what he wants. Women just have a way of ticking a man off...” my father agreed with his wife.

“She is ticking me off right now; I can imagine what you put that poor man through,” she scoffed. I am doomed. My parents...my mom, they won’t help me.

“Vuyiswa, she’s new to this marriage thing, be kinder darling,” my dad said to her.

“Daddy, I don’t need her kindness, I need her protection.”

“Listen Ice-cream,” my dad calls me ice-cream because I loved ice-cream. But I’m not allowed to have it now, or anything that will make me gain weight. Ndumiso is a health freak. He can go the whole week eating nothing but vegetables and fish. “Maybe he is stressed, just try talking to him, maybe you can go for couples’ therapy. You love him and he loves you too...he opened that store for you remember?” I wanted to go to a fashion designing school, not sell designer clothes.

“Yes daddy,” I nodded like the good little girl that I was.

“In the meantime, I will ask around for good therapists,”

“Thank you mama, you’re right, everything will be okay. I just need to obey him right?” I forced a smile to try and convince them that they were right.

“Now you are starting to sound like a grown woman,” she rubbed my hand and I kept my smile in place

“Shall we have lunch?” daddy sang. We marched into the dining room and found the table already set. Ndumiso refuses to hire a

cook. A cleaner comes once a week on Fridays in the afternoon when we are not around.

Ndumiso arrived at my parent's house with a bottle of wine for my dad and a bouquet of flowers and chocolates for my mom. I waited in the car while he said his goodbyes to my parents.

"Thank you Mr. Jaxa, I will get in touch with you," he said getting inside the car. He looked at me and I smiled.

"How was work baby?" I asked he drove out of the gate.

"Work was work...did you enjoy your day with your parents?" he asked carefully navigating the turns of the road.

“Yes I did, we had lunch and talked. Thank you,”

“What did you talk about?”

“Just the usual, work...and life,” I say.

“And how I’m beating you? You said you wanted a divorce from me...” my heart stopped beating and started burning.

“I just...” he banged my head against the dashboard. I stayed down for a minute trying to regain my vision.

“You just what?” he asked. I didn’t respond. I need to cry, I have to cry so there’s less damage.

My head immediately started throbbing.

“Speak!” he shouted and I jumped. He pulled my hair back and held on to the steering wheel with the other.

“I just wanted us to get help. I thought maybe we could go for therapy together. I don’t want to leave you,” he keeps looking at me and then back at the road. When we got home he literally dragged me out of the car, he didn’t even lock or close the door. He pushed me to the floor and I sprained my ankle in the process. He took off his blazer and tie and then belt. He used the belt to whip every inch of my body. I was just on the floor kicking and screaming just hoping and praying that he would stop and eventually stopped...

“Don’t move,” he went into his office. I just

couldn't, I took a chance and ran upstairs..."I said don't move," he came running after me. He grabbed my leg as I was running up the stairs. "Where are you going?"

"Stop, Ndumiso stop!" I kicked him in the face and continued running. I locked myself in our room and immediately fell to the floor. He started kicking the door and banging on it. How the door didn't break open is as much a guess to me as it is probably to you.

"Open this door! This is my house, you have no right locking doors here....open!" he screamed. I am not opening this door. I will not voluntarily offer myself as a living sacrifice.

He has been banging on the door for over an hour now. He even stopped shouting and calling me names. Right now, he's begging me to open.

He says he wants to apologize, well he has been apologizing. I took a bunch of painkillers before I slept so they knocked me right out. This is his guilty phase; he won't try anything stupid, instead he'll wake up with a lot of shame and regret ready to be a changed man.

When I opened my eyes, I remembered last night and what happened. I have to get out of this room eventually, I have to face him. After showering and taking more painkillers for the headache and aching body. I had on some tights, a hoodie and socks. I limped downstairs and found the table all set up; it looks like he made breakfast. He appeared from his office and saw me limping down the stair. I started breathing tremulously, what the hell was I thinking?

“It’s okay,” he says. He has fully entered his phase of remorse and shame. “Calm down. I made breakfast...I was hoping that we could just sit and talk about that therapy you suggested...” he chuckled softly. I am just staring at him trying to control my breathing. “Let me carry you down baby,” he is slowly coming towards the staircase.

“Stop, don’t come near me,” I said with a trembling voice. No matter how hard I may try to be brave before this man, he knows how much I fear him.

“I won’t hurt you; I promise. Let me just carry you to the table so you can have something to eat,” he rubbed his palms together. The aftermath of his outbursts is my favourite thing in the world, I thrive in those. He becomes so

weak and desperate. I know he won't hit me until after I forgive him and then he will go back to being dominant. But I could never be too careful.

"Okay, you can come," he came over and carried me down the stairs. He gently sat me down and then poured me a cup of coffee.

"May I dish for you?" he asked, I nodded. He gave me muesli and yoghurt so I took in a spoon and tried to chew but it was painful. My jaws are killing me. I took a serviette and spat it out. "What's wrong? Is the yoghurt too cold?"

"My jaws are painful," I said gulping down coffee.

"I'll get you some pain tablets," he jumped.

“No, I already took a bunch. I’ll be okay,” he sat back down.

“Baby, I am so sorry...I don’t want to lose you. I love you so much...”

“That’s what you said the last time Ndumiso, and the time before that...also the time before that,”

“I know. I mean it this time...your mom will get me in contact with a therapist...I can even go for anger management,” he came and knelt before me. I just started crying because I was in pain. Physical, emotional, and mental pain; this is just not life.

“Ndumiso,” I said and broke down. “I am scared of you,” I mumbled.

“I will change. I promise you...” he begged. “How about we eat a little and then go to bed and just cuddle until you fall asleep,” I nodded. He reached up and kissed me. And like always, I fell for his tricks. Maybe it’s not a trick, maybe he really means it...but then every once in a while, he finds himself falling back into his old ways. Maybe this is like an addiction for him or a coping mechanism.

PLEASE LIKE AND SHARE♡

INSERT 2

RUN AWAY

Verb

1. To flee by running

2. To leave home, or other places of residence, usually unannounced

Upon the tablets that I had last night and this morning, he insisted that I have more. He said his own are special and they work faster. He pulled them out from his briefcase and instructed me to have them, told him I already took pain killers but he said, "These aren't like your normal tablets, gulp them down," and so I obeyed. He held me while I nodded off in his chest. The minute I closed my eyes I felt my body floating like I was in a swimming pool. I asked him where he got those pills because I liked what they did to me. He obviously strayed

from answering the question by ordering me to try and get some sleep. The pills made everything numb. I couldn't feel the pain I was feeling; both physically and emotionally. I couldn't feel my heart beating like a jungle drum and the fear that's always hanging at the back of my throat wasn't there. I just feel like I don't exist, everything is light and perfect.

I peeled my eyes open and met his...we just stared at each other. He got closer and kissed my forehead.

"How long was I out?" I asked trying to put words together and form a sentence. I just feel tired.

"It's eight in the evening," he said smiling. Why the fuck is he smiling?

“I slept the whole day?”

“You must have been really tired love,” he kissed my forehead again. No! I wasn’t tired, you beat me up...that’s why I was out the whole day and the pills you gave me knocked me out. I know those weren’t just normal painkillers.

“I feel really tired, my body feels numb,” I said.

“That’s good, I will go and get you a cup of coffee...it’ll do you just right” he says standing. My mind rejoiced when I heard his footsteps thudding down the stairs; it meant I had a few minutes to myself. Is this what my life will be now? I will rejoice over a second that I get to myself. Fuck this; I might as well become a

junkie. My husband wants to kill me half the time; my parents don't want to help me because of my husband's money...no one cares about me. Let me just go and take a shower just so I can have more time to myself.

Oh yes! The water just feels so good against my body. Hot and soothing; I stood under the water for a minute not breathing just to bask in the glory of this moment of sanity.

"Hey, you" he wrapped his arms around me. "Why didn't you call me to join you, it's cold today..." he says. fuck fuck fuck fuck...

"I wasn't going to take that long, just a few minutes and then I'm out," say.

“Liar! I saw how you were enjoying this water splashing all over you, you turned me on”

“Alright, you got me,”

“You just look so sexy,” he pressed his manhood against my bums and I just knew that it was time to get it on. This selfish prick knows I am not feeling well because he tried to kill me, he was the one that was nursing me and now he wants to have fucking sex...I literally want to scream. “Turn around and look at me” he demands. I obeyed...I faced him. He is going to command me to kiss him now and then he will take over. “Kiss me,” I kissed him. He tightened his grip around my ass. I stopped and he looked at me with half opened eyes, horny ass motherfucker.

“I just thought that we’d cuddle today, you know...and just talk...” he giggled.

“You’re cute,” he kissed me again.

“Ndumiso,” I backed away. “Can we not tonight please, my love,” I begged to not have sex. He pushed me against the glass walls of the shower, lifted me up and got in between me. He started kissing on my neck and grabbing every part of me that was bruised. “Baby, slow down okay...” I said. I felt his hand going in between my thighs; with his hand he inserted his tiny dick inside my vagina and then looked at me. God knows I longed for a real dick, a real manly penis inside of me but he still chose to punish me with this excuse of a man who has a fucking Vienna for a penis. I longed for real passion. I wanted to moan and mean it. I’ve

actually never had an orgasm; I just saw it on tv when I was growing up. The girl would scream so loud when she experiences one and sometimes the guy just cried fucking weirdly, like a cow giving birth or they groan. And so out of curiosity, I researched orgasms and I watched videos...who knew that would come in handy at this point in my life.

And so, he kept shoving his penis in and out of me and with every erotic sound I made he felt more like a man, his confidence in himself and his penis increased. And in my head; I'm thinking, "Cute." I can't wait until the day I actually get real cock inside me. I sometimes fantasize about how everything would play out the day I cheat on my husband...and how having an orgasm would feel. Ndumiso was my first and aside from him I have never ever slept with anyone else.

“Is it good?” he asked. Thirsty motherfucker can’t even tell if he’s doing it good.

“Yeah, babe...” I moaned. He put me down and kissed me. His hand reached down in between my thighs while he kept my eyes in place. He inserted his middle finger inside of me; that actually feels better than what his manhood did. I kissed him because I actually felt something, something worth a decent moan.

“Is that good?” he asked. I nodded. I literally didn’t want him disturbing me from this moment. This moment of sexual pleasure he was giving me. He stopped...why did he stop? I kissed him hoping that he would continue...he didn’t. He reached for a shower gel and poured a little on me and then hugged me. “I love you,”

he whispered.

“I love you too,”

By the time we had finished dressing up. My coffee was cold so he was kind enough to go back and make a new one.

“Baby, do you see my bag down there?” I shouted standing on top of the stairs.

“Yeah! It’s right here...” he responded.

“Please grab my charger for me,”

“Okay, love” I made myself warm under the duvet while I waited for him. He came in without

my coffee or my charger.

“Hmm, did you forget something?” I asked teasingly. He threw something at me which I gladly caught. I glanced at what I had caught in my hands and looked all too familiar.

“What the fuck is that?” he says leaning against the door. I attempted to stand. “Bitch, sit your ass down,”

“Ndumiso! You can’t speak to me like that,” I stood. He charged for me and grabbed my neck.

“What did you say?” he says. I held on tight to his arm.

“I said, please don’t talk to me like that...” he threw me on the bed and got on top of me.

“You....” His grip got tighter around my neck as he pinned me against the bed. “Why the fuck do you have birth control pills?” I can’t talk...I can’t breathe. His eyes were turning red and veins were popping out of his neck and forehead. He stopped and backed away...I caught my breath. “You think I’m a fool? You’ve been using birth control pills in my house...when you’re married to me,” he is pacing up and down the room. I coughed out of control as I sat up straight so I could be ready for whatever comes. He has been beating me for the past three days now and I think today I have really crossed the line in his books. He walked up to me with eyes filled with no mercy or compassion, “You are a fool!” he spat on me. Then the next thing I felt was a hot slap across my face. “You have been killing

my children you bitch,” he got on top of me and started punching me repeatedly. I tried hiding my face with my hands but that was useless, I could taste blood in my mouth. This man could kill me right here right now and no one would know. Every punch felt heavier than the previous one - and it seemed that - no matter how loud I cried – he wasn’t prepared to have mercy.

He took a break to throw insults at me. “You’re a murderer,” he spat on me again. I need to escape this nightmare or I will die... I need to get out of here. With all my power and might I pushed him and kicked him in the groin. He landed on the floor and nursed his pain. In the meantime; an ugly thought visited my head so I acted upon it. I quickly grabbed the side and smashed it on his head. He screamed like a little girl, just hearing him cry made me want to

do more to him. I wanted to hear more of that cry escaping from him, I wanted to hurt him some more. While he was still trying to make sense of things, I ran out of the room, and went downstairs. I grabbed the gate keys and ran out. It's raining; I am bleeding all over my face. I have nothing but a gown on. I have no idea where I'm going, but I am getting away from here. As soon as the gate opened, I ran for dear life.

The house is far from reality so I know I won't see another house or anyone that will help me for a little while. I just told myself to run and never stop. When I looked back and I couldn't see anything but the road behind me. I can no longer see my house so I'm safe – for now. I slowed down; my throat feels dry and painful, and so does my ankle. I still have the keys with me; I will keep them as a weapon so I can at

least try to protect myself if anything happens but I hope I won't have to protect myself. A bright light behind me, it's a vehicle. Just keep walking. It passed...it was a taxi...hold on, it's reversing. Fuck fuck...I am scared, what was I thinking running away from my husband? If anything happens now, I'm really toast, can't run. I overworked my ankle when I was running away from my house, at this point its throbbing, it can barely function normally.

"Miss," the man inside the taxi shouted. I kept my head down and just kept walking. "Where are you going, let me drop you off; I promise you I will drop you off..." I just kept walking. I need to keep walking. "Excuse me!" he shouted as he drove slowly beside me. "I am trying to help you, it's raining..."

“I don’t need your help, just leave me alone...” I walked faster putting more pressure on my ankle. He drove off. Thank you Lord! He stopped again, what the hell does this man want from me? I told him to leave me alone. He is getting out of his taxi, just keep your head down and mind your own business and if push comes to shove, stab his fucking eye with one of the keys.

“Miss, it’s raining; I’m sorry I won’t rest knowing that I left a lady out in the rain in the middle of the night,” he shouted as I approached him.

“Guy, I said I don’t need your help!” I said trembling.

“Look you are getting me wet, just get in the car please let me take you home,” he says.

“I said no,” I shouted, “I didn’t ask you to get out of your car!”

“We can drive with your door open so if I try anything, you can jump out.” He cleaned his face with his hand, “Better yet,” he pulled out gun. “Take my gun, just pull the trigger if you feel unsafe,” I stood there with my eyes on the wet grass. I don’t want him to see my bruised face. “Please, you’ll be helping me, I need company anyway...” and so I took his gun. He opened the passengers’ side for me and I got it in. “Are we closing the door?” I nodded. It smells like fast foods, weed and beer in here. He ran to his side and drove off. He turned on the heater. I am looking away from him and I am holding on tight to this gun like I know how to use it. “Where are we going?” he asks.

“My parents’ house in La...” no, they will send me back. “Take me anywhere...somewhere I don’t know,”

“I have a flat close by; I will take you there for the night, then, figure everything out tomorrow.”

“Thank you,” I said lowly.

We drove for a little while and then entered inside a building of flats. I just followed him, turned where he turned but made sure to keep my head down. We got inside an elevator. I stood behind him and studied him from the back. He glanced back at me and I quickly threw my face down.

We got out of the elevator and took an immediate right down the passage. He stopped in front of one of the doors and opened with a key; that gave me the assurance that the flat was really his. He walked in, flicked a switch on the wall and there was light. To my left; there is a door way leading to a tiny kitchen, very tiny. To my right; I see 2 doors, the first one is the bathroom and I assume the toilet is behind the second door. And then straight down is the bedroom which we are in now. At least the bed is clean. But you can tell that it's been a while since a broom has moved in this house. I stood by the door. And waited for him to say or do something.

“Welcome to my humble abodes...I hope it's okay for you,” okay? My bedroom on its own is the size of his entire flat; my closet is as big as this bedroom if not bigger. But beggars can't be

choosers.

I nodded and forced a smile.

“Okay, take this,” he gave me a t-shirt and a white towel. “Follow me,” I did. He walked into the bathroom. “You can take a shower; the taps in the tub still need fixing. The toilet is right next door.” And it seems I was right. “Just a second,” he went out. I waited for him. In the meantime; I looked at myself in the mirror, I look horrible. My lips are swollen and so are my right eye. There’s dry blood in my nose and lips. I am just a mess. When the door opened, I quickly looked down. “Here” he handed me what appears to be a body lotion.

“Thank you,” I said under my breathe and waited for him to exit so I can have some warm water

running down my body. He shut the door and then knocked. "Yes!"

"You can lock the door from inside, just to feel safer," he says. How nice of him.

"Thank you," I locked. I don't care how nice he is; there is no way I am letting my guard down around any man. I don't know what I mean by that but that's just how I feel. Once again, the water feels so good against my bruised body, it stung at first but eventually the pain felt like a part of me. I paused for a minute taking in the moment. My brain reminded me that I couldn't take too long, it's not my house. I turned the water off and wiped my body with the towel he gave me. I then moisturized my body and wore the t-shirt he gave me. I exited the bathroom and went into the bedroom. I found him with a

towel around his waist.

“You done?” he asked. I nodded. “Okay, give me a minute. I will be with you now,”

I nodded and then stepped out of the way so he could exit.

“You can have a seat on the bed,” he says. I did just that. I sat on the edge of the bed and waited for him. He started singing in the shower;

“HOW CAN WE BE LOVERS IF WE CAN'T BE FRIENDS?

HOW CAN WE START OVER WHEN THE FIGHT HAD NEVER END?

HOW CAN WE MAKE LOVE IF WE CAN MAKE A MESS?

TELL ME, HOW CAN WE BE LOVERS IF WE CAN'T BE CAN'T FRIENDS?"

He sang his lungs out. I giggled because he sounded so happy and like what he was feeling was so sincere. Geez, when was the last time I sang in the shower? Have I ever sung in the shower? I don't recall...he walked in and my face fell. The wardrobe is behind me, so I can't see him dressing up. He came and stood before me.

"Would you like something to eat?" he asked. I shook my head. "Would you like some tea?" I shook my head again. "Look at me Miss," he says. I squeezed my wrist to concentrate my energy on something. "Hey, you don't have to be scared," he says, "I won't hurt you," Ndumiso said he won't hurt me again but he always did. "Hey we need to have some form of

communication thing going, I could give you my phone so you could text down what you want to say...or paper” he says.

“You don’t have to do that, I can speak,” I uttered.

“Are you in any pain? Do you need some pills for those bruises?” he asked. I shook my head; I’ve been having a lot of pills for the past few hours and the last one Ndumiso gave me was by far the heaviest pill I’ve had. “Did someone hurt you, like sexually? Were you raped?” well sometimes Ndumiso does force me to have sexual relations with him even when I beg him not to...like tonight, but I shook my head.

“No,” I said.

“Can you spot the person that did this to you, do you know him, her or them?” he acquired.

I nodded, “Yes, I know him,” I looked at the rug on the floor.

“Look at me,” he says. Why does he want me to look at him? I look horrible. But I obeyed him.

“Who did this to you?” I quickly looked at the rug again.

“Ndumiso,” I said that like he knows Ndumiso.

“Who is Ndumiso?” he asked. When is this going to end because I am freezing cold.

“My husband” I’m just giving one-word answers. He sighed heavily and rubbed his head.

“Where is your husband now?”

“In our house; can I sleep now please? I’m really tired,”

“Okay, you can take the bed, I will take the floor,” he grabbed a pillow and then took out two blankets from the wardrobe. I got into bed and watched him fix his bed on the floor.

“Goodnight,” he said switching off the lights.

“Can you please check if the door is locked and if all the windows are closed?”

“Sure...I can do that,” he went out. “Everything is locked. No one can get in unless we let them in,” he reported making himself comfortable on the floor. I laid down facing the ceiling. This bed is really small and warm. It smells like fabric softer and dust. “Sleep Miss, you are safe here with me. Don’t worry about nothing,” he yawned.

“Thank you,”

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 3

LUCKY

Adjective

1. Favoured by luck; fortunate; meeting with good success or good fortune

2. Producing, or resulting in, good chance, or unexpectedly; favourable; auspicious; fortune.

I opened my eyes and remembered I was at a stranger's place. I sat up straight careful enough to not hurt myself. Guy wasn't there anymore. His blankets were folded neatly on the floor. I smell food, really nice smelling food, bacon and other fat foods. "Guy, hello" I shouted.

"In the kitchen" he responded. I made my way into this cupboard kitchen where I found him with sweatpants and a white vest on.

“Good morning?” I said.

“Good morning Miss,” he says smiling. “I went out and got you these,” he passed me a plastic from Mr Price. There’s a yellow floral dress inside with three underwears, and a bra. There is also another plastic from PEP with a toothbrush, a body lotion, body spray, a towel and a labello. How kind of him.

“Thank you very much, I will pay you back I promise.” I said. “Let me brush my teeth,” I’m still set on keeping my head down. I don’t want him to see my ugly face; I looked at myself in the mirror last night and I looked horrible.

“Yeah, you do that...” I left him in the kitchen cooking up a storm. I brushed my teeth and looked at myself in the mirror as I did so. I am

so pathetic...why did I run away from my husband? He said we'd go for couples' therapy, he even promised to take anger management classes. Why didn't I just stay with him? What's my plan now? I am so stupid...I am dumb...I am angry. I grabbed on the corner of the sink and squeezed it really hard until the anger that was building up inside of me subsided. I joined him in the kitchen again. "I hope you are hungry because I am and I'd hate to eat all of this food by myself," I looked at him.

"I can have that food and the bacon and eggs...?" I asked. Ndumiso never lets me eat any of this. In fact, we don't store any of these in our fridge. He said he doesn't want a fat wife and he believes that women get fat much faster than men do. Sometimes he'd force me to jog with him. I hated every minute of it.

“Yeah! Why not? You can have as much as you like” he says, I can see him trying to get a full view of my face, but I don’t give him that chance.

“Yeah sure, I am hungry...”

“Great! Wait for me in the room then, I will bring you breakfast in bed...no pun intended, I don’t have a dining area so I will literally bring you breakfast in bed,” he says giggling.

“Sure, let me fix the bed then,” I limped back into the bedroom. I fixed the bed. Put his blankets back inside the wardrobe, opened the curtains and the windows to let in some fresh air. Though the sun is out, it’s still a little cold. I went back into the kitchen. “Do you need some help?” I asked.

“Yes please,” he says. “Just grab that tray with juice,” I did so and followed him. We sat on the floor, which I didn’t mind. “Well, dig in” he says enthusiastically. I grabbed a piece of bacon and threw it in my mouth and chewed. Oh, my word, it’s so delicious. I covered my mouth with my hand. “What is it?”

“It’s delicious,” I said whispering.

“Oh yeah! Have some more please, be my guest,” he leaned against the bed and watched me as I devoured the food. Even though my head is down, I can feel him staring at me and it’s making me so uncomfortable.

“This is so good, you’ve outdone yourself,” I

said while chewing. Ndumiso would have scolded at me by now for speaking while chewing. "I'm sorry for speaking with food in my mouth, I know it's rude," I said. He grabbed a piece of bacon and bit a huge chunk of bread and started chewing.

"What's rude?" he opened his mouth extra wide. I smiled.

"Thank you for breakfast, it's really delicious," I said looking down. I took a quick glance at him then back at the plate. He is staring at me. I feel so insecure; what if he is judging me, I mean any fool can see from a mile away that I'm a pathetic piece of nothing.

"I don't get this, so you've never had bacon and eggs...girl under which rock have been living?"

“I have had them before, but that was a while ago...the rest is just a long story” I said and took a sip from my glass of orange juice.

“I’ve got time...” if this guy was able to get me inside his taxi and able to get me to look at him last night, then I’m pretty sure getting me to tell him why I haven’t had bacon and egg in while will be easy.

“Ndumiso didn’t like fatty foods. He was a gym freak...so since I wasn’t a gym freak, he made sure that we ate healthy foods. He bought the groceries and every twice a week we go for a jog together; said he didn’t want a fat wife...” he took his bacon and eggs and dropped them on my plate.

“Fuck Ndumiso, eat all of that,” he says.

“Okay,” I ate as fast as I could.

“Hey hey hey,” he held my oily hand and my eyes shot up at him, “calm down. I’m not forcing you to eat...I’m just saying that here, you can have much as you want,” I nodded, forced a smile and then dropped my head.

“Thank you,” I said. He is looking at me; I can feel his eyes just poking through me.

“You don’t see me, do you?” he says.

“See you?” I looked at his big dark eyes. “See you how?”

“I mean you don’t recognize me”

“Recognize you? There’s no way I know you...” I swallowed. “Do I know you?”

“I’m Lucky, you hit my taxi a few days ago and said your husband was going to replace it,” I looked at him again.

“Oh my gosh it’s you,” he smiled and I feel so ashamed. “I was so rude to you that day, I was in a hurry, it was raining, I didn’t even give you a second look...my husband,”

“Hey, don’t explain, it’s okay...”

“I am so so sorry...I just had to get home on time,”

“Miss,” he says. I kept quiet. “I understand,” he says.

“Thank you,”

“Tell me something,” I nodded, “that day, I called you later on...you just ended our call so abruptly, did he beat you up that day?” I nodded. “I’m sorry, that was my fault, I should have called the following day or something,”

I giggled, “Ndumiso hits me every chance he gets, so don’t worry about it, I’m sure he would have found a reason to beat me up that night,”

“Motherfucker,” he clinched his jaws.

“My name is Rainbow, nice to meet Mr. Lucky,”

“Just Lucky will do...how come your business card says Tumelo Gumede?”

“Another long story, but I am Rainbow Gumede, please call me Rainbow,”

“Rainbow...I like it. I don’t know anyone named Rainbow,”

“Now you do,” I said.

After having breakfast, Guy had to go to work – I really ought to call him by his name now,

Lucky. Lucky said he was going to work. I didn't ask much about his nature of work, though the vehicle he uses sort of gave it away, but then again, anything is possible. He locked the door and took the keys with him. Well; he only has one key. It seems like Guy doesn't stay here that much often. He has no sense of connection with this flat, he seems like a stranger passing by, it seems we're both strangers here but at different degrees.

Guy left me with a laptop and earphones; he said to watch movies and series. That is still keeping me entertained. Ndumiso always wanted to watch National geographic or golf and cricket. He had no interest in watching a good movie, he doesn't even have a favourite actor. He says it's all lies and it brainwashes one. He made an example about a movie called DELIVER US FROM EVA that starred Gabriella

Union. He said; now women will start believing that being bold and strong and talking to men anyhow is the way to live. He did allow me to watch cooking and fashion channels, which was very generous of him he said. I am now watching THE SMURFS, and I cannot bring myself to understand why a man like Guy would have such a movie as this. Especially because majority of his movies are all action, thriller, suspense, dystopia and sci-fi...again...anything is possible.

I made muffins earlier; I found all the ingredients needed, including a mixture pack with directions. There isn't much edible here, he has a hot sauce from Nando's though and I love him for that. I love hot sauces. The only food that looks safe enough to eat is the one he bought this morning. He also has coffee that is now hard as a rock. I think he is back, I paused

the movie, yes, the gate is opening and I am feeling a little uneasy on the grounds that, somewhere at the back of my mind I am convinced I will see Ndumiso when that door swings open. I am standing by the bedroom door staring at the front door; the door swung open, it's him. I exhaled.

"Hi Miss," he says with a smile. "Why are you standing there?" he asked.

"I just wanted to be sure it was you," I said. I stepped aside as he walked in to his room, which is now part mine.

"It's me," he sneezed. "It smells good, did you cook?" he threw himself on the bed and sniffed.

"I found a muffin mixer, I hope you don't mind...I

just,”

“Fuck!”

“Oh I’m so sorry...I should have asked you first...”

“No, it’s not that. I’m glad you made muffins, in fact I am looking forward to having some, don’t apologize,”

I breathed out in relief. “I’m glad,” I said. He sneezed, and sneezed again...and then again. “Guy, are you sick?” I asked.

“Miss, it’s Lucky not Guy,” he said and sneezed.

“It’s Rainbow, not Miss,” I also said. “Are you sick? You’ve been sneezing and sniffing,” I got closer, “May I?” I brought the back of my hand closer to his forehead.

“Knock yourself out, but I’m not sick. It’s just the rain from last night, and then I slept on the floor,” he laid on his back so I could examine him properly. I placed the back of my hand on his forehead.

“You are burning up,” I said.

“I will be fine by tomorrow, let me sleep.” He says.

“Open your mouth wide,” he did. His throat is red...

“Yep! You definitely have a flu...do you have ginger?”

“No, I don’t have anything here. Unless you want to walk to the mall,”

“The mall?” I said under my breath. My mouth suddenly got dry and my hands got sweaty. I can hear my heart beat. The thought of going outside by myself seems to paralyze me.

“yeah, it’s right outside...you won’t miss it. But then again; I said I will be fine, don’t stress.” Guy has been very kind to me, he opened up his house and even trusted me with it. The least I can do at this point is take care of him. I am just having anxieties about going outside. What if Ndumiso finds me? Then I’m dead; But Ndumiso wouldn’t know this side of the city

province; or would he?

“I will go...” I let out a loud quivering sigh

“Are you sure, you don’t have to do this” he says.
I nodded.

“I want to. Besides...it’s right outside, right?” I said trying to sound brave. He gave me R500 and the keys, he told me to get him cigarettes as well. He gave me quite a lot of money though. I stepped outside the flat and the sun immediately lit up my face. I had to close my eyes because of how bright it was. Okay. I hit the elevator button and the elevator came within a minute. It opened and presented a white old lady inside, she smiled at me. I forced a smile back. I’ve gotten quite good at forcing smiles, I forced smiles at my father’s functions and then Ndumiso’s functions and then in my

house.

“Just moved in?” she asked.

“Just visiting,” I said squeezing my wrist.

“What a pretty lady you are,” she says.

“Thank you, ma’am,” I forced another smile. I jumped off at the ground floor and made my way outside of the building. There is the mall with Spar flags dangling outside. I went in, I saw many other shops, like a movie rental, debonairs, KFC and many more. I can see Spar further down. Right after the stationery store. I walked in and a worker packing fruits smiled at me. Sometimes I feel like I am invisible to the world so I don’t even bother talking to people. I

get surprised when people talk to me because that means they see me. After I changed my name, I found it very hard to interact with other humans. I just felt like I was doing something wrong and then when I met Ndumiso, it just seems like he had everything under control. He made all the decisions so I didn't have much to worry about. He was basically my mouthpiece; mine was to look pretty, skinny, educated, expensive and sophisticated. I remember at some point, a colleague of his at one of his work functions asked me a question and I guess my answer was in contrast with what my husband represented as an entity so that night he beat me up and told me I was dumb. Which I believe I am. Honestly...just look at me. I'm a hopeless little bitch. I am so dumb that I need a man to think for me...

Anyway; I'm back inside. I shut the door and

exhaled when I realised I that I did this. I went outside, to the mall and I did normal human being activities; like greeting other civilians and picking my groceries. When I got home, Guy was still in bed coughing, sneezing and sniffing.

“I’m back,” I said triumphantly.

“Did you get everything you wanted?” he asked. His phone rang, “Excuse me,” he stood up and went into the kitchen. I nodded.

“BABY,” he says. That must be his girlfriend, or wife...whatever. “OKAY, I WILL MY LOVE, I PROMISE YOU,” he sounds rather giddy. “OKAY SAMKELISIWE, I LOVE YOU, BYE” I was literally waiting for him to come back.

“Please shower, I will fix something for you to eat,”

“Yes Miss,” he sneezed his way into the bathroom. I boiled water for tea. I bought teabags and sugar so he could have something warm to eat these muffins with. He is done now, he just walked into the room whistling. I took my tray with two muffins and a cup of tea and walked to the room.

“May I come in?” I asked.

“Yes please,” he was just getting into bed.

“Please try to finish that while I make that remedy” I said.

“I tried eating earlier, I couldn’t taste anything,” he says.

“All the more reason why you should eat,” I left him in the room while I boiled Stoney, with ginger and med-lemon. I learnt this remedy from my mom when she was still my mom. I found him dozing off. “Guy,” I tapped his shoulder. “I’m sorry, you have to drink this and the pills,”

“I’m sorry I couldn’t finish the other muffin,” he said sitting up straight.

“One is okay,” I gave him the remedy and a few flu tablets. They will help ease the headaches.

“I hope it’s not horrible,” he says.

“I think it’s horrible,” he gulped down the pills with the hot burning remedy. Which made me feel sorry for his oesophagus.

“Done!” he said placing the cup on the side drawer.

“Take off your vest,” I demanded.

“What?!?” he recoiled in confusion. That might have come out wrong.

“I mean, please take off your shirt. I want your chest,” I paused seeing that I wasn't making sense. “I need to rub your chest with Vicks,” I say lowly. “If you don’t mind...it’ll help you. I’m sorry” He did as I said and fixed himself. He

sighed and then cleared his throat. I scooped a little bit of the Vicks with my middle finger, spread it all over my palms and then gently rubbed his chest.

“It’s burning my eyes,” he whined.

“I’m sorry, but it’ll help,” I said staring down at his chest. I can tell that he is looking at me, but I will keep my eyes down. “All done,”

“Thank you, Miss,” he put his vest back on.

“You’re welcome Guy, sleep now,”

PLEASE REACT, SHARE AND LET ME KNOW
YOUR THOUGHTS♡

INSERT 4

HUSBAND

noun

(Plural: husbands)

1. The master of a house; the head of a family; a house holder

2. A man in a marriage or marital relationship, especially in relation to his spouse

Guy has been asleep since four in the evening, the time now is eight thirty and he is still snoring. Let me just fix my bed on the floor like

he did last night. I opened the wardrobe and it made a loud squeaking noise. He moaned. Oh! fuckery fuck! He opened his eyes and looked at me.

“I’m sorry...I’m so sorry,” I whispered in panic.

“You apologize a lot...” he says half yawning,

“I’m sorry,” I apologized again unintentionally. He chuckled.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

“Making my bed. I’m tired of watching movies” he sat up straight.

“On the floor?” he asked. I nodded. “Have you been on the floor this entire time?” I nodded again. “I’m sorry, let me get on the floor. You may take back the bed...”

“No, you have a cold,”

“That floor is cold; trust me you will wake up just like me tomorrow.” He says. “Look, grab a blanket, sleep here with me,”

“With you,” I say.

“Well not with me, but next to me...it’s cold and you...” he is panicking now.

“Guy, it’s okay...I understand,” I went over to the

other side of the bed with the laptop. "Do you want to watch?" I asked.

"Let's get a new movie, that one's old," he took the laptop and connected it to his phone and went on Netflix. He asked me to pick a movie but I've been watching the whole day and I don't know any new movies so he picked. He picked Jumanji...which is interesting. We've been laughing our asses off for the past half an hour now and I was actually genuinely laughing. Sometimes I had to restrain myself from laughing too hard, my whole body is still in pain.

"Miss," he says out of the blue. I looked at him but his eyes are still fixed on the screen. When his head turned, I quickly threw my eyes back on the screen. "May I ask something?" I nodded.

“Why was he beating you last night, when I found you?” I experienced a moment where I had to joggle my memory. My heart sank. I had forgotten about that for a few minutes. Now I started feeling the pains I had been feeling all over my body without laughing. I took a deep breath in...I held it for some time. “You don’t have to answer the question if you are not comfortable,”

“It’s okay, I will answer you...” I fixed my sitting. “He had beaten me the previous night to because I told my parents that he was beating, I was actually telling them that I wanted a divorce,” I said,

“What did they say?” he slightly turned to face me.

“They said they’d help us find good therapists

so Ndumiso and I could fix our marriage,”

“What the fuck? They sent you right back...” I nodded.

“Well, when you found me, he was beating me because he found birth control pills in my bag. He called me a murderer and he is quite right. I’ve been killing my own children. He was spitting in my face and calling me names, and...”

“You can stop,” I looked at Guy and I knew that I was just about to cry.

“Excuse me,” I jumped out of bed and limped to the bathroom. I wanted to be strong and not cry but the memory of Ndumiso beating me and insulting me disturbs me more than I’d like it to. He knocked. I opened; this is really embarrassing.

“I’m really sorry. I’m so weak...” I said wiping my eyes.

“You have every right to cry,” he pulled me closer and hugged me. I found myself wrapping my arms around his waist and completely letting him swallow me in his arms. He rested his head on the top of my head and squeezed me. I didn’t even care.

“This is really stupid,” I say backing away. “I’m a fucking grown woman and I am crying. Ndumiso was right, I shouldn’t think, just listen obey,”

“Nah, that’s bullshit. What kind of messed up person would say such a thing to his own wife...” he leaned against the wall. “Give me your address, let me sort this Dumi guy out,”

“No, sort him how?” I cleaned my eyes.

“I have my ways,” he says.

“I need to go back to my husband. I will ask for forgiveness and things will go back to the way they were...” I went into the room.

“Back to the way they were? You mean back to him beating on you every second of the day?” he looks a little angry.

“Not every second of the day,” did I just defend Ndumiso? Yes! I did...I am a dumb fuck.

“Fuck Miss!” he says sharply. “It doesn’t matter how many times he beats on you; no man

should put his hands on a woman. Never!”

“He said we’d go to therapy together,” I defended him again.

“Let me guess, he also said he was sorry and that he loves you, he’d never do it again, he doesn’t want to lose you?” I’ve heard those lines before.

“Perhaps he means it this time. I will just apologize and and and...”

“Are you listening to yourself?” he took a step toward me. “Miss, that is fear speaking through you,” he protested.

“But what will I do? I can’t stay here forever. Who’s going to tell me what to do or how to do it? Ndumiso did everything for me. I need to save my marriage”

“So you will apologize to this son of a bitch for nearly killing you,”

“No, I will apologize for running away when he was disciplining me...”

“Discipl...what are you, a scholar?” I don’t know what to say to this Lucky guy anymore.

“I have to” I mumbled.

“At least, just let me drop you off when I come

back from work tomorrow,” I nodded. “Thank you,” he added.

I wonder what’s Guy’s story? Where does he come? What does he like? I know he has a girlfriend called Samkelisiwe, he sometimes calls her Sam. He always says he loves her at the end of their phone conversation. I think he has a son named Mthobisi that he doesn’t quite get along with; but he loves him. Either than the fact that he really enjoys his cigarettes and showering. But we all have a story man and Guy is just too much of an empty page for my liking.

Guy left for work very early this morning. He said he’d be back really late because he has something he needs to take care of. Unfortunately; Guy won’t find me here when he comes back because I have gone back to my

house. I left a note on the bed that reads;

I AM SORRY, I HAD TO GO BACK.

NDUMISO IS ALL I KNOW AND HAVE. I AM NOT EXPECTING YOU TO UNDERSTAND.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY, I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU WHAT YOU DID FOR ME GUY.

LOVE

MISS

P.S DON'T LOOK FOR ME

There was no way I was going to let Guy take me back home unless I had a death wish. I had to make him believe I'd let him take me, or, I get the feeling that he was never going to let me go.

I remember seeing cabs outside Spar so I got one of the drivers to take me to my house and promised to pay him when I get there. I rang the on the intercom outside the gate. He should be home now.

“HELLO” his voice sent chills down my spine. My intestines started twisting and turning, I could literally vomit them out. I opened my mouth in attempt to speak but my tongue is just dry. “WHO’S THERE?”

“NDUMISO,” I uttered. “IT’S TUMI,” to Ndumiso I am Tumi, to hell with Rainbow. He says it’s more civilized. he said Tumelo Gumede had ring than Rainbow Gumede.

“WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?” he asked.

“PLEASE BRING TWO HUNDRED RANDS, I CAME WITH A CAB,” he dropped the phone. I looked back at the driver who was staring at me like I’m planning on running away without paying him.

“He’s coming now...” he nodded nonchalantly. Ndumiso emerged from the main door. He is wearing his grey sweatpants and nothing on top with his black Nike trainers. It looks like he was working out. He has a bandage around his head from that night. I’m proud of myself for that.

“Thank you for bringing her sir” he gave the driver R300.

“Hello my love,” I said with a forced smile.

“Get in,” he pushed me inside. I just need to prepare myself for this beating and then apologize. Or maybe just apologize, hopefully he won’t hurt me. We walked in and he shut the door behind him.

“Ndumiso, before you get mad, please let me explain,” I rubbed my palms together.

“Speak, I’m listening,” he says.

“I got really scared that night and I thought I was going to die. I was in so much pain...I just needed to get somewhere safe...” I said trembling with fear.

“So you ran away from your husband and

wondered around?”

“I’m sorry,” I whispered.

“I forgive you baby,” he says.

“Thank you,” I stood there before him helpless and fearful. Please heaven just propel him to hug me.

“But first,” he slapped me. “I need to make things right. The fuck you think this?” it’s okay, just be strong and endure, he won’t hit me forever. It’ll just be a few minutes and then he will apologize out of guilt after that things will go back to normal. And so, it starts. He kicked me while I was down awakening bruises that were starting to healing. He is kicking me like

he is kicking a man. "You whore! Why the fuck did you embarrass me like that?"

"I'm sorry!" I cried. Fuck, this is so overrated. Doesn't he see that we are literally doing the same thing over and over again?

"You sorry for what," he consumed my neck with both his big hands, "Bitch bitch bitch...." He kept saying as his grip got tighter and tighter around my neck. "I hate you" he said that syllable my syllable making his loathe towards me clearer with every single letter. He stopped and stood. "Get yourself cleaned up; you look horrible" he walked into his office. He left me alone on the tiles trying to make sense of everything. Thank God that is over, now things can go back to normal. I just need to be perfect for him. That's all.

It's been a week since I returned from Guy's place. He hasn't been particularly nice to me. He hasn't touched me or spoken to me like a husband does to his wife. He chased me out of our room so I've been sleeping in one of the guest rooms since I returned. Today is Saturday, the last time I checked. He told me not to go to work until he tells me. I'm busy in the kitchen preparing our supper, he said he was on the way about 20 minutes ago...that should be him.

"Hello, love" I said with a smile. He walked in, then, my parents followed after. What is happening? "Daddy" I ran and threw myself at him and he embraced me.

"Ice-cream," he held me tight. I went over to my mother with open arms.

“Mama,” she gave me a cold hug. It felt like a hug from a stranger.

“Tumelo sit down,” she demanded.

“Should I make tea?” I asked. I know what this is about, Ndumiso told my parents I ran away and now they are here to lecture me,

“Tumi, your mother said sit!” daddy said. Ndumiso and I immediately took a sit in the couch; my parents sat right in front of us.

“You ran away from your husband’s house,” mama says. She’s very angry. I looked at Ndumiso.

“I came back mama, and I apologized,” I said.

“Baby, you can’t just pick up and run. You are a married woman now,” daddy says.

“I know daddy, I’ve learnt my lesson...it won’t happen again” I said remorsefully.

“Where did you?” mama asked.

“To a hotel,”

“But you left your card and wallet behind...”
Ndumiso pointed out.

“Tumelo! I will not let you treat this guy this way, he is your husband and you ought to respect

him. Where did you go?" mama shouted.

"I ran...I ran until I couldn't see the house anymore and then a man found me and took me with him,"

"You were with a man?" Ndumiso inquired. I nodded.

"Nothing happened, I promise you my love. He was just being a good Samaritan..."

"Tumelo my child..." my father rubbed his eyes and then sighed in disappointment.

"I'm sorry daddy..." I said.

“This is just too much for me, deal with this girl love,” mama walked out. I don’t understand why my mother hates me so much, I don’t understand why she never protects me from anything. Even when I was still little; when I’d get hurt, I’d obviously run to her expecting her to help me. But she’d always tell me I’m a big girl I should sort myself out. It just hurts me but I’m used to it now. One thing I know about my mother is that she loves recognition, power and status. She doesn’t want to lose Ndumiso because Ndumiso will leave with his money and my parents’ status. So, my father lectured me and made it seem like I’m the problem in this marriage, he made me go down on my knees and apologize to my loving husband for not respecting him and for not being a noble wife; which I did.

After my parents left; we had our supper in

silence. I take it he is not ready to speak to me. I did the dishes and then went upstairs to get ready for bed. The door opened; it can only be him.

“Tumi,” he called.

“In here,” I said from the bathroom. I looked at him in the mirror as he walked in. I turned around and faced him.

“You know I had to call your parents here to put you in line because you are out of control,”

I nodded, “I understand,”

“Good,” he says. “Now, this man you were with, do you know him?” I shook my head, “Don’t lie to me baby,”

“I don’t know him” he got closer.

“If you ever try something like that again I will kill you. You are mine; you belong to me and no one else can have you but me” he whispered in my ear. I just kept nodding, just agreeing with everything he was saying. “Assure me that you will never me again,” fuck! How small is his ego? Let me massage it anyway in exchange of my safety.

“I will never leave you again,” I said.

“Tell me you love me”

“I love you Ndumiso,” I got closer and kissed him. “Let me just show you how much,” I kissed

him again, but he pushed me away. "I'm sorry," I said.

"Look nice tomorrow evening, we are going to the Mthembu's for dinner," he says.

"Honey, we always go and my body is painful, can't I just rest," I begged.

"What did I just say to you?" he said almost muffling his words.

"Okay, Mthembu's it is," I sighed and turned around to face the mirror.

"I said" he got closer. "What did I just say to you woman?"

“You said to look beautiful, we’re having dinner with the Mthembu’s tomorrow evening,” I repeated his words.

“Good. Remember Tumi, don’t talk, don’t think...just do honey,” I nodded. He kissed the back of my neck. “It looks like I have to tighten the rules around here,”

“You don’t have to do that,” his eyes got filled with contempt in a matter of seconds. “I’m sorry,” I looked at my feet.

“Look at me,” he demanded, I lifted up my head and looked at him. “You are very beautiful baby...you’re good at that. Just do that, look beautiful for me and I will take care of

everything else,” I nodded. “Change that, wear the black one I love and then join me in our bedroom,” he kissed the back of my neck again. I forced a smile. “Don’t keep me waiting me waiting...” he exited.

I exhaled and squeezed the edge of the sink. My eyes are burning up, I’m about to cry. Please don’t cry.

“Please don’t cry. Please don’t cry. Please don’t cry” I chanted to myself. I went into our bedroom and found him waiting for me.

“You haven’t changed,” he says.

“It’s in here, just give me a minute,” I walked over to my closet.

“Don’t worry about it because I’m going to take it off anyway; come here baby,” I obeyed. He got a hold of my hand and sat me on top of his dick. He sniffed my chest and said; “I missed you,”

“I’m back,” he looked at me.

“You smell really nice” he said.

“Thank you,” he flipped me over to get on top. He started undressing me and I laid there pretending to be into this moment we’re having as husband and wife. In all honesty, I’m just thinking about Guy, I haven’t stopped thinking about him since I left him. How he must be feeling, how he must have felt when he realized I was gone. I really can’t get him out of my head.

His rough African hair and his big black watery eyes. His raspy voice and dark rough skin. He is a kind soul.

Well as you know the rest is history. He humped, huffed and puffed, turned me in all the positions he so desired, grunted and cussed, and, as usual, I screamed my lungs out making sure that his ego and confidence are massaged and consoled.

#Bonusinsert

PLEASE REACT, SHARE AND LET ME KNOW
YOUR THOUGHTS♡

INSERT 5

RETURN

Verb

1. To come or go back to a place or person
2. To turn back, to retreat

Here we are at the Mthembu's. Time to put on a show, be perfect, don't say anything that'll embarrass Ndumiso. Basically; be Barbie. I have on a gold and navy gown by Versace that he handpicked, it matches his suit. All the couples are here; The Gumede's; that's my husband and I, the Mthembus our hosts, the Blacks, Langas and the Shangases. I thought it was just going to be us and the Mthembus but you know what they say, 'the more the merrier,' and more pretending for me.

I'm in the kitchen with the ladies just talking about children and motherhood. They all have kids but myself.

"What about you Tumi?" that's Sandy Mthembu catching me off guard. Sandy is very calm and cool, has got a mind-blowing sense of style and loves her champagne, husband and 2 daughters honey. Her husband is business partners with Ndumiso. They dig up diamonds, cut and sell them.

"What about me?" I asked.

"When are you planning on giving us little nieces and nephews? You know we're waiting for you and I am certain Ndumiso cannot wait," she says.

“Poor Ndumiso,” says Caroline Shangase, who also - by the way - happens to be the death of me. This woman always has her nose in the air thinking she is better than all of us. She’s going to start going on about how much money her man deposited into her bank account. She loves travelling to buy clothes and I hate her.

Meanwhile her husband is a fucking dirty cop. He’s a detective, who makes peanuts but the money he makes from covering up crimes for his friends affords him entry into Grade A level of exception dinner parties such as these. I mean the man has no class and lacks the requisite subtlety for being in such company.

“Ah...jah...well...” I stuttered, “We have enough time, we’re just taking it slow,” Ndumiso and I are the youngest couple here so I mean it when I say we have enough time.

“I see,” Caroline says. I wish I could punch her nose.

“Won’t you be too old by then?” asked Phumelele Langa. Phume is very bossy and loud, she likes giving orders and she is lazy as fuck. She literally lives for Botox because bitch knows she’s ancient, she wants to look as young as some of us do...I don’t even try. People sometimes look at me and think I’m 19 or something. Phumelele’s a mid-wife; and I do commend her for that. Her husband owns a construction company and I really don’t understand why he is here as much as I don’t understand why Shangase is here. but I figured with him buying his material from overseas; Ndumiso might be using him to transport coke into the country. He thinks I don’t know that he’s ventured into that business but I do...when

you spend a lot of your time with your mouth shut you get to hear a lot of things and see a lot.

“Motherhood is the best hood Tumi my love, you will not regret it,” I forced a smile. That’s Diane Black, she’s white and is what society calls ‘wife material’ she’s just all about taking care of her family and cleaning her house and making more babies. Her husband is a surgeon, in fact he just promoted to head of surgery two months ago. They have got to be the cleanest couple in this room but I’m sure they’ve got a stain somewhere. There’s no way they’d be here if they were as clean as they are presented.

“Ladies,” my husband walked in.

“Mr Gumede,” the ladies blushed. Ndumiso is a very good-looking man; muscular, clean, dark

and just has the perfect charisma.

“We were just telling your wife that it’s about time she blessed us with your own children,” says Diane Black.

“Oh Diane, just you wait” Ndumiso says looking at me.

“Honey, we have all the time in the world to make babies,” I say sipping on juice. I don’t take alcohol. Well I stopped because I never want Ndumiso to catch me off guard or do anything to me that I won’t remember.

“The time is now my love,” he says.

“Give the guy some babies Tumi, you don’t want all of that sexiness to go to waist,” Caroline says and winks at him. The nigga smirked and winked back.

“Whooo, Tumi, better hold on to your man...” says Sandy Mthembu.

“Excuse me,” I exited.

“Caroline though,” I heard someone say when I walked out. I went into the loo to get a hold of myself. Even though I hate Ndumiso with every single atom of my existence, I still do love him, he is my husband and I have every right to feel the way I do when any woman is making unnecessary sexual remarks at him. And what I hate is that he and Caroline actually have history. He once cheated on me with her.

Ndumiso was in the shower when his phone rang, he told me to pick it up and it was her saved under C-line. "Hey baby, how about we meet at our usual spot tonight. I'm horny"

"Caroline," I called her name.

"Drop the call honey! Drop it..." Ndumiso shouted in the shower and in just a few seconds he was out of the shower naked and dripping wet.

"She says that you should meet at your usual spot, she's horny" I told him.

"Why are you going through my phone?" he said with anger all over his voice.

"You asked me to pick it up," I said.

“Yeah, that’s right,” he says. “It won’t happen again,” he hugged me. Things were tense for a while between us. I was disgusted at him. From that day on she and I never talked aside from when we have these gatherings. What I hate the most is the fact that Ndumiso is entertaining her bullshit. She did that on purpose, in spite of me. One day my tongue will slip when her fat frog husband is around and I will accidentally spill the tea. Caroline is older than Ndumiso and that just so disgusting.

We’re finally home. I’m sure the food was amazing, I couldn’t taste shit because of the anger that was at the back of my throat. I was silent the whole ride home, I want him to feel my wrath. When we got home; he went into his office and poured himself a glass of whiskey and I immediately prepared for bed. He walked

in while I was putting on my night gown.

“Are you okay?” he asked. I looked at him and thought to myself. ‘now you care’

“I’m fine,”

“Then why the long face?” he says.

“Ask Caroline,” I say

“Don’t be childish, it was just a harmless joke,” he says.

“Forgive me for my petulance then...” I said and went into the bathroom.

“Baby, it was a joke,”

“She did it on purpose and you entertained her...”

“Fuck, come one Tumi,”

“You come on Ndumiso, you get mad at me when a man greets at the store and you beat me up for it and when I get jealous; I’m being childing and the worst part is that you actually entertain this bitch. I swear Ndumiso if this bullshit continues, I will tell Shangase about your little meetings with his wife...”

“That sounds like a threat,” he says leaning against the door jamb. I turned around and

looked at him.

“Take it how you want Ndumiso...” where the hell am I getting all this attitude?

“You’ve grown some balls I see...” he says.

“come here, stand here right in front of me,” he pointed at where he wants me. I obeyed and scoffed. “Are you threatening me?”

“Ndumiso, I am just tired of you making me feel like I’m not good enough when that bitch is around. If you get jealous and beat me up for it, then I think I also have every right to get jealous and threaten you if that will bring me peace,” I saw his big hand coming from a mile away moving with the speed of light. I felt the impact on my face. I stayed down with my hand on my cheek. My heart is burning and my head is throbbing.

“You’ve grown some balls...” he kicked me on the stomach with his Italian formal shoe. I grunted trying to not die. “You threatening me? Is that it...you throwing some threats around you dumb whore,” he also kept grunting as his shoe came in contact with my body. The pain I felt was beyond my understanding; even crying was not going to abate it. I just stayed down and tried to breathe.

It's morning. My body is stiff and painful. What happened? I need to wake Ndumiso up and get him ready for work. My head is throbbing and my tongue is dry, what the fuck happened? I opened my eyes and saw my bed neatly made; I'm on the floor... I passed out on the bathroom floor; he was beating me up last night...that's all I remember. I just remember telling myself to breathe. There's a note right by my head. I

forced myself to sit up straight as hard and painful as it was, I grabbed the note and read;

I'M SORRY TUMI, YOU REALLY MADE ME MAD.
I'M AT WORK NOW.

I LOVE YOU

Ndumiso is heartless. He left me unconscious on the cold hard ground and he went to bed and slept soundly. After that he woke and went to work and his conscious allowed him to even leave a stupid note. I felt tears welling up from deep down inside. I feel dumb. This is the man I married...a psychopath. I married a monster.

I quickly put on some tights and a warm turtle neck. I packed a few things, called a cab and directed him to Guy's flat. I waited outside the

building for about an hour until someone with a disc came down. I kept my head down so they won't start asking any questions. I knocked and knocked until I just got tired, clearly Guy is at work. I sat in front of the door and waited for him. Whenever I hear people speaking, I get scared. I left my phone, because he might be able to track me down. I just took toiletries, a few clothes and shoes, just the basics. It's almost 22:00 and I am hungry, I hope Guy didn't move. Please tell me he still stays here. My stomach started rumbling; I'm hungry now...I haven't had anything to eat since last night. This is just wonderful. Growing up, I never struggled for anything, I had all that I wanted. I've never smelt poverty or even experienced it. Back at home, in the eastern cape, at Mama's place of birth, I was always an outcast. My cousins never liked me because they thought I was spoilt, and to top things off, my Xhosa was very poor; but it's gotten better as I grew. I read

a lot of books and watched Xhosa shows just to get familiarize myself with the tongue. When I was little, I just knew gogo (granny), molweni (greetings) and other basic words. I spent most of my time inside my father's car finishing his data and eating chips.

Going home for mama was always bitter sweet. Bitter because she's a proud woman and people dislike her due to the fact that she actually has money and sweet because she gets to flaunt all her achievements at them, both the family members and neighbors. My father did have friends, but his presence was just obligatory. They liked him because he was very humble and giving; which mama hated. She didn't want to go broke. As if giving R100 to uncle Themba would actually bankrupt us.

Look at me now, I have all the money in the world, yet I am outside, cold, hungry, alone and scared in a foreign territory. All the money I have can't help me now...it can't rescue my sorry ass. I heard keys dangling and I jumped to my feet. It's Guy. I let out a tremulous sigh.

"Miss," he says. My eyes started tearing. He marched toward me,

"Stop right there," I said sternly and he obeyed.

"Miss, its me...are you okay?" he looks shaken,

"You need to promise me," I stopped to catch my breath, I feel I'm crying with my stomach. It's so hard to get the words out. "Fuck!" I cried, "My husband is a sick man. He hurts me all the

time and...and...and” I stuttered, “my parents love him, they adore him. To them; he is perfect so I can’t run home. Basically; I have no one...no one. I am on my own...”

“You are not on...”

“No stop!” I disturbed him “Let me speak. You seem like a very nice guy Guy, and you have to promise that you will help me,”

“I promise, I will help you, Miss,”

“Promise me that you will never hurt me in any way, physically, emotionally and any other way possible,”

“I promise,”

“Okay,” I cleaned my eyes, “Please help me, I’m done” he came closer and hugged me that’s when I literally broke down.

“I’m sorry...” he whispered.

“I’m so tired, I’m tired of crying and being in pain and living in fear,” I said in the middle of crying.

“I just want to eat ice cream and burgers and wear a bright yellow top and a pair of skinny jeans and sparkly sandals,” I don’t even know what the fuck I’m saying. He chuckled.

“Don’t worry we will get you all of that, I promise,” he said holding me for dear life. I didn’t care that he was hurting me, I just wanted

to bask in the glory of this moment.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 6

QUESTION

Noun

(Plural: questions)

1. A sentence, phrase or word which asks for information, reply or response; an interrogative.
2. A subject or topic for consideration or investigation.

3. A doubt or challenge about the truth or accuracy of a matter.

After my moment of weakness and breaking down; I felt so embarrassed and ashamed, I felt even weaker for running to a strange man. He locked me inside and went to the shops while I bathed. I took a quick shower and waited for him in the bedroom. He hadn't changed the bedding since I left so I did that. Though I'm in pain I feel a little fresh and rejuvenated. But I just keep thinking about Ndumiso's reaction when he realizes I am gone. What if he is trying to find me? and what if he eventually does find me? Oh God, he'll hurt Guy, he'll probably kill him. I don't think I can live with myself knowing that I put his life in danger and I would never ever want that.

Guy is back!

“Hi,” I said.

“Hey, I got us some food,” he says taking a seat on the bed right in front of me.

“They’re still open?” I asked.

“Drive-thru,” he says. “When did you get here?” he bit into his chicken.

“I think around 10 am, I can’t remember, I just wanted to get here...” I swallowed.

“I’m sorry that I came home late,” he looked at me and I looked away.

“You didn’t know I was here, it’s okay. I’m just glad I am not there anymore. And I’m happy to be back here with you.”

“I’m happy to see you,” he smiled. It’s been a while since I’ve seen a genuine smile.

“I’m happy to see you too,” I smiled. “I owe you an explanation as to why I decided to come back and why I left”

“You don’t have to,”

“I want to,” he nodded signaling me to speak.

“Ndumiso is sick, mentally. He beat me up last night and it seems that I had passed out on the bathroom floor. I woke up this morning feeling so cold and my body was so painful. When I opened my eyes, I realized that I was still on the bathroom floor and he left me a note apologizing,”

“This bastard left you on the floor and he didn’t even try to help you. What if you were seriously injured?”

“When I saw the note, I just felt so stupid and dumb that it only clocked in that moment that my husband was seriously ill. I mean, all these years of living in pain and fear...”

“At least you realized it Miss, some people only come to that realization just before they die,”

“I could have died,” the pitch of my voice went high.

“Eat your burger...” he said.

After eating our food; we prepared for bed. It was already late anyway. I'm in the bathroom brushing my teeth. I always gaze at my reflection when I see a mirror. Sometimes I feel like I am not myself so a long gaze at my reflection pulls me back to reality. Guy Knocked.

“Come in,” I said. “I'm done,” he came in with a towel around his waist. I excused him. When I got into the room, I saw that he had fixed his bed on the floor. I don't want him to be on the floor, I slept better the last time he was here

next to me. I fixed my side of the bed and his by the door. I got into bed and buried myself and. Thank God I brought a few clothes, I at least have pjs and under wears here. Guy is singing again;

“FROM NOW ON

I’M GONNA LOVE YOU LIKE THERE’S NO
TOMORROW

I DON’T WANNA WAIT UNTIL OUR TURN

HAS COME AND GONE” he sang his lungs out.

What is this guy’s story really? I would ask but I feel like I am in no position to be asking such questions; I’m in the ‘damsel in distress’ position. Come to think of it, that’s the only position I’ve ever occupied. My parents controlled me until I got married, they even chose a husband for me and made it seem like I’m the one that made the decision to marry

Ndumiso (story for another day) and then from there, I went to Ndumiso who literally did everything for me.

“Miss,” he calls me. I uncovered my head. “And then? Where’s my bed?” I sat up straight.

“I fixed your bed right next to me. I slept better the last time we slept together; if you don’t mind please...”

“I have no problem with that arrangement at all,” he said. “I will be warm and comfortable,”

“It’s a win win...”

“Indeed,” he switched off the lights and jumped

into bed.

“Goodnight Guy,” I said.

“Goodnight Miss,” he yawned. He knows my name is Rainbow and I know his is Lucky, but I still have no clue as to why we insist on calling each other Miss and Guy. If I were a good writer, I’d write a story about Lucky and I, and I’d title it whatever corny shit I can think of, maybe add my own spices here and there. In the story I would not be this weak and tamed. But our story hasn’t unfolded yet. Let me sleep, my head needs to literally shutdown and just relax.

My body is aware its morning but I still want to sleep some more. I have no idea what the time is but Guy is awake. I can hear a cluster of noises coming from the kitchen.

“Miss,” he called from the kitchen. I don’t want to wake up just yet. “Miss” he came in and sat next to me.

“Let me sleep a little while longer, please,” I mumbled under the blanket.

“You need to wake up and shower, eat, take some meds then you may sleep again” he said and pulled the blanket from over my head.

“Please,” I begged.

“Please,” he took to begging too. Fine...he wins. I attempted to sit up straight but the pain pushed me back to the pillow as I cried in agony. “Let me see,” he lifted up my shirt. “You are

bruised all over,”

“I know,” I scoffed softly.

“Miss, give me this guy’s work address or whatever let me put a bullet through his skull,”

“No...” I paused. I wanted to be sure about what I was about to say. “I’ll do that myself” I grunted as I pulled myself up.

“Yes, Miss,” he nodded.

I took a quick shower. I just couldn’t stand for too long. At some point I got really paranoid thinking that Ndumiso might come in and want to have sex with me while I’m in dire pain. I put

on some tights and a sweater, something that won't hold me tight. Guy has already fixed the bed and left one blanket for me. I really need to find a way to pay him back; he's been really good to me. He came in with a tray.

"Porridge?" he says smiling ever so enthusiastically.

"Yes please," I immediately started eating. I am really hungry. "I don't remember the last time I had porridge, where's yours?"

"I'm not really hungry, I will eat later. He sighed loudly as he sat on the bed.

"Guy," I called him. He looked at me. "Do you think you can teach me how to use a gun?" I

have never seen Guy with gun but he does look like the type of guy who knows how to use one.

“A gun? You want to use a gun? To do what?” I stared at him. I’m sure my gaze gives a clear indication to not ask any further questions.

“Okay,” he waved his paws in the air.

“Thank you,” I continued eating.

Two weeks have passed and I’m still with Guy. I still have nightmares when I close my eyes but the good thing is, I haven’t gotten a beating in two weeks as well. My body is not as painful anymore and Guy is still Guy. He left about five days ago, said he had business to take care of and he’d be back as soon as he was done. He bought me a whole lot of food and other supplies. I enjoyed being by myself for about

two days, now I'm starting to worry. What if Ndumiso got to him? What if he is torturing him somewhere? Or worse, what if he killed him? I don't have a phone with me, so I can't even call him...hold on.

"Miss!!!" he's here...Guy is here. I stood by the kitchen door and waited for him to open. "It's me Lucky, don't panic," he announced outside. Honestly, I am just so happy to hear his voice; I can't wait for him to get inside. There he is...I couldn't help myself, when he walked in; I jumped at and he embraced me. "Hey," he said under his breath holding me.

"Are you okay?" I asked. "I was so worried,"

"I'm fine Miss, just a little cold. Are you okay?" I backed away when it dawned on me that I had

overstayed my welcome in his arms.

“I’m sorry, I’m just glad you’re okay” I cleared my throat and then squeezed my wrist out of embarrassment.

“I got you something,” he opened his suitcase and took out a squashed-up paper bag from McDonalds. “I’m sorry it’s all squashed up, I know how much you love burgers...you said the other day that you want to eat burgers so I thought I should get you one,” I chuckled.

“Thank you, I really appreciate it, but what are you going to eat?” I asked.

“I got myself one, but let me shower first,”

“Okay,” we went into the bedroom. I sat down while he undressed. He was left with his drawers on and a very nasty thought passed through my head. What if I cheat on Ndumiso with Guy? He is a good-looking decent guy...except he has a girlfriend, Sam. He went into the shower and immediately started singing a love song that I do not know. Why is he always singing love songs?

“You must really be in love?” I asked when he entered.

“Why?” he smirked.

“You are always singing love songs...”

“I guess I just love love...”

“Love,” I whispered under my breath. “I don’t think that thing is real,” I said out loud this time.

“What? Love?” I nodded. “That’s not true, love is real...” he protested

“Ndumiso said he loved me, and he beat me up every chance he got,” I took a bite of my burger. “If that is love then, fuck it”

“Trust me; that Dumisani guy is just sick and he is not a man. Why would anyone not love you...I mean look at you, you’re gorgeous and smart...”

I chuckled. “I’m not smart...” I looked down dismissing what he just said. He must be crazy.

“Let’s agree to disagree,” he smiled. “Do you want to go somewhere tomorrow?” he asked.

“What if he finds me?”

“He will find you with me,” he says.

“Ndumiso has guys that wear black, not to sound condescending but...” my eyes squinted.

He smirked. “Miss, I’m not scared of a bunch of guys in black tights and coats.” I smiled. I’m not sure what he meant by that but it sounded like he was saying I should trust him and there is no way you can’t trust Guy.

Here I am in a taxi with Guy on the driver’s side

driving to God knows where.

“Where are we going?” I asked looking out the window taking the fresh air.

“Where I work,” he says.

“At a taxi station,” my eyes widened.

“Yes, but it’s called a taxi rank...” his phone rang. He picked it up.

“BABA,” He says. “YES SIR,” he steered the wheel making a sudden and abrupt U-turn.

“Sorry Miss, hang on tight,” he says. “I’M ON IT BABA,” he ended the call and concentrated on driving.

“Is everything okay?” I asked checking my seatbelt because the speed at which he is driving, we might just die.

“Everything is perfect, just sit still and try not to ask too many questions, better yet, just don’t speak” he said. My heart dropped to my guts. I held my breath willing myself to not vomit. He glanced at me and then back at the road. “Hold tight Miss,” he ordered.

“I’m trying. Can you slow down...please, I want to vomit!” I cried under.

“Just a few more seconds, we’re almost there,” I nodded. I wonder what is happening? Maybe he just received bad news. He pressed his lips

together as he swerved the steering wheel making the car seem like a weightless object. A muscle in his jaw twitched as he came to an abrupt stop. I looked at him as his eyes travelled around the taxi; his gaze was fueled with determination. He doesn't look like someone that has just received bad news; neither does he look like one who has just received good news.

“What’s happening Guy?” I asked gathering myself and making sense of this heated moment that I found myself in. “Is everything okay?”

“Just stay put, everything is fine,” he leaned in closer to me and I backed away. He got closer, reached his hand over. What is he trying to do? I froze. He searched on the side of my chair with

his hand while his eyes kept mine in place. “I need you to get closer” he says, “Now”

“Get closer?” I asked. I felt his hand on my waist.

“Closer Miss,” he pushed me forward. I could feel his breath hitting against the tip of my nose; his breath smells like nicotine, gum and beer. He finally pulled away. “Thank you,” his hand came back with a pistol.

“What are you going to do with that?” I asked in panic.

“Use it, Miss” was he going to kill me. What did I do? Did I do something wrong. I must have done something wrong; I always do something wrong; I’m Rainbow. My lower lip slightly

dropped.

“On me?” I whispered.

“Keep silent and...don’t...move” he took on a stick staccato. He pointed his gun at my direction.

“Guy” my voice cracked.

“Do you trust me?” he asked adjusting his pistol. Honestly, at this point, I don’t know. I nodded, maybe that’ll convince him to spare my life.

“Don’t move,” he mimed. BOOM!!! The gun went off. I looked back and saw man falling to his death. Tears ran down my cheek as I froze not

breathing. "I'm sorry" I could tell from looking at his lips what he was saying, I can't hear anything from the sound of the gun going off, it was way too close to my ears and frankly; I have never had a gun go off in my presence. He exerted force on the accelerator and drove off. I am still shaken and still temporarily deaf. He reached for my hand and squeezed it. "Miss," he called. I am hearing him but he sounds very far. I looked at him as his eyes were travelling between me and the road. "Miss...Miss"

My heart is still beating fast and I am still frozen but I am coming back to life. Him squeezing my hand is cathartic. And then everything came back, he shot a man outside a house. I saw the man fall down. Like a cannon ball; sounds hit me, I could hear properly now...though the sound of the present sounds rather too loud but I can hear Guy shouting my name; well what he

has decided to be my name.

“You killed a man” I told him, just in case that is not what he thought he was doing or my eyes were deceiving me.

“Don’t say anything...just breathe”

“Don’t tell me to breathe,” my voice took on a stern tone. “Why did you kill that man...?” I asked. He glanced at me and then back at the road. “Stop the car...” I said, I needed to vomit.

“I cannot. This is enemy ground...”

“I don’t care what ground this is...stop this fucking car and let me get off” I demanded.

“I said no!” his gaze went dark and cold.

“Guy...” a lot of questions were running through my head. Who the hell is Guy? Why did he kill that man? But most importantly who is this man that rescued me from my abusive husband?

“Just a few more minutes and we’re home free...if I stop here; we might die...”

“We?!? I didn’t do anything”

“Miss! Shut the fuck up...shut up and let me drive...I swear if I hear one more word from you; I will leave you here!” his words cut sharply through the atmosphere and left a very heavy ambiance of silence. I bit on my lower lip as I

tried to calm myself down and not vomit all over Guy's stupid taxi. We drove in silence for about 10 minutes or so until he finally stopped in the middle of nowhere. There's no house or a moving being in this place. A very nice and remote place to kill a blabbering girl. He swung his door open, marched to my side and pulled my door open. "Get out" he clenched his jaws. I shook my head. He grabbed my arm and pulled me out. He then shut the door behind me and pinned me against the taxi. I got scared, I got really scared and worried. What have I gotten myself into?

"Please don't hurt me...I'm sorry" I quickly apologized. "It won't happen again. Please don't hurt me...please" I begged for him to spare my life. I am breathing out of control out of fear that Guy might hurt me. I've stared death in eye way too many times...this can't be the moment

where death wins. It can't...

“Hurt you?” he tightened his lips together and backed away. “I’m sorry,” even after he had let me go, I still stood against the closed door like I was pinned against it. “Let’s go,” I obeyed and got inside the taxi without fighting him.

“Seatbelt” he ordered and again, I obeyed. We drove off. The entire time I was looking out the window replaying everything in my head. From the moment he got that call until he pulled me out of the taxi. My heart is burning like it does when Ndumiso has just hurt me or is about to hurt me. What just happened? Is Guy a killer? But he said he was a taxi driver, he said we were going to the taxi station. Why did he shoot that innocent man?

PRETTY PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 7

TAME

Adjective

1. Not or no longer wild; domesticated
2. Mild and well-behaved; accustomed to human contact

When we got home, there was still this awkward silence between us. I don't know whether he is mad at me or what? I know I'm not at liberty to be mad at him. But I am a little shaken though. Deep down inside I know Guy would never hurt me, but I suffered a lot in the

hands of a man so I could never trust another man so easily. He changed into a new outfit and then left without saying a word that just confirms that he is mad at me. I stayed alone for the whole day and then around 10 I decided to fix the bed and sleep.

“Miss,” I felt a gentle squeeze on my leg and immediately sat up straight, “May we talk?” I nodded.

“Let me pee first,” I sauntered to the bathroom. I don’t want to pee; I just need to gather myself. I know how all over the place I get when I’m scared. I have a lot of questions for Guy and it would put my mind at ease if I were to have them answered. But then again – who am I to be accorded anything by this ‘saviour’ of mine. I flushed anyway and then joined him back in the

room.

“I’m really sorry about earlier. I didn’t mean to upset you,” I apologized the minute I walked through the door.

“No, Miss...”

“It’s just that you killed a man and then you were driving so fast...I couldn’t hear or breathe or do anything and I thought you were going to kill me...I panicked.” He stared at me which made me cover my mouth with my hand, “You did kill a man right? My mind didn’t make anything up?” he nodded. “Are you a serial killer?” I questioned and he shook his head. “A psychopath? A most wanted criminal?”

“Miss, can you listen please...”

“Are you going to kill me?”

“No!”

“Are you a gangster? A drug lord?”

“Rainbow!” he called sternly and I immediately shut my mouth.

“Look, you shouldn’t have been with me then. It was an impromptu mission. I had to attend to it, we’ve been looking for this target for the past 6 months now,”

“Mission? Target?” What kind of person uses such words? Am I in a movie?

“The less you know, the better” I nodded. I don’t want anything that will put my life in any form of danger. I just want some peace in my life...but I don’t think I will rest knowing that Guy killed a random man after he received a call and he used words such as target and mission. “But I’m at wrong here; I shouldn’t have spoken to you like that...I’m sorry,”

“No! I panicked and as usual I messed things up...”

“You didn’t mess anything up, you panicked and that’s okay...”

“So you are not mad at me?” I bit on my lower lip.

“I should be asking you that question...” he gently took my hand. “Are you mad at me?” I shook my head.

“I’m not,” I said lowly. He smiled and I smiled back. I like seeing him smile, it softens my heart. It’s like drinking water after a long hot day. Or coming home at the end of a very sunny day. He got up and got out of the room, I assume to go to the loo. I am falling asleep again but I can hear his footsteps thudding around the room. The switch flickered and darkness took over the room. He let out a long sigh as he settled into bed.

“Miss,” he called. I got a little annoyed because my body was starting to detach from my mind escaping my catastrophic thoughts, some of

which involve Guy and his identity.

“Yes, Guy”

“I would never hurt you, I promise,” I know he is talking about that episode earlier today when he pulled me out of the taxi and pushed me against it. There’s a beast somewhere inside of him, but it seems like he has mastered the art of taming it. I wonder what brought about that beast...or maybe who and when? How was it created. I wonder if he’d ever killed or hurt a woman before.

“Pinky promise?”

He chuckled softly, “Pinky promise,”

“You can’t break a pinky promise Guy, it’s the ultimate form of promise; the mother of all promises.”

“I don’t plan on breaking it,”

“May ask one more thing?”

“Go on...”

“What did that man do?” there was a gap of silence between my question and his response.

“I can’t tell you that, I’m sorry”

“what do you do for a living,”

He giggled under his breath, "I'm a taxi driver,"

"That kills people?"

"I can't answer that either...all you need to know is that; I would never hurt you and what happened today had to happen but I will never put you in that position ever again. But if you feel scared, you can go, I will understand,"

"I don't want to leave..."

"Then trust me and sleep. You'll still be alive in the morning, you'll see..."

"I trust you Guy," I yawned.

"It's Lucky not Guy,"

"It's Rainbow, not Miss,"

He giggled softly, "so cheeky! Goodnight Miss,"

"Goodnight Guy"

All his answers leave me pondering trying to put things together. But the issue with Guy is that, there is nothing there to put together. He is just a blank page. All I know is that he is Lucky, he has a girlfriend called Sam, probably son a called Mtho and he has a taxi that he drives around.

I like Guy, he is a very reasonable man. I like staying with him and sleeping next to him, though I can't help but think about the next step for me. I need to start over with my life. A life without my mother and father, a life without Ndumiso Gumede...and hopefully in that life, Guy and I will still be friends. Whatever we are, I know I want to have him in my life because in all honesty, he did save me.

This morning, Guy told me to pack my things, said we were going to a new location and I am alive like he said I'd be. I don't know where he is driving to but I know he knows why he is taking me there. Look at me; I am so pathetic...I am subconsciously putting Guy in charge of every move I make, of everything. Just because he said it, it already sits well with me and I have no desire to dispute anything he says. Force of habit; I guess.

“Where are we going?” I asked.

“Work,” I’ve noticed that Guy doesn’t talk much when he’s driving. He is always very focused.

“As like yesterday?” I asked again. He peeked at my direction and a corner of his mouth turned up.

“No, don’t worry...”

“I’m not worried...I’m ready,” I pressed my lips together. He glanced at me again this time he was shocked and in aware and so was I. I don’t know where that came from but I just want Guy to know that I’m not completely weak.

“Ready for what?” he asked.

“For whatever comes,” I squeezed my wrist but he quickly noticed that and then took my hand and kept it in his.

“Don’t do that. It’s okay...”

We drove in silence holding hands. I even forgot that our fingers were interlocked. I stopped daydreaming when the vehicle came to a stop at a very dodgy area; a taxi station. “We’re here,” he took on a sing-song voice.

“Where’s here? The taxi station?” I asked looking around trying to not make it obvious that I am disgusted by this place and it’s smell

and the people walking around here.

“Work, Miss...this is where I work. I’m a taxi driver remember. And no one calls it a station, it’s a rank” he looks rather pleased to be here. He opened his side of the door and then looked at me. I gave him a puzzled expression because his gaze gives off the impression that he is waiting for me to do something or say something when all I’m doing is to follow his lead. “I’m going to need my hand back,” I quickly released it.

“Oh yes! I’m sorry...you can, sure.” I stuttered in shame. I’m so stupid. Anyway; I followed him. There’s a lot happening here. There are vendors and idle people, taxi drivers and their taxis, people going up and down going about their day completely not fazed by the horrible smell of

beer, meat, nicotine, dirty socks and sweat. I grabbed on to his hand so I don't get lost in this place unknown to me. The minute I grabbed his hand, he squeezed it twice and for some reason I knew exactly what he was saying. Though I can't explain it in words, I just know what he means.

"The Lucky number 1!" a man said in excitement as we approached a group of them seated around a table laughing their lungs out playing cards and eating takeaways.

"Salute boys! Salute" Guy just blended in and I stuck out like a sore thumb. One of them whistled examining me from head to toe. He then stood and walked up to me gently putting one foot in front of the other charismatically

“My Lucky star, correct me if I am wrong but I am looking at an angel,” he said gazing at me.

“Spider, close your eyes. And yes...you are right, that is an angel” Guy said and glanced at me. I released a half smile. “Boys, this is Rainbow...Rainbow, this is everyone. We work together...”

“Hi everyone,” I let out a coy grin, waved and then grabbed my wrist.

“Marry me?” this Spider guy proposed. I took a step back.

“I said close your eyes,” Guy tried to kick him but he was quick to jump. He led me inside a small room situated right on the side. It’s an

office...I know an office when I see one. There's man seated behind the table doing some paperwork. He looked up and his face lit up at the sight of Guy and then his eyes travelled to me.

He stood and extended his arm which I gladly shook. "Ntokazi, my ancestors would turn their backs on me if I don't plant a kiss on your soft skin...allow me please" he said. I opened my mouth in attempt to speak and looked at Guy He gave me a reassuring nod.

"Oh! Okay..." he went around the desk and planted his feet before me. He held me gently by the shoulders and leaned in. Where was this man planning on kissing me? I got a little puzzled until I felt his beard on my cheek. "Thank you," he released me. You'd swear he

just won a lottery with the way he's smiling.

“Please take a sit,” he said and I obeyed. “Are you my boy's girlfriend?” he asked.

“No...I'm not,”

“Mhlongo come on, she's not...” Guy cut me short. “She's not my girlfriend. We're just friends right...”

“Yeah! Friends...” I tried to convince this man.

His eyes travelled between Guy and I.

“And your name is?” he asked.

“My name is Rainbow...”

“Rainbow, very beautiful name for a beautiful lady,” I smiled.

“How are things here? How are the boys?” Guys asked.

“We’ve been doing really good this week. Sadly; Sgora has been sick so I told him to stay home,”

“Good call,” Guy keeps nodding to everything he is saying. He opened a book and slid it over to Guy which he analysed.

“That’s from the past 3 days,” Mhlongo says.

“This is including the new route?”

“Yes sir!”

“Everything looks good. What about you? Are you okay?”

“You know I’m always okay Lucky. It’s you I should be worried about...” said Mhlongo packing away all that was before him.

“I’m okay brother, yesterday’s trip, it was uncalled for...” he rubbed his forehead,

“But you did it, right?”

“Of course, I did it, I always do it, but I had company so...but I did it”

“company?” Mhlongo looked at me and then his eyes trailed back to Guy.

“There was no other way?” Guy sounds like he is explaining himself.

“Are we compromised? Should I be worried?”
Mhlongo inquired

“No sir! It’s all under control.” I think they are talking about that little impromptu mission. Maybe he is his boss and the order came from him. But if Mhlongo is his boss then why was he giving him a report and showing him papers and answering to him.

“Lucky!!!!” a very thick lady with excessive make

-up walked in shouting on top of her lungs. She is wearing leopard printed tights, with a very bright pink vest and black 6-inch heels. Her outfit is as loud as she is. "I saw you coming in so I thought I should bring you some food, on the house my chocolate," she chewed on bubble-gum in a very undignified way.

"Thank you Pinky, I appreciate it. I am very hungry..." he stood and hugged her and then kissed her cheek. "This is Rainbow, my friend"

"Hey friend, I'm Pinky his future wife..." announced the loud lady.

"Pinky, stop..." Guy said reprimanding.

"A girl can dream mos" she says.

“Pinky is my colleague, she works in the kitchen,” Guy says.

“Hey Pinky,” I greeted.

“Would you like a plate too, she asked. You’d have to pay though...” she popped a bubble with her gum and then chewed again.

“No, I am good thank you...” I said.

“Get her a plate. Don’t put the rice, just the vegetables and a piece of chicken,” Guy says. Pinky looked at me,

“She is still paying,” she folded her arms to her

chest.

“I got it. I will pay for her plate...”

“So vele, she is your girlfriend right Lucky?” she asked. What is happening here?

“No, I am not. I promise you...he is just helping me,” I bit on my lower lip.

“With what?” Mhlongo asked leaning back on the chair.

“Personal things,” Guy jumped in before I could respond.

“Where do you live Raindrop?” Pinky asks.

“It’s Rainbow,” I corrected her.

“She is staying with me, for now it’s temporary,”
Guy responds again.

“Does she know about this?” asked Mhlongo.

“Who is she?” I looked at Guy.

“Okay, brother, I will be in touch...” Guy took my
hand and pulled me out.

“Keep well young blood,” we walked back to
where we parked the taxi. Again; swimming in
this very disgusting sea of humans. Someone
bumped into me.

“Ouch, I’m sorry,” I said as we collided.

“That was my fault sistera, I’m sorry” I looked at the person I had collided with. He stared at me and I took to staring back. Guy got a hold of my hand again and then pulled me away. That was weird.

“You know that guy?” he asked as we got into the taxi.

“No, I don’t think so...”

“You don’t think so?” the engine started.

“I don’t know him...maybe I’ve seen him

somewhere,”

“Where? He doesn’t look like someone you can see anywhere...”

“I don’t know Guy, maybe he also thought he knew me. I mean he was looking at me...I could swear he wanted to say something,”

“He must have you confused with someone else...”

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 8

OUTCAST

Noun

(Plural: outcasts)

Synonyms: Outsider, Vagrant, Exile, Beggar

1. One that has been excluded from a society or system.

We got burgers on the way and then drove off to the new location. I've been thinking about the guy I collided with...do I know him? Sometimes I place myself on a pedestal and pay no attention to the world around me. Like with Guy; who would have thought that a guy whose vehicle collided with mine? Whom I was so rude to would be the guy to save my life? Maybe I know him too...I just need to think really hard. This is

a lesson I need to learn and live by and that is to not look down on people because I have no idea what tomorrow holds for me and that person. I am just hoping and praying that I wasn't rude to that guy if we ever met before.

"Welcome to my other humble abodes," Guy sang as we walked in. it's prettier than the previous location. Has more space and its cleaner. I smiled. "You like this location, don't you?" I nodded as my eyes travelled around the living room. There's a huge flat screen tv on the wall.

"Does it work?" I asked walking towards it.

"Yes, DSTV, NETFLIX, SHOWMAX everything works," he says.

“I like it here...”

“Me too,” he said in satisfaction. “Let me show you your room,”

“I get a room?” so exciting. I followed him. He turned left on the passaged and opened the door at the end and then ushered me in.

“This is you...” he put my bag on the bed.

“Everything is clean. I had someone come in yesterday...”

“Thank you so much,” I threw myself on the bed.

“I love it,” the bed is very big. Bigger the one at the previous location.

“I will be right down the passage if you need me. let me take a nap.”

I took a bath. A long hot steamy bath and just relaxed. I then went on and devoured my burger and milkshake while watching tv. Guy has been locked inside his room since 18:00, I did peek through just to check on him and he looked dead so I went back to watching tv. At 21:45 I headed for bed and I've been tossing and turning since. I can't sleep...I feel like this bed is a sea and I'm drowning in it. I took a blanket and went to the living room to sleep on the couch. As uncomfortable as it is, at least I know where it starts and where it ends. I started yawning and my eyes were getting weaker and weaker by the minute. Thank God.

“Hey, Miss” I peeled my eyes open and found Guy standing over me. “Go to bed...”

“May I sleep here please? I can’t sleep in there...” I said under my breath.

“You can come and sleep with me,” he held out his hand and I reached out for it. He took the blanket and then led me to his room. “Hop over that side,”

“Thank you, Guy” I said burying myself under my blanket.

“It’s Lucky,” he says.

“It’s Rainbow...” He chuckled softly.

This morning I was up at 6:00 on the dot. His alarm went off which he annoyingly switched off and then went back to sleep. I woke up feeling lighter and just wanted to challenge my anxieties. I wanted to do something I would be proud of. I just wanted to do something positive, I need to start somewhere. I had cereal and then I decided to open my hair and lose this Brazilian weave. After I had opened my hair; I saw someone I hadn't seen in a while, a stranger. My black puffy afro framed my face ever so perfectly. I haven't seen my hair in a while. Ndumiso made sure he gets me the most expensive hair money could buy. He made sure it was long and smooth and just moved every time I moved. Now my natural hair, my afro...it's just standing, it's obedient. It doesn't move when I turn left or right. I wish I could be like my hair, not moved by anything. Not succumb to

everything around me...but again; it's just hair.

I'm in the bathroom still admiring the strength and beauty of my hair. When I was little, before I became Tumelo; the cleaner would tie my hair into barbie girls and then decorate it with bright and colourful hair accessories. A lot of black girls often asked if it was my real hair. thank God for my father otherwise I wouldn't have this much hair because - as much as my mom doesn't lack anything - she does lack hair; hence the number of wigs she has.

"Whoa!" I turned my attention to the door and found Guy half asleep with his jaws on the floor.

"Close your mouth," I said.

“You are so beautiful” his eyes are glued on my face. I looked at my toes and squeezed my wrist. He got closer and then rested his hand on my shoulder. “Look at me, Miss” I lifted up my head and looked at him.

“I’m sorry,” I said under my breath.

“You didn’t do anything wrong...my God! Look at you!” he continued to exclaim in awe of my hair.

“Stop,” I bit on my lips.

“I have never seen anything like this. I’ve never seen anything like you. Gosh! Look at you...”

“Guy, staring is rude...” I shifted my weight to

one side.

“I’m sorry,” he took a step back.

“Did you want to use the bathroom?” I asked.
He nodded. I stepped out.

“She’s beautiful,” I heard him say as I was shutting the door. I smiled a little. He thinks I look beautiful. Ndumiso never said I look beautiful. He always said I look sexy. But I feel good, I did something that brought me back to myself. To many, its just hair...to me, its therapy. It’s a healthy activity and I am proud of myself.

After a little while Guy came out and went into his bedroom. He came out all bathed and dressed up.

“You are going out?” I looked up at him.

“Yeah, don’t worry I will be back very soon. I was thinking maybe I could cook something....”

“That would be great! I’d like that,”

“Awesome...”

I’ve been stuck in this couch with my eyes glued to the tv screen, watching movie after movie. Eating snacks and drinking hot chocolate like it’s nobody’s business. After all it is a cold day.

“Lucky!” the voice followed with a knock and then a shout, “Open up,” it sounds like whoever that is they’re not alone. I can hear laughter and

indistinct chatter. Guy told me to never open for anyone. That he'd never send anyone to come and check on me or come to the house.

"We know you're there; we heard the tv." That's a different person. I tiptoed to the kitchen and armed myself with a knife. I don't even have a phone to call Guy or text him. I don't know why the fuck he has a landline when it doesn't work. Even if it did; who was I going to call?

"We're coming in" shouted the voice behind the door. I heard keys jingling and hitting against the gate. I just stood by the entrance frozen and scared. I know I should do something, like hide or anything that decreases my chances of dying. The door swung open and 4 men poured in to find a girl in tights and an oversized hoodie who is a few seconds away from peeing on herself with a knife held so close to her chest. "What the fuck?" I am still frozen. A lot of things are

going through my head right now; like what if Ndumiso found me and then sent these guys here.

“Who the fuck are you? Say something...” one of them raised his voice, I’m not sure which one of them because at this point fear has taken over me and I can’t seem to make out things like which of these guys just spoke and if that is my heart I am hearing or someone is playing drums really loud.

“Guy...I-I...” I stammered

“Did you break in here?” the guy that seems to be the dominant one took out a gun and held it against my forehead. That’s when I lost it...I lifted my hands up letting the knife fall.

“Did Ndumiso send you to come and get me...do you work for him? Please, Guy will pay you”

“Who is Guy and who the hell is Ndumiso...” shouted the dominant one.

“Put the gun down man. Maybe we got the wrong flat...” the tiny guy spoke.

“Nah, she came here to steal, our key opened you dummy” the dominant one ejected.

“I wasn’t st..” I tried to defended myself. He took out his belt.

“Turn around,” he demanded.

“What?” my eyes widened. He scoffed

“Don’t flatter yourself,” he violently pushed me around.

“Just don’t hurt her man, maybe she came to clean,” one says.

“Open your fuckin’ mouth,” he says. He then inserted the belt between my teeth and then fastened it at the back of my head. “we’ll wait for him,”

“You know he’s going to...”

“Shut up Langa,” the small guy’s name is Langa.

The Dominant guy tied my hands and feet and then locked me in Guy's room. He is stupid, anyone could escape this, including me. I was able to set myself loose. Yes! Of course, I was a scout in primary and I remember learning about knots and ropes or whatever, no wonder it came so naturally.

Judging from the loud chatter coming that side, I would say they are drinking all of Guy's beers and watching tv. Now they are playing their music so loud, which only leads to them trying to speak above the music. Let me just stay calm and wait for Guy. I honestly don't have the right to be mad at anyone here. I'm a beggar.

I think it's pretty clear now that they know Guy and Guy obviously knows them. I mean they had the key to his flat so...It's all good.

There was a sudden silence.

“What the hell is happening here?” Guy! Guy is back...thank heavens. “And where is Rainbow?”

I banged on the door, “Guy, I’m in here. it’s locked!” I shouted. Guy to the rescue...again.

The door swung open.

“Did you guys lock her in here?” he looked at them.

“We don’t know her,” the dominant spoke. “She was talking about some guy and Ndumiso...we thought she was here to steal or something,”

“No, you thought she was here to steal, I said she was a cleaner” Langa exempted himself.

“Ndumiso?” Guy directed the question at me.

“I thought that maybe Ndumiso had sent them to come looking for me, I just panicked, I’m sorry” I said and the squeezed on my wrist to concentrate my energy.

“And you bastards! What the hell are you doing here? The supervisor called me to tell me to turn down the music,”

“Shit!” one of them cussed under his breathe.

“And I find my house looking like a fucking tavern and...” he shifted his weight to one side. “and you locked Rainbow inside the room, my guest?!?” he took on a high-pitched tone

“We were just trying to look out for you,” one says. I’m not even looking at them at this point. My eyes are just digging into the tiles.

“Shut up!” Guy raised his voice. He led me inside the room, “Did they do anything to you,” his eyes trailed off to the belt and rope on the bed. “Whose belt is that?!?! Hey you bastards...get in here,” he took out his gun. “where did you even get a fucking rope in this house?”

“It’s okay, they didn’t do anything...” I got a hold of his arm to try and get his attention.

“Then what the hell is that belt doing here, did these morons try anything?” the pistol was pointing at the guys.

“Nothing happened! We would never, we just tied her up and sealed her mouth to make sure she didn’t do anything funny,” dominant guy spoke for them. Now that Guy is here, I can see that he is the second dominant because Guy overshadows all of them with just his presence.

“You sealed her mouth with a fuckin’ belt...get out!”

“We have a meeting remember about our playdate,” the other one that hasn’t said a word since he walked through the door pointed out.

Now that I keep glancing at the 4 of them, I can see that the 2 quiet ones are twins. And any fool could tell that he was speaking in code seeing that I was there. I may get a little clumsy sometimes and overly fearful but I am not dumb.

“Plus; we didn’t know you had a visitor over. We don’t know you to have visitors aside from Sam and...” said Langa

“Chew on your fucking tongue,” Guy says dismissively. That statement got my guts twisting and then the thought of him actually chewing on his tongue just makes things worse.

“Have your meeting, please...I’m sorry. It’s all my fault I was supposed to explain to them properly but instead I froze and I thought about

a lot of things,” I said. The last thing I want to do is ruin things for Guy, especially business wise.

“Are you sure you are okay?” he asked pleading with me to tell him the truth with just his eyes.

“Pinky promise,” I bit on my lower lip.

“Stay in there, I’ll be done here in a few minutes,” I went into the room and stayed put.

“You fuckin’ bastards...make this quick,” I heard him.

“Boss,” someone says. “My guy says it’s arriving tomorrow,”

“That’s 3 days earlier than expected! What happened?” Guy sounds like he is in panic mode.

“Change of plans. They know we are on to them” one of the guys says.

“What do we do now? We know the guy...but our things are not in order and we don’t have enough time to get them in order.”

“I’ll do it!” Yes, that is me...I have no idea what came over me but somehow; I managed to get up from the bed and walk out the door and join the meeting.

From what I hear, some guy is arriving with something and they need to take it from him.

The issue is that it arrived 3 days earlier than their guy had communicated with them.

“Do what?” Guy looked at me. This is awkward.

“I can get whatever you want to get from the man you want to get it from,” I said nonchalantly.

Dominant guy chuckled, “Lucky, who’s this girl,” I took a glance at him and then realized that he wears skinny jeans, he is not worth a second of my time.

“Then you’ll get what we want to get from the man...Miss, please go inside the room and wait for me,” Guy says and I don’t like his expression and tone. He was totally belittling and

underestimating me.

“I’m serious Guy,” I persisted. “Look, I don’t know what you want to get but clearly you are all too busy tomorrow. I will pick it up for you. I spend the whole day here; let me help,”

“Do you even know what we want to get?” one of them asked.

I shook my head, “but I know that whatever this is...it’s illegal,” I sighed loudly. “All I need to do is procure whatever you want, it’ll be clean and quick.”

“procure...clean...” Guy speaks again, clearly condescending and dismissing my suggestion and idea.

“Okay, let’s just say, hypothetically speaking; we wanted diamonds from this man,” Langa speaks and the entire time my eyes were fixed on Guy and of course I am squeezing my wrist because I am freaking out right now. I don’t know what’s happening. I will have to replay this moment later today. “How would you ‘procure’ them?”

“Myself...” I said. Am I even thinking straight? Maybe too much junk and tv makes you go looney.

“Yourself,” Guy raised one eyebrow.

“Yes...” I confirmed, “I’m pretty...I can get anything I want. That’s how they do it on tv”

“So, you think just because you are good looking, a guy that works for a dangerous man - a man to whom he has sworn loyalty to – will just give you diamonds because you bat your eyelashes at him?” said Guy.

I nodded. “Precise,” I responded, “Well maybe not give, I can take them when he’s not looking,”

“It’s not a bad idea...plus uBaba will kill us all if we don’t get them. This is our only option” one of the twins said.

“Yeah, it’s a horrible idea, forget about uBaba, I’ll take care of him” Guy says.

“No...Lucky, think about it, she could just bat her

eyes, do whatever he wants, maybe get him drunk,”

“And then he does what he wants, like have sex with her?” Guy cuts in.

“She won’t let it get to that” said the twin

“Who is Baba” I asked. I remember guy receiving a call from a Baba the day he killed that guy.

“Who are you again?” asked the dominant guy.

“I’m Rainbow,” I responded and he looked at the floor.

Guy and his guys went back and forth arguing about whether I should be served on a silver platter for a truck driver to have me as he pleases, which – by the way – is not at all what I was proposing. All I was saying is; I am pretty and maybe it's about time I started using that to my advantage. Guy refused; which was very foolish of him. He told the guys to go he'd call them to come back later after he had come up with a better idea.

“Let me do it, let me help you,” I said taking a next to him in the couch. He switched off the tv and gave me his attention.

“No way, Miss...” he says. “If anything happens to you, I'd never be able to forgive myself,”

“Nothing will happen to me, I promise you,” I

said beggingly. I so badly wanted to do this. Not only to help Guy, but also to prove to myself that I am not weak and dumb.

“I said no, now let it go please...”

“Please,” I begged

“I said no...” he took on an aggressive tone

“You don’t think I can do it...you are scared I’ll mess things up,”

“Do you blame me though; I’m just trying to protect you here!”

“Stop! I am fine...let me prove to you that I am

fine,”

“You are not fine, Miss...”

“And who are you to tell me that? How the hell am I supposed to be fine if you don’t let me be fine?”

“Your fucking husband used you as a punching bag for years and you couldn’t do shit about it, what makes you think you’d ever be able to bat your eyes at a man and get a very expensive and illegal product!” his words just rolled out of his mouth like he had been holding them in for too long.

“Okay, I understand,” I exhaled. “I will be in the room,” that was very hurtful. I remembered all

of Ndumiso's words, maybe I am just not good enough. Even my beauty can't help. Unless, I just stand and make someone else look good. I stood to excuse myself.

"That came out wrong Miss, I promise."

"It is okay, I understand..." I left him. I should be mad at Guy, but I can't. I can't be mad at him because he is my helper and he is doing me a huge favour for even letting me stay here with him. I should apologize to him for being forward and stupid. I could have ruined business things for him. I went back to the living room and found an empty couch. I heard clattering in the kitchen and I followed the sound. I found him there opening a bottle of beer. "Guy, I just want to apologize for what I did. I don't know what came over me thinking I could do that kind of

thing. I'm sorry..."

"Not that you can't do it, I know you can. I just don't want you getting hurt," I nodded, smiled and then left him.

I just need someone to believe in me. That's all. And I want Guy to be able to rely on me. I want to repay him for helping me and just feel like I belong somewhere. Somewhere where I can do something right and just be a part of something, a part of a group of people and just feel normal. I want to belong somewhere and know people, like truly know them and not be scared of what they could do to hurt me. I just don't want to be an outcast in this world. It sucks, I would know...I've been an outcast since my brother died.

#bonusinsert

PLEASE SHARE♡

don't ever say I never came through for y'all

INSERT 9

BOOM

Interjection

1. Used to suggest the sound of an explosion

2. Used to suggest something happening suddenly and unexpectedly

“Miss,” I felt a very soft and deliberate tap on

my shoulder which pulled me out of the deep sleep I was in. I opened my eyes and saw Guy standing over me. He looks morning fresh. "Sit up!" he commanded.

"Did I do something wrong?" I quickly sat up. I don't want to upset him.

"Tell me about your idea again?" he demands.

"Idea?" what the hell is this guy talking about at this time of the morning. "Guy, what time is it?" I yawned.

"It's 2am. Now tell me how you were planning on 'procuring this product'," he made imaginary inverted commas with both hands

“The diamonds” he cocked his head to the side,
“I know you want to get diamonds, Guy”

“How did you know that?” he asked.

“Your guy, the small guy. He created a hypothetical scenario and hypothetical scenarios are usually the real scenarios,” his eyes held mine in place. “The idea, there isn’t much to it really, I just get up, stand by the side of the road, one of your guys gives me a heads up when his car is approaching and then boom”

“Boom. What is boom?” his forehead creased

“Boom is; I go for it, I’m a damsel in distress in a little short dress. Why wouldn’t he stop?”

“Why wouldn’t other cars stop?”

“Because I will come out from my hiding spot when your boys give me a signal,”

“You will have a listening device on you, you hear me,” I nodded excitedly. “I will be able to hear you and the same goes for you. I will make sure I’m close by so I’m there when you are done,” I nodded again. “Safe word is COOKIES; if ever you want to back out just say that word and I will come and get you myself, are we clear?” I nodded. “I need to hear you say you understand Miss, are we clear?”

“Yes, crystal,”

“Get ready,” he exited.

I got ready. And believe it or not I wore the yellow floral dress Guy got for me with sparkly bright sandals and joined them in the living room.

“Is that what you are wearing?” The dominant guy asked. I nodded.

“Don’t you think that maybe you should wear something sexy, maybe look...I don’t know...sexy,” he says.

“Hey, dude with the tights, what’s your name?” I looked at him hopefully my gaze gives off some intimidation. If I want to be badass I may as well practice with this dick. His entourage giggled.

“Smilo,” he says.

“what do you suggest I wear?” I asked.

“I don’t know, maybe put on some lipstick. Wear high-heels and maybe bum shorts,” so stupid.

“Okay, Justin Bieber. I am a lost girl and not a lost hooker...I need to look like an actual lost girl. My thighs are out and so are my boobs. You’ve been drooling over them since I came out and not to mention my face, I am pretty...jackpot!”

“She’s good...” Langa said.

“Think with what’s in your head Justin Bieber, not what’s in your pants, it’s too small,” I drifted

my gaze to Guy, "I'm ready,"

"Boys, let's get to work" Guy said and they started moving. That was bad ass. I liked that girl, she should visit more often. My blood is boiling, I am scared yet I am so ready to show guy that I am more than just an abused girl. I can do things. I want him to see me and believe in me.

Here we are. I'm am terrified to the bones; I want to shout 'COOKIES' but I also want to prove myself. There's no backing out now. We're doing this.

"I GOT HIM. HE IS NOT IN ATRUCK; I REPEAT WE ARE NO LONGER AFTER A TRUCK; BUT AFTER A BLACK ISUZU KB, RAINBOW YOU GOT THAT,"

“No, what is a KB?” I don’t know cars...I just I don’t. I’m panicking; what if I mess it up?

“KB, 4-by-4....HMMM 250D-TEQ, IT’S A DOUBLE CAB,”

“English please, is that the number plate?” I asked in panic.

“MISS, THIS IS GUY...IT’S A BLACK VAN IT HAS 4 DOORS AND AN OPEN BOOT. YOU WON’T MISS IT,”

“I got you,” I squeezed on my wrist willing the fear in my chest to disappear. ‘Breathe in and out’, I just kept chanting to myself.

“MISS,” that’s Guy’s voice again through this thing in my ear.

“I’m here,”

“I CAN HEAR THAT YOU’RE SCARED. YOU KNOW YOU CAN PULL OUT ANY TIME,” Guy is being too soft on me and I don’t need that right now.

“I haven’t said the word so I’m still in...” I was determined to finish this mission or task or whatever. I planned it, came up with the idea and took charge so I need to finish it. If I chicken out; I’m killing myself later.

“I WILL BE RIGHT HERE...”

“Guy, stop!” I said sternly.

“OK START COMING OUT,” said one of the guys. I stood up from the long golden grass and made my way towards the road. It’s 3:40 in the morning so there isn’t a lot of cars passing here. There is my car...I counted myself down...

“3...2.....1”

“Boom!” Guy said exactly what I was thinking. BOOM! I went for it. I waved around and looked scared and lost...I made it so very clear that I was talking to him and no one else. He slowed down...jackpot, he stopped right next to me.

“What is a lovely lady like you doing out here alone?” he asked with a thick coloured accent.

“I ran away from my boyfriend, could you give me a lift please...” the entire time his eyes were on my chest, he was biting on his lips like how he is imagining biting on mine.

“Aren’t you scared of strangers little missy,”

“What can I say? I love an adventure...and I’d appreciate one right now kind gentleman,” I smiled seductively. My motto coming here was, DO IT LIKE IN THE MOVIES.

“Well, hop in,” he smirked. Well well well...I’m not that bad at this. I guess I can only say that once I’ve procured the diamonds.

“What’s your name sexy?” the only thing

keeping me from jumping out of this van is knowing that the motorbike behind us is with me and Guy is listening in on me parked somewhere in his taxi.

“You don’t need to know my name, it’ll be more fun...in that way I’ll always be that girl in the yellow dress and you’ll always be the guy in the black van,”

“Fuck! You sure are an adventure!” he cried. I looked at him and smiled. He made a turn at the garage. “Let me get some strong drinks,” he hopped out, threw on his jacket and then stuck his hand under his seat. He came out with a black little bag, it looked really fancy so I took it that was my goodie bag.

“What’s in there? Diamonds?” I asked smiling. A

ghost of shock visited his face and then quickly passed.

“Nothing you need to worry yourself beaut”

“BEAUT” Guy repeated what he said out of mockery.

“Give me a minute,” he shut the door and marched inside the convenience store. I exhaled and bit into my lower lip.

“SHOULD I COME AND GET YOU?” Guy asked.

“No, I can do it...I’m okay,”

“I’M RIGHT BEHIND YOU RAINBOW” said the

twin on a motorbike.

“Make sure he doesn’t see you...” I warned

“HEY TONE IT DOWN ON THE SEXY TALKING, DON’T THROW YOURSELF AT HIM,” Guy says.

“LUCKY, SHE’S DOING GREAT,” Biker guy defended me.

“Thank you, now shut up!” he swung the door open.

“You’re still here” he said ever so enthusiastically.

“I haven’t had my adventure yet,” I grabbed the

bottle of Johnny walker and held it to my lap. After he started driving; I turned the radio and switched through the channels until I found one with soul ballads, "I love this song," I lightly folded my lower lip between my teeth and then allowed it to slip out slowly while my eyes held his in place.

"I'm driving...be careful," he said stretching his hand forward towards the bottle. Which I gladly opened for him.

"Well then, why don't you park somewhere?" my hand travelled across and rested on top of his dusty blue jeans.

"Are you from heaven?" he asked trying so hard to concentrate on the road.

“I might be,” my hand slowly went in between his thighs and then finally stopped at his manhood. He grunted.

“Let me stop the car,” he stopped on the side of the road, I jumped over to his side and sat right on top of his hard manhood.

“WHOO...LOOKS LIKE SHIT IS ABOUT TO GO DOWN,” said Biker Guy.

“RAINBOW, SAY THE FUCKIN WORD!” Guy demanded. I came too far to quit. I’m in a van in the middle of nowhere with a stranger. Nah! Guy must forget. He squeezed my butt against his penis, his breathing was getting louder and out of control. I wonder what will happen to him

when he actually inserts his penis inside of me; which won't be happening.

“Here, have a drink,” he dangled the bottle right in front of my face. I haven't had alcohol in years. I stopped when Ndumiso started hitting me. Aside from the fact that I didn't want Ndumiso to take advantage of me, I also searched for healing at the bottom of wine bottles so when I couldn't find it in one, I popped open another one.

“SHE DOESN'T DRINK, MISS, YOU DON'T DRINK...” Guy says in panic. He is making this very hard for me, he is distracting me and disturbing me. “THAT'S IT, SIPHO SHE CAN'T DO THIS. PULL HER OUT...PULL HER OUT NOW. I KNEW WE SHOULDN'T HAVE MADE HER DO THIS...PULL...” we got disconnected because I

pulled out the earpiece and threw it out the window while I made sure that this fool was occupied. I took off his jacket while he unbuttoned my dress revealing my chest.

“Wow...” he cried burying his face in my chest. I used that opportunity to throw his jacket out the window. I know biker Guy will see it and take it.

“Hold on,” I said.

“What? Come on...” he tried to stick his hand inside my underwear.

“Hey hey hey...it’s an adventure don’t rush into it. I need to pee...just give me a second okay...”

“Okay, hurry up. I want to tear up that pussy,”

“Just keep the engine running,” I hopped down and nonchalantly walked down leaving the car behind me. I could hear him grunting from masturbating, Fool! I can see Biker guy, Guy just called him Sipho. And he had the jacket. He waved it at me, I ran to him as fast as I possibly could. That motherfucker is busy keeping the ‘engine running’ he won’t even see me running away.

“You okay?” he asked.

“Go!” suddenly I got really scared. When I was in action; I was okay, everything was good, my blood was boiling because of the thrill of it all. I made out with a stranger.

“I got her!” he drove the opposite direction. The van guy came of the car and started shooting at us; but we were already too far.

“Drive faster in case he comes back for us...” I say holding on tight to Siphos.

“Don’t worry,” he stopped the bike and hopped off, grabbed my hand and dragged me through the grass. We ran hand-in-hand, cutting through the grass with honeydew leaving us wet. I finally saw Guy’s taxi. Guy got out and approached us furiously.

“What the fuck was that?!?!” he shouted.

“Boom,” I said shoving the little fancy black at

his chest. “Oh and thanks for the vote of confidence. You really gave me a boost out there” I attempted to get into the taxi but he hugged my arm with his big hands.

“What happened? Did you have to fuck him?” he asked.

“Really?!? That is all you’re worried about?” I said amid huffing and puffing.

“And what the fuck were you thinking throwing away your earpiece? What was that one of your bright ideas? Boom?”

“I couldn’t concentrate with you bringing me down, telling me I cannot do it, well I did it, you dumbass” I tried to free myself from his grip but

he resisted.

“All I’m saying is, it was a stupid idea,” he got up close. “You getting all touchy and feely with that dick and then losing your earpiece. I couldn’t hear you anymore,”

“Don’t worry, I enjoyed everything he did...” he released me and I jumped into the taxi.

Fuck Guy, this only just proves that he didn’t allow me to do this because he knew I could do it but because he had no other choice. I don’t care what he has done for me, right now I am at liberty to be mad and angry at him. Langa gave up his jacket for me which I gladly took. I don’t know why Guy decided to seat next to me but I wasn’t giving him the time of day. This bastard didn’t even say thank you, I got his stupid

diamonds. Now Baba – whoever he is – won't kill them.

"Lucky," the twin driving called.

"Don't say anything," Guy says sternly

"You were a bit harsh there, don't you think?" he said and I let out a loud scoff then gave Guy a dirty look.

"She was way too in...she has never done this before, now she's all up in here acting like some witty sleek and sly badass," said Guy. They do know that I'm here right and I can hear them?

"Or maybe she's just a witty sleek and sly

badass. What do you want from her?”

“Yeah no! she’s not any of that,” he looked at me.

“Wow,” I stood and located another seat.
“You’re welcome by the way,” I clicked my tongue.

“Whatever, Miss!” he also clicked his tongue.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 10

KISS

Verb

1. To touch with the lips or press the lips against, usually to express love or affection or passion, or as part of a greeting

2. Of two or more people, to touch each other's lips together, usually to express love or affection or passion

Upon getting home, Guy didn't have much to say and so did I. I took a shower and got ready for bed. He had some beer and watched tv. I've noticed how he likes watching documentaries on criminals and drug lords etc., it never made sense, as of lately, a few things are starting to make sense.

I'm having challenges sleeping knowing that Guy and I are fighting, so I gathered my pride and joined him in the living room. I took a seat beside him to which he didn't even flinch. It was as if I wasn't even there.

"This is childish?" I said turning to face him.

"Which part, the one where you threw out the listening device or the part where you fucked that bastard?" he says with his eyes glued to the tv screen.

"Can you look at me please?" I said. He glanced at me then back at the tv screen. "Guy, I threw out the listening device because you had no faith in me, you were discouraging me on the job. And I didn't fuck him?" he looked at me, this time there was a little light in his eyes.

“You didn’t?” he asked. I shook my head, “But you said you liked everything he did to you?”

“Because you made me angry for even assuming that”

“Now that’s being childish...”

“You do know that you owe me an apology, right? You are wrong, not me?”

“I’m wrong for trying to protect you?” his jaws clinched.

“Goodnight Guy,” I stood to make my way to the room. Clearly, I won’t get anywhere with him.

“You know, for someone who’s been trying to

convince me how strong and smart I am, you sure do know how to keep me caged, grow up Guy” I left him.

Guy’s side of the bed was still made when I opened my eyes. I can hear him singing in the kitchen – as usual – a love song. I can also smell food. I went into the bathroom to wash my face and brush my teeth and then I went to the kitchen and found him dancing over the stove shirtless.

“Good morning,” I jumped on the counter and watched him prepare breakfast, which I think is like an apology, but we shall see.

“Hey, Miss...you hungry?” he asked

“Very much, the food smells great,”

“Alright!” his voice took on a sing song tone. He started chopping cucumber right beside me.

“You’re making a salad?” I asked a very stupid question. I just want to keep the conversation going here and hopefully get to the part where he apologizes.

“Yeah,” he nodded. “Oh fuck!” when I looked down, I saw that he had cut himself.

“Shit! I’m sorry...I’ll carry on.” I attempted to go down but failed because it is easier to climb up than it is to go down. He pulled the drawer beneath me and pulled out a first-aid kit container. “Let me help,” I opened my hands to

which he put his hand. "It's just a cut, you won't die," I said wiping the blood. He chuckled.

"Boy, am I glad to know that..." Guy smells really nice. I looked at him but his eyes are glued to what I'm doing. Then his eyes shot up catching me off guard. I quickly looked at his hand resting in my hand. "Ouch! Careful!" he winced.

"I'm sorry, I just need no press on it a little...its quite deep,"

"Do your thing Miss," he says moving his head closer to give the cut a proper look. Guy is really close to me; I can hear and feel his breathing...and then, I did the most stupid thing in the world.

"I'm so sorry..." I covered my mouth with my

hand. “That was stupid, what the fuck was I thinking....” I am panicking my shit out. I fucking kissed him. I kissed Guy, what the actual fucking hell!

“Miss, its okay...” he said as I attempted to jump down.

“Help me down please...”

“For Christ sake Miss, could you just plaster me up and stop panicking,” he says. “Calm down...” I nodded. “I’m going to go to the bathroom and get some plaster, will you please stay here?” he raised an eyebrow almost begging me. He knows I can’t go anywhere, unless I’m brave enough to let myself fall. I nodded anyway. The minute he disappeared into the corner I exhaled. What the fuck was I fucking thinking? I’m such

a fucking fuck! I'm stupid and dumb and stupid and good for nothing but ruining things. Guy is so good to me, why would I ruin that by kissing him? Why the fuck would I do that? He came back and handed me a plaster.

"Thank you" I said under my breath with my face down. "And I'm sorry again...stup..." the next thing I felt were Guy's lips all over mine. He had his behind my neck and one on my thigh. He stopped and looked at me keeping my eyes in place. I feel dizzy.

"Now, we're even" he said. I nodded again..."Now, can you cover that up so I can finish up with breakfast," I covered up his cut and then he continued making breakfast. I decided to go and bathe, what the hell was I supposed to do with that awkward energy?

which I think is only coming from me. Guy is just normal as per usual. Guy has a girlfriend or possibly a wife...Guy has a child and I don't want to ruin his family. I don't want to be a homewrecker.

After breakfast we got ready to go out to run some errands. He ran a lot of errands, stopping at fancy hotels to drop off envelopes and only God knows what else; then our last stop was the taxi rank. He asked me to stand outside while he spoke with Mhlongo. I sat with some of the drivers, they tried to make small conversation, but I could hardly understand half of what they were saying, I swear they were speaking in taxi driver lingo; so, to somethings I just smiled and nodded. I'm a little distracted though, it's that guy again. The one I saw the last time I was here. He is at a distance laughing with his acquaintances, he turned to

my direction and caught a glimpse of me. He also stared at me for a second or two. I forced a little smile which he did not reciprocate. He just started walking away...I followed him. I could hear the drivers calling out my name but I blocked them out, my focus is on this guy. I swear I know him and he knows me too; I can see it in his eyes. His pace keeps increasing by the minute and so is mine. He looked back and saw me, he started walking faster than before. Why is he running away? Did I do something wrong to him? I started running and just trying my hardest best to be polite as I cut through these people. Then I collided with another body and came to a stop.

“Where the hell are you going?” it’s Guy.

“Wait, I’m losing him” he held my arm as I

attempted to follow the mystery man.

“You are not going anywhere. Who are you looking for?”

“The guy, the guy I bumped into the last time, he was here and he saw me...”

“Miss, he’s a hobo, he stays here with his fellow hobos”

“I feel like I know him.”

“We need to go back home and pack. We’re leaving...” he took my hand and dragged me in the opposite direction.

“Where are going?” I asked as I followed him like a stray dog.

“Home, to see my family. It’s my mom’s birthday tomorrow...I completely forgot about it and she will kill me if I don’t come home”

Okay, when we get home; I will insist that I stay behind. I don’t want to ruin his time with his family. We got home and I took a gentle seat on the bed and watched him take out his clothes, carefully handpicking them and fixing different outfits as he went along. He looked at me. “Why aren’t you packing?” he asked.

“I don’t think I should go, let me stay behind...” I said.

“Why?” he came and stood right in front of me.
“It’s safer there and I think my family will like you,”

“I don’t want to ruin your time with your family. From what you said; I picked up that it’s a tradition for you to be with your family on your mom’s birthday, I don’t think bringing a stranger will suffice,”

“I will pack your things myself and carry you to the car,” I smiled.

“Fine, I will pack” I didn’t put up much of a fight. He continued packing and I got started with mine.

“Here,” he gave me two A4 brown envelopes. I

opened and it saw R200 notes in bundles.

“What should I do with this?” I asked.

“It’s your cut, you’ve earned it,” my cut...oh wait! He’s paying me for getting the diamonds. I got paid...now I can pay him for helping him. Maybe I can even work for him and save up some money, then get my own place and just start over.

“Thank you, please take it. It’s my payment...” I extended my arm forward dangling the envelopes in front of him.

“Payment?”

“For helping me, for saving me, and for giving me a place to stay...I know it’s not enough but...”

“Keep it, you don’t need to pay me,”

“Please, I’ll feel better...”

“I’ll feel bad,”

“Fine, thank you...” I’m so proud of myself. I don’t know how much I have in my bank account but Its waaaaaay more than this. But this little cash that can’t even afford me a 2 weeks’ vacation and a shopping spree in Paris just makes me so happy. I worked for it. It just gives me hope that I am getting somewhere, that I am not useless or as dumb...and sometimes I need to let my fear push me to do

the unthinkable. I know what I did was illegal, but who cares you know. We all need to get by.
“Guy, may I say something?”

“Sure, Miss, speak your mind...” he sat down on the bed and gave me his undivided attention. I like that about Guy, he looks at me when I talk, he listens...he makes me feel important.

“I know that you have a girlfriend...or a lover” I said, “and I feel bad about kissing you, I can apologize to her if you decide to tell her...” I rambled.

He looked at me with confusion. “I have a girlfriend? Or a lover?” I nodded repeatedly.
“And...and you know her?” he asked.

“Sam, you talk to her all the time and you say

you love her...and you smile genuinely when you talk to her, which means you must really love her...or you think you do, I don't know...what the fuck is love anyway?...I'm sorry" I stopped myself from rambling any further. He took a long breathe in and then rubbed his forehead as he slowly exhaled.

"I do love her; you are right about that. She's amazing..." he smiled. I bit on my lip and then held on tight to my wrist waiting for him to speak. He stood up so I had to tilt my head back a little to have a proper view of his face. He took my hand. "Miss," he chuckled. "I love Sam very much because she is my little girl, my daughter, she's 6"

"I know, and that's why I'm apologizing for messing up what seems to be a good

relationship...I'm sure she must love you dearly too and..." I closed my eyes, Guy's words just replayed in my head. "Did you say she's your daughter?" he nodded. "Like your baby, your child. You're a father..."

"Yes, I have a 16-year-old son too by the way, stubborn but I love him. You will see them..."

"You have children? Not a girlfriend...Sam is in fact, a little girl, to whom you're a father," I feel a little embarrassed. He cupped my face in his hands.

"I don't have a girlfriend," he laughed in my face.

"Okay, hmmm..." I breathed out sharply. "Okay, that's good...that is very good. In that case...will

you have sex with me? I will pay you,” he peeled his hands away from face as his eyes grew wider.

“You want me to have sex with you...and you will pay me? You want me to sell my body? To you?”

I nodded and said, “Precisely,”

“Woow, okay. I don’t usually do this...it’s just...I don’t do this”

“Can you get one of your friends to have sex with me then? At least it’ll be someone we know” I asked.

“No!” he cried. “No...no...never!” he shut his eyes and shook his head I guess trying to rid his mind of the idea of myself engaging in sexual intercourse with one of his friends, “I’d rather do it myself,”

“Thank you,” I smiled.

“Do we set a date or?...I don’t know how this works” he rubbed his forehead again.

“Guy it’s just sex. There is absolutely no need for formalities,” he bent down and kissed me, I kissed him back. This time I wasn’t scared or embarrassed like before. Guy gives great kisses, if I do say so myself. I stopped and squeezed shut my eyes; I’m dizzy again. “You taste amazing...” I said under my breath and he snickered then resumed kissing me again. I

attempted to take off my sweater but he stopped me.

“I got it,” he helped me take it off. He analyzed my upper body then bit onto his lips. He noticed an old scar and kissed it. One of Ndumiso’s work of art. He pulled down my jeans and tossed them aside. “Wow,” he whispered. “Turn around,” he said under his breath. I obeyed. He unhooked my bra and allowed it to fall freely to the floor. He pulled down my underwear and then kissed my butt cheeks. I chuckled. I turned around and helped him off his shirt, he pulled down his pants while kissing me. He is slow and gentle and that is just such a turn on. Everything with Ndumiso was violent and aggressive. And not to mention that sex was just about him. He took my hand and led me to my side of the bed. He opened and signaled me to go in, I obeyed. I laid on my back and he got

on top of me and then pulled the blanket over to his waist. He looked at me straight in the eyes, I got nervous and bit on my lower lip. He got closer and kissed me and I kissed him back. I wrapped my arms around his neck and enjoyed the pleasure I was getting from just his kiss. I felt his hand going in between my thighs, I braced myself. He placed his penis at the entrance of my vagina and then brought his hand back out. He concentrated on kissing me again. And then before I knew it; he just pushed his manhood inside of me, it was a little painful, he came in with force so winced and pushed my pelvis back. "I'm sorry, do you want me to stop? I can stop" he asked brushing my forehead.

"No," I said shaking my head. "I'm fine," I actually derived pleasure from that pain. He came back in, gently this time. He slowly

thrusted gently and it hit me, I have been deprived of sexual pleasure. What Guy is making me feel right now is beyond what Ndumiso made me feel. I moaned in satisfaction. His pace increased and so did my moaning. He buried his face in my neck and grunted as he pushed forward harder. He started pushing in with force, harder and faster. The faster he got the louder I cried and that only propelled him to push even harder. I found myself digging into his back with my nails and screaming even louder. He pushed forward and held while kissing me, he gently pulled himself out and then looked at me panting. He started going down and I panicked! I don't want that...I don't like that.

“No...” I took his face into my hands.

“Stay down, and relax...” he said with half open eyes. I nodded and did as he said. I laid back down and relaxed. The minute his tongue came in contact with my vagina I moaned softly, I folded my lips together and let out a soft cry. I have never experienced this before; I just don’t know how to describe this feeling. I cried louder as his tongue played around with my vagina. How the hell does Guy do this? I grabbed a piece of blanket and it squeezed. I allowed a loud and quivering scream to escape, he started sucking my clitoris gently. OH MY! OH MY! OH MY!

“Lucky,” I called out his name amid moaning.

He stopped and came up to kiss me. His lips tasted salty but I didn’t care, I just wanted to kiss him. He looked at me.

“So that can you to say my name,” he rested his forehead on mine breathing heavily.

“Stop,” I chuckled

“You good?” he kissed me softly.

I nodded, “Thank you,” he threw his sweaty body next to me. we both faced the ceiling as we tried to catch our breath. I felt a gentle squeeze on my hand so I looked at him. He slept on his side facing me so I did the same.

“You okay?” he asked. I nodded and threw in a smile. “It was just sex, right?” he confirmed.

“Totally, I just wanted to cheat on my husband and have real sex...” he chuckled softly.

“Your husband? You still call him your husband?”

“He is still my husband...”

“I’m glad I could help,” he said and fell back on his back. I felt his hand freeing from mine, I don’t understand why we were holding hands in the first place. “Let me bath quickly so we could get going,”

“Ok” I watched him get up and walk to the bathroom totally naked. When he disappeared; I smiled...I had sex with another man. Ndumiso would kill me if he found out about this...oh how

I wish he would somehow find out...how I wish he would know that another man has been inside of me and he gave real pleasure, he made me cry...genuinely cry in satisfaction. But at this point that is just wishful thinking.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 11

FAMILY

Noun

1. A group of people who are closely related to one another (by blood, marriage or adoption)

2. A group of people related by blood, friendship, marriage, law, or custom, especially if they live or work together.

Guy opened the door for me and my eyes wondered around. This place is beautiful, green and just peaceful. This will be an opportunity for me to get to know Guy beyond just Lucky the taxi driver. i think meeting his family will give me an idea of what I got myself into here.

“Welcome to my home,” he says. This looks like a place that could do me some good...it’s nothing the city life I am used to, city life is the only life I know. “Not your style?” he asked.

“No, not my style at all...” I said looking around. I

think I see horses at a distance...or maybe my eyes are deceiving me. I've never seen anything like this place.

"That's okay, I can book you into a hotel in town...but town is far though..."

"No! I mean...it's not my style but I like this style. I feel like I can breathe here..."

then a child came running with joy brimming in her face. "Baba! Baba! Baba!" she charged for Guy. This must be Sam, his daughter and not his girlfriend.

"Stand right there!" Guy says and the little girl paused smiling from ear to ear. She had some teeth missing. "Who are you and what did you

do with my little Sam?”

“Baba, it’s me Sam,” she giggled in between her heavy breathing of excitement.

“How are you so big? Is it really you?” I’ve never seen Guy this bright. He is just glowing and you can tell just how happy he is to be here. He picked up his little girl and spun her around. I’m just standing behind him like a little stray dog so nervous to greet a 6-year-old girl. “Sam, this is daddy’s friend Rainbow...Miss this is Sam...my daughter,”

“Hey Sam,” I said with a high pitch tone trying to relate with her.

“Your name is Rainbow?” she asked.

“Yes...my name is Rainbow...”

She looked at Guy and smiled. “Baba, she’s beautiful” she said.

Guy giggled and kissed her cheek. “She really is beautiful,” Guy looked at me and said. “She thinks you’re beautiful,”

“oh! Thank you, Sam, I think you’re beautiful too”

We entered into the main house and found the rest of his family waiting for us.

We were welcomed warmly, though I still do

feel a little weird and out of place.

“Where’s Mtho?” Guy asked.

“He spends most of his time on the field with his friends,” said Zanele his sister.

“Lucky,” his mom called and Guy looked at her.
“Who is this young lady?” Guy looked at me.

“Oh! Everybody, I know I didn’t do a proper intro. This is Rainbow...my friend,” I smiled. “Miss, this is my family. Mom and dad, Paul and Eunice Dlamini...sister Zanele,” Zanele waved, “you already met Sam. Later you will meet my son and big brother.”

“It’s very nice to meet you all...” I grinned coyly

“So she’s not your girlfriend?” Zanele is quite the curious cat.

“Oh no! I am not his girlfriend...just his friend.”
My eyes darted around then finally found refuge on the floor.

Later that day the entire family, and myself; sat around the dinner table and had dinner. His mom made steamed bread and beef stew...it’s so delicious. I’m just minding my own business not saying a word. My eyes are glued to my plate because I don’t want to make eye contact with anyone. I can hear them laughing and just having a nice time together. Guy is seated right next to me and Sam is on his other side.

“You okay?” he whispered.

I looked at him and smiled, “I’m perfect.” I said.
“Are you okay?”

“Perfect” he continued with his food.

“Rainbow...” his father called and my heart started beating out of control.

“Yes sir,” I took a quick glance at him and then back at my plate.

“My son told me briefly about you earlier...you are welcome here and you are safe,” he says.

“Dad...I told you not to say a word” said Guy.

“It’s okay,” I don’t mind them knowing, they seem like nice people.

“So, you are not his girlfriend?” Zanele asked again.

“Zah, awuziphathe kahle...” (Zah, behave yourself) her mom reprimanded.

“She is not my girlfriend...” Guy said while giggling.

“I can assure you Zah, I am not his girlfriend,”.

“You are not daddy’s princess?” Sam said, I

couldn't even see her tiny body.

"Okay," Guy stood. "Miss, let me show you something," he let out his hand and helped me up. I followed him outside. There are no street lights here but the stars are making the night look so magical.

"Wow! The stars are so bright here..." I adored the night with both my words and eyes.

"That's what I wanted to show you, they just light up the night so perfectly..."

"Did you grow up here?" I asked. The stars made his eyes glisten even more than they naturally do...Guy's eyes have always been that one thing that I liked about him, like the main attraction of his face.

“Yeah! You can say, I moved here when I was 12 years,”

“Where were you before?”

“That doesn’t matter, the only thing that matters is now and where I am now. Look, you’ll be sleeping with my sister inside, okay?” I can see that he is trying to change the topic. This made me hopeful a little bit. This means that Guy has a past, he is somebody and I plan on finding out.

“What about you?” I asked.

“My room is at the back...” he stopped and concentrated on the movement coming from the gate. “Mthobisi?” he called but the person

didn't respond. "Bongumenzi?" he called again. He then took out his gun and made his way towards the gate.

"Guy, I don't think you should do that," I said. "Should I call you father?" I'm already thinking that Ndumiso found me. My heart is about to jump out of my chest.

"Stay here," he commanded. Their yard is huge so it's kind of hard to see who is by the gate. He is talking to this stranger that was trying to open the gate uninvited but it seems like he succeeded.

"Is this the time you come home now boy!" Guy shouted behind the uninvited guest. It's a boy, his son I presume.

“Baba! I was playing soccer with the boys...” he faced him. What do I do now?

“Until ten at night?” why is Guy shouting like this? He is a teenage boy; these are their times to come home.

“Why are you here?” the boy’s words short out sharply. That’s mean.

“Is this how you talk to your father? Is this how you disrespect my parents when I’m not around?”

“You just arrived today and already you’re picking a fight with me baba?” they are just going back and forth arguing.

“I’m not picking a fight; I’m reprimanding you boy...”

“No! You are just trying to control me...I’m 16 now just lay off...”

“I have every right to control you because I’m your fucking father and you will do as I say...”

“Lucky, calm down...” I ejected. He was getting a little too angry and I feared that this argument might get out of hand.

“Stay out of this Rainbow...”

“Just go back to wherever you came from,”

Mtho walked away hastily. As Guy attempted to run after him; I stopped him.

“Let him go” I said.

“This is boy disrespectful!” he says while his gaze is still fixed on his rebellious son walking away from him. Mtho clicked his tongue as he was walking away. Guy looked at me, I could tell he was hoping I’d let him go.

“Just breathe Guy,”

“Fine!” he waved his paws in the air as a sign of surrender and obedience which I appreciated by the way. I have no idea why Guy and his son are arguing but I know that this is more than just about him coming home late. It didn’t start

now...and if he is not careful; he might lose his son for good.

I couldn't sleep and Zah passed right out next to me, she is snoring like a drunk man. I woke up and stood outside and watched the sun rising. I've never seen a place as beautiful as this. The birds are chirping, the air is fresh and crisp...everything just seems perfect. Mtho appeared from the back of the house in his school uniform. We were not properly introduced to one another so I don't know what to say.

"Good morning" I sang.

"Sho" he glanced at me and then walked inside the main house. Well...that went well. I felt a cold hand at the bottom of my thigh.

“Miss Rainbow, could you please tie me two Barbie girls,” It’s Sam looking as cute as ever in her uniform.

“Yeah! Sure, okay...” she took my hand and dragged me to her room. When I got in; I was blinded by bright colours, it reminded me of my room once upon a time. “Wow” I cried. It’s beautiful.

“Do you like Barbie? She’s a princess and she has magics...she can do anything” wow, I wish Sam could stay like this her entire life, just not grow up. Soon the people she loves will turn on her and break her, soon she’ll realise that magic isn’t real, so is Barbie and dresses that change colour and sparkle or make you fly don’t exist and that you can’t do everything like Barbie.

“I love Barbie,” I can’t disappoint her. I sat her down in front of the mirror and stood behind her and carefully parted her hair at the centre into equal parts. Then I tied each side with a pink scrunchy then used purple sparkly clips to decorate her head. “Done!” I said and sat on her bed.

“Do you have magic Ms Rainbow because you look beautiful, like a princess...” what do I say now? I don’t know what they teach this child.

“Yeah! I do...I have magic Sam,”

She gasped, “I knew it! I knew you were daddy’s princess” she ran out. Oh Lord! What have I done? Not only does she think I’m magical but also that I am her father’s lady person. Oh my crap! Guy walked in while I was screaming

inside my head and literally squeezing my wrist trying to centre myself.

“You okay?” he asked standing over me.

“Your daughter thinks I have magical powers and that I am your princess,”

“Wait! I thought you did have magical powers...like Barbie...do you not?”

“Guy, I’m serious” I chuckled.

“Miss, she’s 6, she believes she’ll get her powers when she’s 10. It’s really not a big deal” I sighed loudly. “She likes you,”

“I like her too, she’s cute”

“Come on, let’s walk them to school” he held out his hand.

“I’m not dressed...”

“Just throw on a gown, let’s go...” just like that I threw on a gown and walked Sam and Mthobisi to school with our Guy. Mthobisi was behind us with his head phones on. Sam was holding his father’s hand and singing about little ponies. We arrived at their school and to my surprise it was not far. Mtho just walked passed us without even saying goodbye.

“Mthobisi...” Guy called. He looked back at him. “Come here” he rolled his eyes and walked back.

“Goodbye Sam, here” he gave her a R10 note,
“Buy some cookies and remember to...” he bent
down and hugged her.

“Share with other kids and always be nice” Sam
finished off his father’s sentence in a sing-song
tone. “Thank you, baba” she said and kissed his
forehead. She ran through the gate shouting,
“Bye Miss Rainbow,”

“Bye Sam,” I shouted.

“Mtho, did you meet my friend?” Guy asked.

“I saw her” Mtho glanced at me.

“Well, this is Rainbow, my friend...the lady that

saved you from me last night when you disrespected me...”

“That’s not necessary...Hi Mthobisi, nice to meet you” he nodded his head and then looked away.

“Jesus Christ Mtho! Can you at least be nice to her, she’s a nice lady”

“Guy, it’s okay...” I took his hand and pulled him away from Mtho, if they started arguing now, here in front of the other students and teachers, who know what might happen?

“I don’t know why you keep saving his ass, he needs a tight slap” Guy says looking back at Mtho who had already walked inside the school.

“Take it easy, he is still maturing.”

My first day at Guy's home was very splendid. I met his big brother Bongumenzi who will be staying here for the time that we're here. It seems Guy is very close with his family except his son. Their relationship is well...it'll be fine. I think Mtho is just going through a phase – a teenage phase.

“Rainbow!!” I heard Zah shouting my name from outside. Hearing that name makes me so happy, it makes me feel like my old self is being resurrected in a way. I came out rushing, there was a sense of urgency in her voice and the first thing that came to my mind was that she was hurt or someone was hurting her, but her brothers are here so we're good.

“What happened?” I found her patting a black horse that had a very masculine guy wearing vest on it.

“Why do you look scared?” she asked.

“You scared me, are you okay?” I asked coming closer.

“I’m fine, I wanted to show you this horse,” she says

“Hello,” I said to the man mounted on the horse.

“Unjani?” (How are you?) he asked hopping down.

“May I touch your horse?” I asked with my hand already on it.

“Please...” he stepped aside and so did Zah. Horses are magical creatures, they’re majestic and fast...plus they are the only thing close unicorns that I can relate to. “Hey there,” I walked around it marvelling at its shiny and soft coat.

“His name is Black knight,” said the owner.

“He is beautiful,” I stood in front of Black Knight and caressed his face.

“He likes you,” the guy said.

“Why don’t you guys take him for a ride?” Zah suggested

“Oh no! I’ve never ridden before...” my eyes are still fixed on the horse.

“I’ll teach you,” said the owner with a cheery tone.

“Come on Rainbow, it’ll be fun and Senzo is very nice, I trust him, go!” she insisted

“Go where?” Guy appeared.

“Your sister thinks I should go horse riding with him,” I told him.

“No, it’s not safe Miss,”

“Hawu Lucky!” Zah cried. “What was the point of bringing your friend here if she won’t explore?” she emphasized on the word ‘friend’

“I just...Zah,” Guy stammered.

“Guy, let me go...I won’t be long,” I said.

“Okay then! It’s a date,” said this Senzo guy. I chuckled.

“No Senzo, you are just going horse riding. Miss, why don’t you wear some pants or tights, that dress seems very short,” Guy said and then cleared his throat.

“I’m okay.” Senzo helped me to climb up on Black Knight and then he climbed behind me.

“I will be controlling him from behind you okay”? he says.

“Okay,” I’m a little scared.

“I’m coming in closer; it might be a little awkward...” he says grabbing on to the ropes that apparently control this horse.

“It’s cool. As long as I do not fall,”

“You are safe with me...” and we were off.

This feels awesome. I can do this the whole

day...it feels like I'm running without touching the ground and the wind is just making love to my face. Who knew how satisfying and pleasing such a simple thing like horse riding would be? Whenever I needed to distress; I would go shopping, to a spa or just travel and I somehow convinced myself that I was feeling better. Right now, I don't even need to contemplate how I feel simply because I felt it...I felt light and there is just positivity all around me.

Senzo took me to his house where I met his parents and his million brothers, there's actually 7 of them and they each have a horse; including their parents. I was blown away by their life style. If someone was telling me about them; I wouldn't have believed. But I saw their life with my own two eyes. They just have a cute little farm life with all the farm animals and everything. His mom had made a spinach

smoothie which she insisted I should taste and it was amazing. I also met Zandile's boyfriend; he is one of the brothers. Very cute and attractive, they all are...just a cute little family.

Returning to Guy's house; I was on the horse and Senzo was walking besides us. I'd say we were strolling and chatting.

"So, you and Lucky are a thing?" he asked.

"No. Lucky is my hero, literally ...he helped me through a tough time. Well I'm still in that tough time. I don't trust anyone but I think I trust him..."

"What did he help you with? I hope you don't mind me asking..."

“I do, I’m sorry. I still can’t talk about it without tearing...”

“I understand. Whatever it is, I’m sorry,”
I glanced down at him,

“Thanks,”

I know Zah was trying to hook me and Senzo up but it’s not going to work but I’m glad she suggested I go horse riding with him. It really relaxed me. If only she knew what her brother and I were up to right before we drove here yesterday then maybe she wouldn’t be playing Cupid.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 12

PLAN

Noun

(Plural: plans)

1. A set of intended actions, usually mutually related, through which one expects to achieve a goal

2. A method; a way of procedure; a custom

As we were nearing the house; I could see Guy

and Zah outside looking at us. Zah lifted her hand up high and waved. Senzo and I did the same. We got into the yard and the look on Zanele's face is just priceless. Her cheeks are practically turning red and pink.

"Sandile called and told me he met you," Sandile is her boyfriend.

"Yes, I met him," I'm speaking to Zah while Senzo is me helping get down.

I swung my leg to the other side so it's easy for Senzo to carry me down.

"You ready?" he asked.

"That's okay Senzo, I'll help her down" said Guy coming to us. Senzo had already prepared to

help me down, his big hands were already around my waist ready to lift me up. Guy pulled his hand away...

“Bafo yin manje?” (What’s up bro?) said Senzo turning his entire body to face Guy.

“I said I will help her down,”

Senzo ignored him. He returned his attention back to me.

Guy pushed him and he stumbled. Senzo wasted no time, he threw in a punch that sent Guy to the dusty ground.

“Oh my word! Zah help...”

“Baba!” Zah cried. Guy got up and threw a punch at Senzo as well. From there on; hell broke loose.

“Lucky, stop it! Stop!” I shouted. The horse is panicking and I’m panicking and worried that it’ll run off with me. Bongumenzi came and separated them. They both have blood coming out of their nose and are both equally dusty.

“Take your fucking horse and leave!” Guy shouted.

“Lucky!” his father shouted standing by the door, “What is happening in my house?”

“Someone please help me down,” I waved my

hand to get their attention. Bongumenzi came to my aid. "Thank you"

"Ngithe hamba Senzo!" (I said leave Senzo!) Go raised his voice

I went over to guy. "What are you doing?" I asked under my breath.

"Go Senzo, I'll deal with this," Bongumenzi says.

Guy cleaned his nose. "Answer my question" I said. He looked at Senzo as he was exiting the premises.

"And don't come back!" he said.

"Lucky!" Bongumenzi and Zah shouted in

unison. I held his face with one hand and turned his attention back to me.

“What are you doing?” I asked.

“Not now, Miss,”

“What do you mean not now? Why the hell did you attack him?” he looked away, “Guy look at me!” my voice got stern.

“I said!” he shouted and then gathered himself, “not now” what the hell got into him?

“What happened?” asked Menzi.

“I think he’s just a little jealous,” said Zah. Menzi

was looking at me like this was all my fault. I'm just as confused as he is. I have no idea what fuelled what just happened.

"I'll go and talk to him" I declared heading to his room.

"Ntombazane" (girl!) Menzi called and I assumed he was referring to me. "I don't know what the fuck just happened but we all know what is happening and you better sort it out" his husky controlled tone and demeanor accompanied by his gaze suggested he was ordering me and most importantly threatening me.

"Menzi, I don't know..." I tried to defend myself

“We all can goddam see that Lucky is in love with you!”

“Menzi let it go!” spoke Zah

“All I’m saying is; if you do not feel the same way then get the fuck out of his life because I’m not buying all that ‘just friends’ bullshit and I will not let another woman break my brothers heart,” with every word he said I could feel his loathing for me and it made me very uncomfortable. Since I met Menzi, I always sensed that he didn’t quite like me. He looks at me like I’m here to steal something from Guy.

“I...” I swallowed in fear, “I will talk to him,” I exhaled trying to control my trembling voice and then bit on the left side of my bottom lip.

“Better!” he walked away. I looked at Zah searching for something that can help me make sense of what her brother just said, she shrugged and shook her head simultaneously and unfortunately that didn’t help me at all. I went to Guy’s room and knocked.

“Come in,” he said hesitantly. I found him in bed facing the ceiling. It’s my first time walking through this door. There’s a bed, a chest of drawers, a table that is just idle and one with a laptop and speakers; I’m guessing for work. “What are you doing here Miss?” he asked sitting up straight.

“I’m here to talk to you, Guy” I sat next to him. He brushed the top of his head. “What was that?”

“I don’t know...I’m sorry!” he rested his elbows on his knees.

“Are you falling for me?” I asked. His eyes shot at me and then he snickered.

“Whatever gave you that idea?”

“Well, I don’t know...your brother seems to think so. Why else would you attack Senzo...?”

“Maybe because you are my responsibility and...”

“Responsibility?” I echoed him.

“Yeah, what if Senzo had touched you in a way that reminded you of Ndumiso...”

“Guy!” I jumped to my feet.

“What!?” so did he.

“I am not your responsibility. I am not a child...you don't own me!” I poked at his chest with every word, “And don't you dare use my tragedy to justify your stupidity and foolishness...I sleep with you one time and you suddenly think you have some power over me, it was just sex!” I lashed out. He marched to the door swiftly and shut it and then came back and kissed me. I pushed him away but he didn't give me chance to gather myself, he pulled me back into his chest and kissed me again. He paused and looked at me breathing heavily,

“It’s just sex,” he echoed my words. Before I knew it; my thighs were wrapped around his waist. He threw me on the bed and then came on top of me. His hand travelled up my dress as he leaned in to kiss me. I pulled his t-shirt out as he was helping with my dress. He hurriedly pulled down my underwear; I unfastened his belt as fast as I could. He leaned in even more. I felt him inside of me and I immediately moaned softly, he looked into my eyes for good few second and then buried his face in my neck as he pushed forward harder and harder. I dug his face out of my neck and kissed him. He pulled himself out, flipped me around like a pancake on a frying pan and then insert his manhood from behind. I cried as he pushed back and forth making my body quiver with every second. He put his hand over my mouth trying to lessen the amount of noise I

was making. He pushed forward, held for a few seconds and I was holding my breath, grabbing on tight to the edge of the mattress. He released and removed his hand from my mouth at the same time. I turned around and faced him, he was on his back huffing and trying to catch his breathe. "You good?" he asked.

"Yeah," I licked on my lips, "Are you good?" heaven knows I wanted more. I needed more. But this is his parent's house. I feel bad for even being in his room with him. He took my hand and kissed it.

After that he fell asleep while I watched him. Suddenly I remembered Menzi's words about how he wasn't going to let another woman break his brother's heart and I just wondered more about Guy. I was curious about what

happened to him? Who this woman is and how he broke his heart? How can anyone break Guy's heart? Firstly; he is a good guy and secondly, he is Guy. My thoughts all boiled down to what we just did. I don't want any complications or misunderstandings. As amazing as sex is with Guy, it can't keep happening.

Later that day I helped Zah in the kitchen to prepare supper. My chest is burning with questions but I don't want to overstep or push the wrong buttons so I kept to myself.

"Okay, girl-to-girl," she cheerfully said, "What's the deal with you and Lucky?" It seems I'm not the only one with burning questions aching to be answered.

“There is no deal...we’re friends. He helped me when I was going through a tough time. What is the deal with Menzi?”

“He is just protective of Lucky, nothing personal”

“What’s not personal?” Guy’s voice declared his presence.

“Nothing, just something between girls,” Zah covered for us.

“Can we talk?” he looked at me. I nodded and then walked up to him. He led me to his room. Thank God he asked to talk because I need to talk to him as well. He didn’t shut the door this time. “You disappeared,” he uttered.

“I had to help Zanele with supper” I justified. He nodded.

“I wanted to apologize for the way I spoke to you earlier; I shouldn’t have said some things,”

“It’s water under the bridge,” I smiled, “Listen...” I added, “I also need to talk to you,” I sat on the edge of the bed.

“I’m listening”

“I need to leave,” I broke the news and he grimaced as a result. “I need to get my own place and start my life over without Ndumiso...”

“And without me...” he added to my sentence.

“Guy, our arrangement wasn’t permanent. You were just helping me. We’ll still be in touch but I need to figure my life outside of your flat.” I said “We will still be in touch but I need to be a grown-up”

“I understand...”

“Which is why I think I should leave tomorrow;” his eyes shot at me, “ I have a flat viewing the next morning. It’s reasonable and the money you gave me can cover rent for the next two months and some food”

He sighed loudly. “You seem to have this all planned out”

“I made a few calls with Zah’s phone while you were asleep and one agent made an exception to let me view the flat on Wednesday before it can be open to other people”

“What about furniture and other things? You can’t stay in an empty flat; I won’t let that happen?”

“Well, I was thinking that maybe you let me work with you for 2 or 3 three jobs that will help me get set up, in the meantime I will be looking for a real job,”

“Miss...” he rubbed his forehead in distress “I can’t let you in on the jobs...that was just an exception because we were in a tight situation,”

“Imagine how smooth everything will be when we are not in a tight situation?” I am trying to sell myself to this man so I can start my life afresh.

“We?” he glanced at me.

“Come on Guy” I begged.

“Do you even know what I do for a living?” he inquired.

“Something dangerous” he chuckled. “Come on please, It’s not permanent,” he looked at me and smiled.

“You want in?” he asked. I nodded. “Okay, follow me,” I obeyed. I don’t know where he is taking me but I know I will do whatever it takes to start afresh and also earn this man’s respect in the process.

He ushered me into his parents’ bedroom and I must admit; it’s a bit awkward walking into their bedroom. Their chatting died down as we walked in.

“Baba, can we talk...” he said and rested one leg on the edge of the bed.

“Ithi ngiyosiza uZah dear,” (Let me go and help Zah) his mom said getting up...

“Alright my dear...” he watched her walk out with

eyes as bright as a star. I wish someone could look at me like that; it's special.

"Ma, please call Menzi," he yelled.

"Alright" she responded.

"What is it Lucky?" his father looked at him with concern. Menzi walked in, his eyes rested on me and then on Guy.

"Yebo baba," I love how they become little boys when they are talking to their parents.

"Remember the diamond job," said Guy. They both nodded. "Remember that we had a little situation as to how we were going to get

them?”

“Ndodana, where are you going with this?” (son) he played with his grey beard.

“Did something come up?” asked Menzi.

“No everything is fine.” Guy says, “It was her...” he added.

“What do you mean?” his father cocked his head to the side while keeping my eyes in place. I looked at my shoes.

“She was the one who got the diamonds. She got in the van and got the diamonds...” Guy said as if it was that easy.

“You let a stranger in on a job without letting us know?” asked Menzi with uneasiness all over his facial expression.

“We were in a tight situation and she had a watertight plan...” Guy defended me.

“You let a stranger in on a job Lucky...” Menzi emphasized.

“It was a watertight pla...”

“To hell with that! What the fuck does she know about watertight plans?” his eyes shot at me, “How old even is she? 19?” he asked a question and answered himself.

“I’m 25...” I corrected him.

“I don’t care!” he shouted.

“Hey! Menzi...don’t talk to her like that. I allowed it. If you want someone to shout at then I’m here,”

“Bongumenzi,” his father called softly.

“Dlamini,” he responded. I could sense humility and calmness taking over his tone and entire being. “Calm down. Lucky”

“Yebo baba,”

“Do you trust this girl?” he asked. They are talking about me like I’m not here.

“Yes sir...and I think we should use her” he said what I’ve been waiting to hear but not exactly in the way I was hoping he would put it.

“What he means baba is tha...”

“Mr Dlamini to you,” his father corrected me. Well shit...

“Mr Dlamini...I will help with two or three jobs just to get my life started and then I promise from there I will get a legit job,” I stated out. Menzi scoffed sharply. “I just need your help sir...please. Lucky is all I have and I want to work for whatever he decides to give me,”

“Baba, please don’t tell me you are considering this...”

“Lucky, do you trust this girl?” Dlamini asked again.

“Yebo baba, I wouldn’t be here if I didn’t trust her and if I didn’t think she was good enough. I saw her that day...she’s good,” Guy spoke highly of me and I appreciated every word.

“Boys, give us some space,” ordered Mr Dlamini.

“Yebo baba,” the boys said simultaneously and walked out one after the other. They closed the door. Shit! Fuck! Guy’s father is really intimidating. I only know 2 intimidating men and I am currently not in good terms with either of

them; that is my father and Ndumiso. Maybe this was a stupid idea...yes, it is; it's my idea. I always come up with fucked up, ludicrous and stupid ideas and I always make matters worse. Why didn't I just shut up and maybe talk to Guy about this when we're back at his place. Fuck you Rainbow....bloody hell!

REACT, SHARE AND COMMENT PLEASE♡

INSERT 13

CUP OF TEA

Noun

1. A cup full of tea

2. (idiomatic) Whatever suits or interests one

“Young lady,” he looked at me in the eyes without flinching or blinking. I looked at my shoes. “Look at me when I’m talking to you please,” I slowly peeled my face away from my shoes to him. “Good. Now...how do I know you will not betray me once you get what you want? I need something I can hold on to, leverage” he needs leverage and I have nothing to my name, don’t even know the last name I’m going by now since the name Tumi has been put on hold.

“You will just have to hold on to the word that I am giving you now; I will never betray your son, let alone you or your family. I just need a way-out sir,” he squinted and looked away.

“Go to the kitchen and make me a cup of tea

with milk please...” he ordered.

I recoiled in confusion, “I should make you a cup of tea with milk?” I inquired just to be sure I heard him correctly. How did we go from talking about working for him to making a cup of tea for him?

“Yebo baba,” I left him.

What literally just happened? I have never been so confused in my entire life. Does this mean I’m in...or does it mean my idea is too stupid that he won’t even dignify it with an answer. I went into the kitchen to make this cup of tea.

“What was that about?” Zah asked.

“Zanele, can’t you let this one thing pass you by? It’s between Rainbow and your father...” said her mom.

“Your father just asked me to make tea for him,” I announced. They both smiled. “He didn’t even give me an answer to what we were talking about. The conversation ended like it never started.”

“Make tea, the longer he waits the grumpier he gets,” said Zah. I got started on the tea. I will make it exactly the same way I make my father’s, though it has been a while since I made my father a cup of coffee or tea; I still remember how he liked it. Guy walked in.

“And then?” I’m sure that’s directed at me.

“He said to make him a cup of tea with milk,” I said. Guy groaned.

“Ma...” he whined.

“No Lucky, don’t get me involved. You know your father” she waved her hands in the air.

“But ma...”

“Lucky...no.” her mom made it clear that she won’t get involved. I made the tea and took to him. I knocked.

“Come in,” he said. I walked in and gave him his tea, I turned around heading for the door.

“Young lady,” he called. I paused and then turned my face back to him.

“Yebo baba...” he stirred his tea while looking at me. This staring thing is really not making me comfortable so while his eyes were glued on me, mine were wandering around the room. Even Lucky wants me to look him in the eyes; he’s always saying, “Miss, look at me,” and I don’t want to look at anyone. I feel like they can see into my soul, all my scars and fears. He sipped his hot cup of tea, closed his eyes and then swallowed. He let out a soft sigh and took another sip.

“Call my sons...come as well” I rushed out. I don’t like men that intimidate me so Dlamini had better play his cards right because I do not want to add another name to my list of

intimidating men I'm not in good terms with. Shortly after, I walked in with his sons following me. We all stood at the bottom of the bed and waited for him to pull his attention away from the tea to us. "Here's what's going to happen," he announced. "I will give you every single penny for 3 jobs upfront so you can be on your feet,"

I smiled, "Thank you sir..."

"I'm not done!"

"Sorry," I said under my breath. He took another sip.

"I will give you what I pay my sons monthly..."

“Baba that’s too much. Not even our men get that much money.” Menzi disputed.

“Menzi, I am speaking...” a part of me is annoyed by this Dlamini character but I need him so I will hold my horses.

“Ngiyaxolisa Dlamini,” (I’m sorry Dlamini,) Menzi humbled himself.

“As I was saying; a payment of three months upfront will be yours before the day ends, but...If we need you – you will avail yourself. Whenever I call you come running...”

“Wait baba!” Guy spoke. “That will stand until she repays her debt, right?”

“No, it will go on for as long as I want it to...we don't have a woman in the field and she was able to get those diamonds; it makes me wonder what more can she do...plus she makes a nice cup of tea,” says Dlamini.

“Dlamini, I don't mean to question your decision but...”

“Then don't,” he disturbed Guy. So, this man wants to own me basically. I can't live like that. I can't be owned by anyone; especially not by a man.

“That means my time with you is indefinite, that means you own me...but unfortunately Mr Dlamini, I don't plan on doing shady things for a long time. My plan was just three jobs tops...”

“My business, my plan, take it or leave it...if you choose to leave it; then pack your things and leave my house and if I so much as hear that you helped anyone penetrate my business I will deal with you personally and when I deal with things they never become a problem again.” Did he just threaten to kill me?

“Baba!” cried Guy. “You don’t have to threaten her...it’s okay. Don’t take the money; I will help you with everything!”

“You will do no such thing,” Dlamini shut down his plan as well.

“It’s okay...I will do it. It’s fine,” My whole life has always been a scattered puzzle, never making

sense. I've never felt a sense of belonging anywhere. My mother never loved me, my father loved me when my mother wasn't looking, I had to change names because of my psychotic mother, I got married at 22 and then my husband immediately started beating. Every day that I lived, was always a wonder for me...I don't have another choice, this here is my way out. I have to take it.

"Miss, you will be in debt to my father for God knows how long" Guy stated out what we've already figure out.

"You are basically hiring her baba," remarked Menzi.

"Then so be it...now" he smiled and his eyes lit up, "I hear you cooked with Zah today, I look

forward to tasting your meal. You may be excused,” we all headed for the door. “Young lady,” he called just before I could shut the door.

“Yes sir,” I looked at him.

“Look at people more often, you have very beautiful eyes,” I nodded.

“If I may so bold as to ask, sir?” I hope I’m not pushing it. He nodded. “What does tea have to do with this?” he chuckled.

“Nothing, I just love a nice cup of tea...welcome aboard. Now please leave me to enjoy my tea,” I nodded again and left him.

For some odd reason the idea of me being owned by a man gives me more fear than the fact that the job is actually dangerous. I don't know much about what these people do, but I know it's not safe; it's not your typical 9 to 5. There's more. Firstly, Guy gave me a glimpse of his life when he killed that man right in front of me and then the diamond job made things a little clear, this meeting with his father just signed on the dotted lines just like I signed on the dotted lines with my life. I have Guy, I will be good.

The following morning, Guy and I left his family and headed for Durban. And as promised, before I left his father called me into his bedroom and gave me a bag full of money which gave me the shock of my life. I come from money, I grew up with money all around me but I've always seen it on bank statements

and phone alerts. Seeing it with my naked eye just threw me off. The ride back to Durban was bitter sweet. Guy kept promising that he would get me out of this deal with his father and I kept telling him to stay out of it. We obviously went back and forth arguing about it which resulted in him bringing up Ndumiso and how he has tamed me into a timid person that I can't even look people in the eyes. That's when I stopped talking to him.

He left the minute we arrived at his flat and I didn't even ask where he was going. I bathed and then watched some Tv. Eventually I fell asleep and then woke up to find the tv watching me. I went to the bathroom to pee and then went to the kitchen to make a sandwich, I'm starving. I heard keys rattling outside the door; even though I know it's him; I still want him to confirm that it's him. My past won't allow my

mind to rest. I'm constantly looking over my shoulder just waiting for Ndumiso to show up and beat me to the pulp.

"Guy?" I called.

"It's me..." he said pushing the door open. He bought McDonald's. "Can we talk?"

"I'm listening," I concentrated on my sandwich.

"I have burgers," he says that like it's an achievement of some sort.

"Great!" I brushed him off. I must admit; I am imagining the first bite of that burger and my mouth is just watering.

“Miss, I’m sorry. The thing is I know where you are coming from and just don’t want you to get hurt,”

“I won’t get hurt!” I declared,

“You don’t know that!” sharply he said. “That night when I found you, I was so mad but I had to keep calm for you”

“Guy...” I softly said while taking his hand,

“I couldn’t sleep. I was up the whole night...I kept looking at you, checking if you are still alive. Kept looking out the windows for any suspicious movements or cars...my chest was burning. I wanted to get my hands on whoever had done that to you and kill them on the spot. I

mean, how can a man do that to a woman.
How?" he emphasized on the last word.

"You were there to save me. Even when I went back you were still there to save again. That day, when you shot that man, I was terrified I wanted to pee on the spot but you were there, you were there to make sure I was fine. And the diamond job...how the hell do you think I managed to do that job? Because I knew you were there." He grinned, "I disconnected communications with you because you were being a pain in my ass but I knew you were there and I was certain that nothing would happen to me with you there,"

"Oh Miss," he said softly,

"I need you to believe that I believe that you will never put me in danger," he nodded. "Thank

you.” I sighed in relief. “Now, can I have my burger please?”

He kissed my forehead, “You are a pain in my ass!” he says. “Let me freshen up” he leaned in and planted a kiss on my lips. We both realised after we had kissed that we actually kissed, it wasn't planned or forced, it was just natural. “I'm sorry...”

“Me too...whoa” I chuckled awkwardly and so did he.

“Yeah! Whoa...okay, let me go...” he walked out. I mouthed ‘fuck’ the minute he disappeared. I really need to move out. Guy and I can't keep doing this – especially now that I'm working for his father.

Speaking of his father, I think it's only fair that Guy tells me what they really do. They talk a big game, like they have a lot of money but they don't look like they have money. For example; Guy has flats, just ordinary flats, any average person can have those. They are not fancy or in an expensive area. His family home is just that...a family home. It's a big house with other rooms outside but it's just a family home; nothing suggests that they make the money their talks insinuate they do. I need to know more since Dlamini practically owns me now.

I went to bed feeling extra excited because tomorrow I will be going to view a flat; I'm taking the first step towards starting my live afresh. It's a one bedroom flat, I'm content...in fact I am overjoyed. I have never stayed by myself. I went from staying with my parents straight into marriage. I can't wait to fix my house the way I want to, buy furniture and

decorate it to fit my personality. This is too exciting I can't even sleep. I went to Guy's room and got into bed with him. He was already asleep.

"Is everything okay?" he asked wrapping his arms around me.

"Yeah, I can't sleep," I said.

"Okay, you can sleep here with me," he kissed the back of my neck and said, "Goodnight Miss"

"It's not Miss, it's Rainbow," I uttered.

"And it's not Guy, it's Lucky" he let out a lazy chuckle.

I woke up this morning, took a quick shower, prepared an outfit for my viewing at 14:30 and then got started on breakfast. I left Guy still asleep but I think he is up now; I can hear water running in the bathroom. Since this guy doesn't have a dining area, I set up breakfast in the living-room.

"Breakfast is ready!" I shouted. In a minute or so he joined me.

"Is this your going away gift?" he sat.

"...eat, you look hungry,"

"So, you're leaving me now?" he took a piece of bacon and chewed on it.

“Remember that day when you found me?” he nodded, “that morning you made the exact same breakfast for me, so I thought I should make it our last breakfast,”

“Last? I thought you were still going for a viewing?” he leaned back on the couch.

“Guy, I don’t want to waste any more time. The viewing is at two thirty; in the meantime, I will go and buy the essentials,”

“Miss!”

“Guy!”

“I can’t now. I need to go to PMB...”

“I can handle it,”

“So, you don’t need me?”

“That’s not what I said and you know it...why is everything always a fight with you?”

Well as you know it! Guy was difficult or I was difficult, I don’t know but all I know it that what started out as breakfast ended with him bringing up Ndumiso again to try and exercise whatever power he thinks he has over me. I wasn’t going to stand for that. His father clearly already has some power over me and that’s enough.

I got myself a cab and went into town buying what I will need for me to actually move in. The important thing I needed was a bed and bedsheets. I was able to get a fridge and a microwave which, the bed store manager was kind enough to let me hire one of their delivery drivers for a few hours. By 16:00 my bedroom was set up and ready to be used. The fridge was up and running and all I had to do was just move in and be a home owner. I feel so proud of myself. I wish my parents could witness their daughter growing up – though of course they would probably force me to go back to my husband – but still it would be nice for them to see what I've accomplished.

I arrived at Guy's place at exactly 18:00 and he was back already from PMB, still in a foul mood.

“Hey,” I found him gawking at the tv. Honestly; I just want to talk about my new place and not fight with him.

“Where have you been?” he asked still gawking at the television screen.

“I told you I had a viewing today and I had to buy furniture,” I defended myself though I don’t think I should because his question suggests that I answer to him and I don’t.

“It’s 6 Rainbow and your viewing was at 2...” he stood.

“I had to set the place up...” I said to my defence.

“You can’t disappear the whole day without notifying me...”

“I don’t have a phone!”

“I don’t care!” he raised his voice, which made me flinch.

“Don’t shout at me...don’t. You can’t do that to me...” I left him and went into my room. I think it’s best if I leave now. Guy and I are just getting too comfortable with one another. I don’t have much to pack so this’ll be quick. He came in.

“What are you doing?” he asked taking a seat.

“I think I should go to my place while we both

still have our sanity intact,” I zipped my tiny suitcase.

“Come on Miss, we just had a little argument,”

“We seem to be having a lot of those lately,”

“It’s normal people argue all the time...” he justified,

“Yeah but we seem to argue whenever I have to do something that gives me a little control and power over my life” I said, “I need to find my power Guy...and I don’t think I will find it here with you, living under the same roof”

“With me not around, how will I be sure you

won't go back to your psycho husband..." I paused trying to take in what he just said – in fact – I am trying to find a suitable way to respond.

"I am about 3 seconds away from slapping you, why don't you get out" he took my hand and pulled me closer. He got up and leaned in but I leaned back before our lips could touch. I stepped aside, "I'd like you to leave alone please,"

He took a step closer and said, "Miss, I didn't mean..."

"You didn't mean what? You didn't mean to always imply that I am weak and stupid and Ndumiso's puppet because that is what I always hear. Maybe try being a man Lucky for

once and say exactly what you mean..." we stared at each other for a few seconds.

"Fine, have it your way..." he exited. I have given Lucky way too much power and he is abusing it. He wants to control me. He wants me to do as he says, he wants to protect me like I belong to him. The only difference between what he is doing and what Ndumiso has been doing is the fact that his dominance doesn't come with slaps and insults.

PLEASE SHARE AND INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO THE PAGE♡

INSERT 14

RUDE AWAKENING

Noun

1. Surprising and unpleasant discovery that one is mistaken

2. An occurrence of being made to face an unpleasant fact

This feels nice. Waking up in the comfort of my own space...I slept like a baby. Today I will go and see Guy, try to make things right with him because I do need him to be in my life. Besides that; his father owns me now so we basically work together. We need to find common ground. For now, I need something to eat so I will need to go out and find the nearest shop just to get breakfast. I got myself ready for my little trip around my new neighbourhood. I wore a white vest, denim mini skirt and flip flops. I bought

these when I was furniture shopping yesterday. I need to do something about my hair, something that doesn't remind me of Ndumiso and the life we lived, maybe cornrows or anything natural and simple, for now I just combed my afro and left it open.

“Okay Rainbow, you can do this,” I motivated myself, “Just breathe, walk like a normal person and be a normal person. Ndumiso is not here, he will not find you,” I reassured myself. I took my wallet and headed for the door, before I opened, I did a little breathing exercise. I pulled the door handle down, swung the door open and then...

“Hi honey” he said with that evil smirk all over his face. My chest started burning, my wallet fell along with the courage I had built up. “Open

the gate,” he demanded. I froze, “I said,” he shouted kicking the gate, I jumped and immediately unlocked the gate. I stepped back allowing him space to come in. he locked the gate, shut the door and locked it as well. “Did you miss me?”

“Please leave. I won’t report you to the police, just leave,” my voice failed me by trembling before my biggest fear signaling that I’m nothing short of petrified.

“The police? What police? The police are my friends...” he grabbed me around the neck. His grip got tighter. All I could do was hit his arm and that did nothing to abate the situation. He finally released me and I fell to the floor. A kick came in like a cannon ball in my stomach which stopped my breathing for a second. I tried to

crawl to the room but he kicked me again, sending me face first to the tiles.

“I’m sorry,” I winced rolling over to face him. I watched him take out an injection from his pocket.

“Don’t move,” he came over me with the injection. I felt a pinch on my arm and just knew that whatever happens a few seconds from now I will have no knowledge of.

“What did you give me?” I asked when I felt my body detaching from reality.

“Just relax, you won’t die. I’m taking you home my love...” I tried screaming and kicking but I had no control over any part of my body but my

mind. I could feel my eyes giving out to the drug as well. They were heavy and needed me to just close them and relax. Unwillingly they shut, leaving me in an abyss of darkness.

I jumped when a fair amount of water was thrown in my face. I gasped for air and coughed as I opened my eyes. I attempted sitting up straight but I was restricted. I looked to my left and found that my wrist was tied to the corner of the bed. Both my hands and feet were tied to each corner of the bed.

“Welcome home honey” he sang. This is our bedroom.

“What do you want?” I asked crying.

“Nothing,”

“Then let me go Ndumiso...”

“You still remember my name,” he threw in a devious smile, “I can’t let you go, you are mine. You are my wife,”

“Please Ndumiso, I want a divorce...divorce me then let me go. I will not fight it, you can take anything and everything,” I begged.

“Well I want you!” he sat next to me.

“I don’t want you!” I shouted out of anger, “I hate you! You are a sick weak and worthless...” he shut me up with a slap across my face. I spat right in

his face, he slapped me again and stood. "I hate you," I cried under my breath.

"Till death do us part, I need to go to work and support this family," he bent over me and kissed my forehead. "I love you," he pulled the drawer open and pulled out black tape. "This should shut you up, but I will send you back to sleep, just for my sanity,"

"Wait!" I said before he could stick the tape over my lips. "I won't do anything stupid, please don't do that..."

He smiled and said, "What makes you think I trust you?" he pulled out an injection from the drawer, admired it and then stabbed my arm with it. I screamed as a result of pain, to eliminate the noise I was making, he

immediately covered my mouth with the tape. Everything became light, I lost control of body movements. My eyes started seeing blur images, everything was just distorted. I allowed my eyelids to fall and all I could see was darkness. He kissed me over the tape and said, "I can't wait to make love to you," if even for a second I thought I could be anything without Ndumiso, I was in for a rude awakening.

"Baby," I felt a slight pat on the cheek. When I peeled my eyes open my heart started racing. I tried shouting, having completely forgotten about the tape over my mouth. Everything started coming back to me. "Calm down," he caressed my face, "Shh, okay?" I nodded. "I will remove the tape. If you scream, I will put it back and then beat the fuck out of you" I nodded again. He peeled the tape off leaving behind a stinging, burning sensation. I licked my lips

trying to bring life back into them. "I love it when you obey me my love,"

"Please let me go, please Ndumiso..." I begged with tears running out my eyes.

"No!" he stood. "You are my wife..." he started untying me. I sat up straight. "Go and shower, try anything funny and I will fucking kill you," he pulled out his gun. "Go"

The entire time I showered Ndumiso was there waving a gun around like it was a toy, with no care in the world. He watched me shower and spoke to me like everything was normal. Like he hadn't hurt me or kidnapped me for that matter. How can a person, a human being be so delusional and sick and stupid all at the same time?

After bathing he pulled out a clean shirt from his clothes and threw it at me to put on. And then we went into the bathroom again - at his command of course. It was his turn to shower; he locked the door so I won't try anything stupid.

"What were you up to this whole time you were away?" He asked pressing the gun on my back as we exited the bathroom into the bedroom.

"Nothing," I said under my breathe. In all honesty I have nothing to say to him. At this point I'd much rather sleep and wake up stronger. Whatever he keeps giving me hasn't completely worn off from my system. I still feel woozy and tired. My body is shaking, it's even tiring to breathe.

"Come on baby. Are you expecting me to believe that?" he glanced at me and his forehead creased. "Tell me then," he pulled up his boxers, "how did you manage to get that flat?" I kept my eyes down. He came and sat next to me. "How did you manage to be in that flat? You left all your credit cards...A person in your position should be out in the streets,"

"Not everyone is as cruel as you are Ndumiso," with the speed of light he grabbed my neck, pushed me back and pinned me to the bed and then climbed on top of me. I hit his arm trying to get him to stop but all my attempts failed. I'm weak, I'm sure that felt more like a tap than a hit.

"I have been so good to you, Tumi..."

"I'm sorry," I uttered with the last bit of strength

I had in me. His eyes bored into mine as they burned with malevolence. He stopped strangling me, I took a long and loud gasp in attempt to gather what was left as a sign of life inside my beat-up weak body. He allowed his body to find rest on top of mine further restricting my ability to breathe freely. He then rested his forehead on mine, "you will live at my mercy, I will make sure that you cannot be without me, you hear?" I nodded. "I will be your God, your ruler, your master...therefore that means I can break you and I will break you Tumi. You are already broken, now I will crush you. You will never ever be strong in your life you useless bitch!" Droplets of saliva kept jumping out of his mouth and onto my face. "Get into bed!" He gave an order and I did.

I watched him take out an injection from his drawer, the second my eyes laid upon it; I

shifted away from him.

"Please don't, I will respect you and obey you: I promise," I begged. He got closer and injected me anyway. He pulled my legs apart and then pulled down my underwear. I attempted to lift up my arm but it refused to function like a fully functioning arm. I lost control of all movement and I'm scared that I might die. I know what he's going to do. As blurred as my vision is, I can see him touching himself and breathing heavily over me preparing to come inside me.

"I missed you," he whispered as he came over me. He got closer and kissed my forehead, "just relax," he said. He inserted his penis inside of me and then exhaled softly. My eyes fell shut giving in to the drug he had injected me with.

I don't want to open my eyes. I don't want to

face reality because it's scary and I'm weak. To be honest thought; what the fuck did I think? Did I think I'd just run away from him and then live happily ever after? Lucky fooled me into believing I could be something other than Ndumiso's wife and punching bag. He made a fool out of me and said I was strong. This is all his fault; he made me believe I could lead a normal and be a normal human being that can stand up for themselves. He lied! He lied to me. Fuck! I was actually starting to see myself as someone else. How fucking dumb of me right? Because here we are now and I'm back to being that stupid, worthless, dumb bitch that Ndumiso always tells me I am.

Maybe I just need to give in and come back to my old life,

That'll be easier. That won't be a lie because I know it and I've lived it for years. That life is realer to me than the air in my lungs. Ndumiso is realer to me than Guy is. I know him, I've experienced him and I know what to expect from him. I've studied him and mastered his ways. I know when he's going to beat me or yell at me or fuck me...I just know. This is all the more reason why I have to apologize to my husband and stay here; for good this time.

"Ndumiso," I whispered. "I'm hungry," he was seated next to me busy with his phone. "What time is it?"

"It's the evening of the next day," he says. "We had a lot of fun you and I," he smirked. I breathed in tremulously. Ndumiso is a sick man. How can you have sex with an unconscious

person and then say, 'we had fun'

"I'm hungry," I think I hadn't eaten in nearly 3 days. Even breathing feels laboured.

"I'll get you a coffee and maybe some cereal or soup," I shook my head.

"I want a burger," I uttered.

"Fine, I'll make an exception just this once. I'll order a burger for you. I'll get you some grapes in the meantime,"

"Coffee," I said swallowing only God knows what seeing that my mouth is as dry as the Sahara Desert. He got up and exited. My eyes

flooded with tears at the thought of Ndumiso having his way with me while I was unconscious. I sat up straight and cleaned my eyes. The sooner I accept Ndumsio for the monster that he is the less traumatizing the things he does to me will be.

Lucky will never be able to find me. I don't have a phone and he had never been to my new phone so I'm fucked. My only hope of ever abating Ndumiso's anger is by playing along. That's the only way I will survive.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 15

VOW

Noun/Verb

(Plural: vows)

1. A declaration or assertion

2. To declare publicly that one has made a vow, usually to show one's determination or to announce an act of retaliation

A week later and I'm still here; he still drugs me and beats me every now and again. I'm still tied up in his bed. He went to work, but I'm certain he is on the way now.

Basically, I spend my days drugged and my nights even more drugged. He rarely feeds me. He says he forgets I'm back. He last fed me yesterday morning. I can only hope to die right

now. I feel weak, cold and scared. The drug wore off faster than usual. I usually don't wake up until he comes back and wakes me, maybe he has used it so much on me that my body is starting to not yield to it.

"Good, you're up!" He announced barging in. "We need to talk," he untied me then removed the tape over my mouth.

"Ndumiso, please give me some food," I begged with what felt like my very last breath.

"Answer me this first, who was taking care of you?" He asked. "Was it a man? Your lover?"

"Food first," I demanded.

"Who did you run to? Was it that good Samaritan from the last time? Was he fucking you," he took my hand and pulled me to my feet, my entire body was so painful, standing felt like a foreign activity - as a result - my knees failed me and dragged me to the floor,

"I want food,"

"While in the office, I remembered the last time you ran away; you said a man saved you. Was it him?" I ignored him and concentrated on breathing; "Speak you worthless whore!" he raised his voice. I attempted climbing on the bed but this heartless son of a bitch pulled me back to the floor by my hair. His foot swung back, and with full speed came back to collide with my rib cage completely stopping me from breathing. It felt like my guts along with my life

had somehow found an exit out of my body and took it.

"I will tell you," I gasped for air.

"Speak!" he demanded. "Did you go back to him? What's his name?"

"Lucky..."

"Lucky? You said you hit his taxi that night! Is it the same guy? Were you cheating on me?" A slap flew across my face.

"Please, kill me Ndumiso," I cried on the floor just a second away from giving up

“I need his full name,” I can’t. I can’t offer Lucky as a living sacrifice; I would never be able to live with myself if anything happened to him. Lucky is the only thing tangible in my life and his kids. God Sam and Mtho, what would they do without their father?

“I don’t know,” he punched me in the face and I immediately bled. “Ndumiso, please...” I begged. He bent over me and started punching me repeatedly. He grunted with every punch. It got to a point where I stopped trying to fight. I couldn’t see. I couldn’t breathe properly and I couldn’t feel my face. I couldn’t hear him grunting anymore, I couldn’t feel him over me. My vision is distorted, I can barely see anything. I think I’m alone now. Where did he go?

“Ndumiso,” I called. I stayed right where he left me, the fact that I cannot see is making things even harder for me.

“Hey, hey...open your eyes”

“Ndumiso,” I panted with my eyes practically shut.

“He’s not here, its me Menzi. Just hang on” Menzi is here...Menzi. “She’s up here...” he shouted. “Stay with me” I tear trickled out my eye. I couldn’t even cry properly; my whole body was just numb and painful.

“Help” I whispered gasping for air, “Me” he carried me in his arms.

That’s the last thing I remember.

My brain pulled me back to reality. I think I'm in a moving vehicle. Where is he taking me? I started panicking, my heart started beating fast. I got more scared when I attempted to open my eyes and couldn't. all I felt was pain and fear. I didn't know where Ndumiso was taking me or what he was going to do to me. I'm certain he is going to kill me.

"Hmmm" I moaned, I felt a hand squeezing mine.

"Rainbow, just stay calm. I'm here..."

"Ndumiso..." I uttered through my teeth.

"She thinks he's still here..."

“This is Menzi, Lucky’s big brother. You are safe...” he squeezed my hand. Then I remembered; Menzi came. But everything is such a blur...”Andile, you need to drive faster, we are los...Rainbow! Rainbow!”

I have never felt safe since Tumelo died. He was my best friend and he looked out for me and protected me, after he died; I was just on my own. Dad tried to be there for me but he did that by buying me things and giving me cute pet names, like Ice cream. And mama...Jesus that woman! I don’t know what happened to her. I don’t know why she’s so cold and loveless. She tried to be a loving and present mother but it seemed occupying that position made her uncomfortable.

“Get up Rainbow, open your eyes...” I heard a

voice at a distance. I felt a squeeze on my hand, “Rainbow,” I tried to open my eyes to see where I was. As unbearable as the pain was I managed to at least see what was in front of me, “You need to wake up, please...”

“Hmmm” I moaned and then wiggled a finger. I peeled my eyes open even wider, it’s Lucky, he’s here. But now the question is, where am I? I feel that my face is a mess, my eyes feel swollen and I just know I look horrible.

“I’m here...” he said. I opened my mouth and tried to speak but I failed. I couldn’t speak, I couldn’t open my mouth. It was too painful. “She’s up!” Guy shouted, “mama!” I’m scared. I’m so scared. What if I’m never able to speak again?!? I started breathing heavily, what if Ndumiso broke me for good?

“Hmm,” I wiggled my hand, he looked at me,

“Speak, I’m here,” he says looking at me. My eyes travelled between his eyes and my hand. I needed him to look at my hand, I’m trying to communicate with it. But he kept his eyes on mine. “Say something,”

“Paper...she needs something to write on,” I don’t know who said that.

“Good job boy,” said Guy and ran to get a paper and pen.

“Baba, use my tablet, it’ll be easier!” he came before me with a tablet. Mthobisi is here...Lucky came back empty handed.

“That’s a good idea Mtho,” Mthobisi brought the tablet closer,

“Just type aunty Rainbow,” I nodded trying to say he was doing a great job. I looked at the tablet screen, lifted my hand and started typing.

“NDUMISO” I looked at Mtho when I was done, he showed it to his father.

“He is not here, you are safe but I promise you, I will find him,” said Guy. His mom and dad walked in.

“SAM” I typed. I didn’t want her see me like this.

“Sam is fine. She saw you...already Miss...” I shook my head and tears fell out of my eyes and into my ears.

“CANT SPEAK PAIN”

“Rainbow, we are all here my baby,” said his mom. “No need to worry,”

“SCARED” Guy came and took my other hand.

“It’s okay, I’m here...we’re all here,” I nodded. Even though he assured me that he was there, I was still scared. Ndumiso is a man with a lot of connections. How did he even know where I was? How did he find me?

His mom came closer, "I need you to relax your muscles okay and just open your mouth, just a little," I tried to relax and just be calm down. I attempted to open my mouth but the pain I felt made me retreat immediately.

"I need you guys to leave...this won't be pleasant," she says. "I need to open her mouth myself and it's going to be very painful,"

"Hhhmmm..." I cried.

"Ma, please. She's been in way too much pain...can't we give her some times,"

"No, if we don't do this now; her jaws might lock good..." I cried at the thought of having my jaws locked forever. What did Ndumiso do to me?

“Let me stay with her,” begged Guy.

“Everybody else, out,” his mom demanded.
“baby girl, this is going to hurt, just be strong...its only going to take a second,” Guy took my hand. She first massaged my cheek bones then pulled my lips apart. I breathed heavily waiting for her to do whatever it is that she wanted to do, Before I knew it, she had pulled my mouth open. I couldn't scream as loud as I wanted to, I just let out loud groanings, turned on my side and cried while holding on to Guy's hand.

“I'm sorry, I'm so sorry,” Guy's voice cracked.

“Let me give her something for the pain...” her

footsteps thudded away.

“I’m going to find him and kill him slowly, on this day I make that promise to you,” I kept groaning and wailing like a dying dog, at this point that is all I can do. His mom came back with a glass and a spoon.

“I crushed the tablets and added water so it’s easier for you to consume,” I laid back on my back with my mouth slightly open. She poured what used to be solid tablets inside my mouth, swallowing wasn’t as hard. The liquid just slid down my throat. Guy just sat there holding my hand in his, making vows to make Ndumiso pay. I cried for a fair amount of time; I was in pain. The pills she gave aren’t working as fast as I’d wanted them to. At this point no sound is coming out of me but I’m crying. I want

everything to stop. I don't want to be alive. I don't want to feel this pain anymore. Make it stop. Please!

"I promise you Miss, I promise you. I will die making him pay...I vow." He kept saying.

After an hour or 2 the pain had eased. I was feeling sleepy, but I didn't want to sleep. What if Ndumiso comes and takes me again. I can't sleep. Guy walked in and found me breathing heavily.

"It's me..." he says. Zah is sleeping in his room, since I invaded hers. He came closer. I wiggled my hand and he looked at it, "Okay...you can talk," I wrote on an imaginary paper with an imaginary pen. "Writing...okay, hold on" he took out his phone and went to memo and then held it up for me to write.

“SON” I typed.

“Son, my son?” he confirmed, I gave him a thumbs up. “Mthobisi....” He called. “Mtho,” Mthobisi came in running. “She wants you,” he said and stepped aside giving him space.

“Aunty Rainbow,” he took his father’s phone.
“You can type...”

“THANKS VERY BRAVE”

“Don’t worry about it, just rest okay.” I nodded.
“I’m here. Baba’s here and baba Menzi, and Mkhulu,” I nodded again.

“WATER,”

“Okay, I’ll get it for you,” Mtho jumped.

“Mthobisi, I’m sure there’s a straw somewhere in the taxi...” said Guy

“Okay,”

Guy looked at me. he stared into my eyes. What would I have done if anything had happened to him? If I knew anything about him at all; would I have led Ndumiso to him to save myself? The thought of him getting hurt just made me cry. My eyes were filled with tears.

“I’m sorry Miss,” my breathing quivered. I’m the one who should be apologizing to Lucky for bringing this mess into his home, his family and kids. I will never ever forgive myself for this

#bonusinsert

#React

#share

#comment



INSERT 16

REALITY CHECK

(Plural: Reality checks)

1. A check or review to make sure something is consistent, reasonable

2. A wake-up call, reminder

2 weeks later and I'm still here. Still hiding myself in Zanele's room and still scared. I can speak now; my body is healing but my heart breaks everyday that I breathe. Every second I think about what Ndumiso put me through and I relive everything in my head, making the pain brand-new all over again. I don't recognize myself anymore. I don't even feel like myself. I don't feel like Rainbow and I don't feel like Tumi. I just feel like a corpse waiting to be declared dead.

The past days have been very hard for me but the Dlamini's have been very hospitable towards me. Zanele moved into Lucky's room so Lucky can spend his nights with me. And Mthobisi, he has become my favorite person in this house. He just matured up and became a man literally in a matter of seconds. He comes

in here every day to help me walk around the room since I'm still scared to go outside. Sam comes to read me stories and give me cookies from school, which she made me swear to not tell a soul; especially not her father.

Zanele did my hair, nothing fancy, just cornrows to protect my hair and Eunice is a doctor...who would have thought. I asked her one of the days how she knew exactly what to do and she told me she was a doctor but a special kind of doctor, she works for her husband as well. She didn't really go into detail but I got the picture. This morning I bathed without the assistance of Guy or Zanele. I make sure to not look at myself in the mirror, it sets me back a few steps. I can hear them filling up in the dining room for breakfast. Usually – they'd bring my food to the room and I'd eat alone. Guy ate with me for two or three days and then I told him to stop; he

needed to spend time with his family; especially his kids. This morning, I made a bold decision to join them. I have on grey sweatpants, Guy's black adidas t-shirt and flipflops. I walked steadily to the table.

"Miss Rainbow," Sam cried. Guy stood and walked up to me.

"Good morning everybody," I said. Guy took my hand.

"You okay? You want to sit down?"

"I'm fine," he pulled out a chair and helped me sit. My body is still healing so I had to be careful when sitting. "Sir, ma'am" I acknowledged them.

“It’s good to have you here with us...” Eunice said.

“Gogo, it’s the cookies I gave her, they helped” Sam blurted our little secret and then quickly slapped her hand over her mouth.

“Samke,” her father called. “Were you feeding Miss Rainbow cookies this entire time?” he asked.

“All gogo gave her was soup and vegetangles baba, the cookies helped,” did she just call vegetables vegetangles? Yes, yes she did...okay.

“No more cookie money for you, young lady! Gogo please give her vegetangles everyday for school.” said Guy and then Sam’s jaws dropped.

Eunice laughed, “Oh vegetangles...its vegetables Sam. Akunama tangles lana,” she teased her.

“But I enjoyed the cookies....” I defended her.

“So you are strong,” Mr Dlamini shifted from the topic at hand. His eyes are on me.

“Excuse me?” I said.

“Walk with me,” he stood.

“Baba, maybe let her eat first and then take the walk...” Guy spoke on my behalf.

“It’s okay, I will eat after,” I want to know what this man thinks. He hasn’t said a word to me since I arrived here beaten to the pulp. I steadily walked behind him. When I stepped outside, the light hit my face refreshing me and bringing me back to life. I had almost forgotten how beautiful this place is. If someone told me this was Wakanda, I wouldn’t argue with them, it’s marvellous. He stood at the centre of his yard and looked around. I planted my feet right next to his.

“When I let someone work with me, they need to show me 3 things,” he says. “First, bravery; you’ve shown me that. Secondly; strength, and you just demonstrated that and then lastly, stupidity,”

“Have I showed you how stupid I am?” I asked.

“Not yet. You were brave for running away from that monster and attempting to start over. You were strong for walking out of that room and joining us, it takes a strong woman to stand after a horrible ordeal and it takes an even stronger woman to stand after such a short amount of time,”

“So, you still want me to work for you?” is this man serious?

“Yes, but heal first. I spoke to Lucky; I want you both here for a week or two. Mhlongo will take care of things in Durban. I want you to heal...get stronger and then get back to it.”

“What am I getting back to Mr Dlamini?” I mean

if I am to work for him then I need full details. A full job description. “What do you guys do exactly?” He glanced at me. A shadow of doubt crossed his face. “Sir, your son killed a man in my presence and I am still here. I stole diamonds from a man that was ready to have sex with me, and I didn’t even know you then but I am still here and I haven’t told a single soul about you and your sons. If you really want me to work with you then you’re going to have to meet me half way.” He sighed loudly.

“Follow me,” I obeyed. We passed by the dining room, “Zanele my baby, please bring me my tea and whatever she was drinking,” said Mr Dlamini.

“Yes baba,” Zanele got up,

“Where are you taking her?” asked Guy.

“To the office,” he responded.

“The office, now baba?” there was a note of concern in his tone.

“I know what I’m doing boy,”

“Okay, let me come with you then. Please...” Guy begged.

“No, stay put,” his father stopped him.

“Guy, I’m fine. Let me go please...” Guy nodded. I followed his father as he led me to his bedroom. He walked up to the big mirror on the wall and then just pushed it aside revealing a closed

door. He pulled out a set of keys from his pocket and unlocked. It was an office, literally an office...just an office with a table, a fancy chair, books and papers...'this had better be worth it,' I thought to myself.

"We work for the government!" he said taking a seat in the fancy leather chair behind the mahogany desk.

"I'm sorry, what?" my eyes widened. "But Lucky said what you do is dangerous,"

"It is," his phone rang and he pulled it out of his pocket. "Excuse me. It's my daughter" he picked up. What the fuck does this old man mean they work for the government? He is probably senile. The government kills people now? The government steals diamonds from people. "OK

ZANELE, HOLD ON A MOMENT,” he ended the call. “She’s here with our tea, open the door,” I got up and marched to the door and opened. I found Zah on the other side wearing a smile that stretched from ear to ear.

“Welcome to the team,” she whispered and then sauntered away.

“Ever heard in the movies when they say, ‘I know a guy’” I nodded. “We’re that guy. We do what the police can’t do. Ask questions that can’t be asked. Bring them information they can’t get and we’re basically always on call.

“You’re a police?” I asked.

“Oh no! I’m a criminal. Well I was...I made a deal

with the police years ago, I work with them and they keep me out of jail and my family safe,”

“What did you do?”

“What did I not do is the question to ask...” he snickered and then sipped on his tea. I can barely keep my mouth shut. Is this real? Am I hallucinating? It can't be. The Dlamini's look like a regular Zulu family. Guy drives around in a taxi, and they just don't fit the part.

“That bad huh!”

“I did everything that could bring me money. In my old age, the police caught up with my activities but instead of putting me on trial and have me sentenced, they offered me a deal I

could not turn down, immunity for information, and extra eyes and ears outside of the force” well how’s that for a reality check?

“And your sons?”

“Lucky came when Menzi was already in motion, it seemed...”

“Came from where? What do you mean?” I have so many questions. I can’t even breathe.

“I think he will tell you that himself,” he leaned back on his seat. “Anyway; Menzi got arrested for trying to rob a bank; when the police learnt who he was I had to beg for him. I promised he would work for me. They were impressed with his skills and his ability to be stealth, they called

him, 'young Dlamini'. He was younger, knew the new criminals, gangs and leaders and so it was a jackpot for both sides,"

"This is a joke..." I muttered. "You can't be...look at you. You're just a regular old man. Lucky drives a taxi and..." I looked at him wide eyed.

"You've never seen him transporting passengers like your regular taxi drivers," he read my mind. I nodded; I have never seen Guy transporting passengers around...

"You should see your face right now" he giggled.

"So, I would be working for the government. I don't have the proper training and and and...I'm clumsy and fearful and timid. I'm dumb..." I can't

work for the police. I will mess things up. This is too serious. I thought they were just small-time underground criminals.

“Firstly; you don’t work for the police; I work for the police and you work for me,” he says. “I hire whoever I want,”

“Okay, but I still don’t think I have what it takes. I can’t do this, I will mess up your entire operation,”

“You’d be stupid to think you can. Young lady, you may leave now...let me make some calls,” he picked up the telephone.

“But, I still have some questions,”

“We have enough time, go and have breakfast,”

Later that day, Lucky asked me to join him in his room. I was glad he did, I missed him. I missed talking to him and being around him. But more than anything, I need to ask him some questions. If I’m really going to work with him, then I need clarity on some things. I walked in and found him shirtless in bed with his eyes shut facing the ceiling.

“Hey,” I announced my presence by the door. I stood against the door.

“Hey,” he sat up. “I missed you” he took the words right out of my mouth. “come here...” he patted the bed. I went on over and joined him in bed. I groaned out of pain as I sat down. “You got this,” I sat right in front of him with my legs

folded. He got closer, putting me between his legs.

“How ugly do I look?” I asked trying to lighten the mood.

“1 to 10, it’s a fair 8,”

I poked his chest with my index finger, “Hey, that’s not funny,” I smiled.

“It’s kinda badass, if you ask me.” he let out a smile. I stared at him, I just studied his face and then my memory went back to that night when Ndumiso was beating me and asking about him. I could hear in his tone that he had nothing but hate for Lucky and that he wanted him dead. The only thing that saved me was Menzi’s

timing and the fact that I really didn't know Guy's full story. The only reason I didn't utter the Dlamini surname was because of his kids and his father. Lucky's hand rested on my face and brought me back to reality. I grinned and then he kissed me. I kissed him back. My hand rested on his chest as I allowed myself to dive into this moment.

"I NEED HIS FULL NAME," I heard Ndumiso's voice echoing so loud like he was right in this room with us. I stopped and inhaled tremulously.

"Hey, look at me," I obeyed. "You are safe here with me...okay?"

"When uhmm...that day when Menzi came, he was beating me. He wanted you, he wanted to

know everything about you and I told him your name,” I tear ran down my cheek. He cleaned it.

“It’s okay. He will never find me, I am not on the government database,” that sentence on its own is just questionable judging that they work for the government.

“Guy, I need you to tell me everything. Who are you? I want to know you like you know me. I cupped his face in my hands. He kissed my thumb and then pushed himself forward.

“I am Nhlanhla Vilakazi,” chills invaded my entire body. It felt as though I was being introduced to a completely different person.

“Why are you Lucky?” I murmured.

“My father, he hmmm,” his head fell, I rested my hand on his shoulder.

“I’m here,” I whispered.

“He used to beat my mother...” my mouth slightly opened. I am beside myself with fear and shock.

“Just tell me the short version,”

“One night I came home after a soccer match and I found him beating her, she wasn’t moving Miss...she was just,” his voice cracked. I sat on top of him and wrapped my legs and arms around him.

“It’s okay, you don’t have to tell me now,” I was trying so hard to maintain the semblance of being the stronger one in this moment. I have had my moments of weakness far too many times and in all those times, Guy was strong.

“I want to.” He sniffed buried in my neck.

“Take your time,” I kissed his neck.

“So, when she was laying there lifeless, I panicked. I attacked him and we fought...” he let out a quivering sigh. “I was only 12 Miss; I didn’t know better. So, we fought, obviously he was beating my ass, somehow a candle fell, we were not paying attention to it. I managed to reach for the knife so I stabbed him. When I

came back to my senses; the house was drenched in fire,”

“What did you do?” I asked.

“I went over to my mother; her eyes were open. I tried to get her up but I was 12. She uttered, ‘Run Nhlanhla, and never look back,’ it was either the fire took 3 lives or 2...it took 2. I made sure my father didn’t escape, I set fire on him on purpose and ran”

“Oh my God,” I muttered.

“I found myself in the streets of Jozi, no home, no family, no money, so I went for the next best thing, pickpocketing. I lived off that for 6 months and then one day, I pickpocketed the

right person and his name was Paul Dlamini. He took me in and made me his own,” a ghost of a smile visited his lips. I cupped his face into my hand and then kissed him passionately. His hands went under my shirt and moved slowly and carefully. He tried turning over to put me on my back but I winced.

“I’m not there yet...it still hurts,” I folded my lips.

“Can you sleep here tonight please...with me,”

“I’d like that very much,” I kissed his forehead.

“We have to bribe Zah to keep her mouth shut,” we both giggled.

PLEASE REACT AND SHARE♡

INSERT 17

DISCORD

Noun

1. Lack of concord, agreement, or harmony
2. Tension or strife resulting from a lack of agreement; dissension

The following day was a very bright and hot Saturday, which meant the kids were at home. This morning I volunteered to make breakfast and also cook supper. Everyone was just in a cheery mood and I wasn't going to ruin that

mood by living in my head. Around noon, Sam came to me with a big smile thrown across her face. She found me with her dad in his room. She stood by the door smiling and looking so cute in her pink barbie dress.

“What is it baby?” her father asked.

“Baba, can me and Miss Rainbow go to the shop,”

“For what?” asked Lucky sitting up straight.

“To buy chips and cookies,” she responded.

“Samke, what is up with you and cookies? Are you addicted?” she nodded while giggling.

“Spell addicted”

She covered her face with her hands and laughed, “Baba, please,” she begged.

“Please Lucky,” I took to begging too.

“Miss, she eats cookies every single day. On weekends she can an apple and vegetangles if she likes but no cookies!” he said.

“What about me? I don’t eat cookies everyday...”
I persisted.

Sam brought her palms together, smiled and batted her lashes at her father, “Pretty please,”

“Hey, who taught you to bat your eyes like that?” Lucky asked.

“Nobody” she said and looked around.

“You better not be batting your eyes like that for any boy but me, your brother, baba Menzi and Mkhulu okay?” Sam giggled and nodded. “You can go,” he added. Honestly, I didn’t want to go anywhere, I’m just doing it for Sam. Her father gave us R50 and then watched us leave for our GIRLS DAY OUT, as Sam said to me while I was putting on shoes.

We strolled to the shop under the sun, singing and gossiping about a boy called Clinton that seems to be bothering her every single day. I told her to slap him the next time he bothers her. I didn’t want to tell her the obvious, which is that

Clinton clearly likes her.

We bought our chips and snacks and then headed back home.

“Miss Rainbow,” she called with her cute high-pitched voice.

“Yes Sammy,” I copied her tone.

“Are you my new mommy?” she asked and I nearly choked on my spit.

“What makes you ask that sweetie,” I glanced down at her as she kissed the ground with her pink flipflops.

“Well,” she took on a sing-song tone, “You and

baba look like mommy and daddy...”

“Sammy, why don’t we talk about this when we get home with baba...” she stopped walking.

“There’s something in my eye,” she squeezed her eyes shut.

“Okay, let me see...” I knelt down in front of her.
“Open your eyes just a little baby...”

While I was still trying to clean her eye, I saw a black tazz slowing down behind her. The driver’s window wound down then a gun peaked out before I could even carry Sam and move her out of the way, I had already started hearing gun shots. Pedestrians were screaming and running for shelter, I had Sam buried in my chest and

my legs wrapped around her. Then the car did a quick U-turn leaving dust and shock behind. I'm still frozen, I'm scared and I can only imagine what is going through Sam's head right now. I can only imagine the fear gushing through her veins and how fast her heart must be beating. I could still hear loud and unpleasant cries across the street.

"Miss Rainbow," Sam uttered and I could hear fear all over her voice.

"It's okay Sammy, Miss Rainbow is here," my trembling tone gave away that I was scared too. "It'll be fine. I'm so sorry..."

"Miss Rainbow, it hurts," she groaned. I slowly peeled her away from my chest, my eyes laid upon blood coming out of her mouth.

“Oh my God” I screamed. My body immediately started burning. “Help!” I shouted. “Sam, where does it hurt baby...just stay with Miss Rainbow,”

“It,” she panted, “Everywhere, it hurts everywhere,” there was blood on her chest, her stomach and arm. “I want baba,”

“Okay, listen to Miss Rainbow, just try to breathe, help is on the way....” I looked around and shouted “Help!”

“I called an ambulance sisi, it’s on the way...” shouted a man from across the road.

“Miss,” I heard Guy’s voice at a distance. When I looked back, I saw him with Mtho and Zanele

running towards us.

“Baba is here, Sweetie okay...open your eyes.” she let out a weak groan. “Sammy,” I shook her leg. “Samkelisiwe open your eyes, no no...Sam” I let out a loud scream.

“Sam” Guy shouted as he came to a stop right over a body that used to be his daughter. He took her from my arms and shook her, “Samke my baby, baba is here...open your eyes,”

“I’m sorry, I’m so so sorry...” I cried.

“Sam,” Mtho cried as he fell to his knees. Zanele was whaling behind me.

“Samke, vuka” cried Zanele.

“Baby, listen to me, this is baba...open your eyes,” Guy said lowly as tears and sweat covered his face. An ambulance appeared wailing and speeding. It stopped next to us, two males and a female hopped out hastily.

“Everybody, make way” the lady shouted finding way to get to the injured party.

“Please wake her up,” I grabbed her arm and looked into her eyes.

“Ma’am, you’ve been hit,” she says.

“I don’t care!” I shouted. “Just wake her up”

“Malinga, assess her, she’s got a gun wound on her arm and get the police here,” she says deliberately ignoring me.

“Samke, wake up baby girl” Guy rocked back and forth with Sam still on his lap. He kept kissing her forehead and telling her he was there, but there was no movement or sound coming from her body. This Malinga man stared assessing my arm.

“Is she going to be okay?” I asked.

“Are you the mother?” the other guy asked.

“Is my daughter going to be okay,” Guy shouted causing everyone around him to jump.

“Sir, I’m sorry but...”

“Don’t tell me that fucking bullshit” Guy’s eyes were red and his face was wet.

“She’s gone sir and I need you to step aside, you might be messing up with evidence that will help catch the person who did this”

“Baba” Mtho cried. Zanele came held him her arms.

The police arrived eventually. They questioned everybody that was around, including me;

“The girl was with you?” he asked and I nodded.

“Did you see who did this?”

“I just saw the car, it was a black tazz,”

“The plate number? Can you remember where it was from?”

“ND” I murmured.

“Ma’am, you need to come with us to treat that wound,” that Malinga guy said,

“No!” I said sternly. “I need to be here with them,”

“You have been short!”

“I don’t care!” I shouted.

“Miss, get in. we’ll meet you there,” Guy insisted.

“But I can’t leave you,” my voice cracked.

“I said I will meet you there,”

I’ve in this hospital room for almost 2 hours now. The nurse told me that my family was here and that they said I should wait for them. I’ve been waiting and I can’t wait any longer, I need to be with Guy. He just lost his daughter, he needs me.

I’ve been pulling my mind away from thinking

about this, but could this be Ndumiso? I pray to God it's not him because if it is, I promise you Guy will never forgive me. Oh God Sam! She's gone. She died in my arms and she just wanted to be with her daddy before she could let go of her life. How can this world be so cruel? Sammy was so young and Lucky...Oh sweet mercy, help him.

Menzi barged in with Senzo. I jumped to my feet.

"Let's go," he said.

"Where's Guy?" I asked.

"Waiting for us outside,"

The ride home was brutal and hard. It was already dark outside, the stars had already beautified the night as per usual, but for the Dlamini's, the night is nothing remotely resembling beauty. When we got home, Guy went into his room and everyone else gathered in the lounge. We just sat in silence, hopeless, heartbroken and sad. Mtho was curled up in his gogo's chest still crying. Sammy is gone. Guy walked in startling us all with eyes void of humanity. I walked up to him with haste

“Are you okay?” I whispered taking his hands into mine. He shook his head.

“My little girl Miss...” he buried his face in my neck and sobbed. I held him with all the strength that I had...I squeezed him hard willing all the pain and distress to disappear. But it

didn't...he took a step back, cleaned his face. "I want you to leave," he let out a hoarse tone.

"Lucky!" his father exclaimed.

"What?" I murmured.

"Pack your things and leave. This was your fault; you killed my daughter..."

"Guy, I...how...I" I stammered. How did Guy come to this conclusion? Why would I do that to him?

"This has your husband written all over it. You came here and all your problems and demons followed you, now my daughter is dead! I don't

ever want to see you again..." I'm at a loss for words. "Get out! Leave!" he raised his voice at me so I took a step back. Menzi took my arm and dragged me outside.

"I didn't...Menzi, you have to believe me..." I don't even know what I'm trying to explain to Menzi. I would never want Guy to go through such pain?

"The family is going through a lot right now and Lucky does have a point," said Menzi, "Just leave Rainbow, leave my brother alone,"

"Where do you want me to go? I don't know anyone here?"

"I will give you some cash, enough to last you a few months. Right now, Senzo will take you to

guy in the next town, he sells and rents out cars. Get yourself a car and get the fuck out of here,” he turned around to go back inside.

“Can I at least get my things, please” I cleaned my face in attempt to assume the semblance of a strong and understanding person.

“Zah will get them for you,” he didn’t even look back when he said that. But then before he could be swallowed by the door, he marched back to me speedily. He was standing so close to me that I could smell his breathe and feel his wrath transferring into me. “I saw you from a mile away that you were trouble and I knew you were nothing good for my brother,” I got closer and looked him in the eye. Usually - when a man would speak to me like that – I would cower and reduce myself to nothing, but I couldn’t. I

just couldn't let him say all of those things to me without me talking. I got even closer and tightened my voice.

“Menzi, you best backup and fix that tone. You don't know me so don't act like you do. You know I had nothing to do with this, but this is just all working in your favour because you never liked me from the start. Now, I'm not saying this is not Ndumiso but I'm saying I shouldn't be blamed for it...I would never do this to your brother and you know it!”

“You know; the only reason I came to save you was because he begged me to. My father declared finding you a 'mission', but he couldn't get involved, he was too close. He was going to mess it up. I wanted to dump you in some shelter for abused woman and now...looking at

you. I know I should have. You sowed seeds of discord in my father's field of peace."

I sighed loudly and took a step back.

"Like I said, you don't know me, you have no idea what I've been through. Before we both say things we might regret, let me just say thank you, you saved me and for that I will be forever grateful and thank you to your family for welcoming me in and I owe my life to Lucky. He is the reason I'm alive today. I just hope that one day you'll see how much he means to me. But I can't take the fall for Sammy's death,"

"Don't speak her name!" he said sternly. He marched back known into the house.

I know Ndumiso. He likes to be seen; he likes it to be known when he is around. He came to fetch me himself from my flat so if he had received intel about my location, I am certain he would have been here himself. He has always wanted Lucky; he hates him. Why would he leave him and go for his daughter? He wants Lucky dead...the Ndumiso I know doesn't operate like that. That job was too stealth, too common and orthodox. Ndumiso is extravagant and kinky.

PLEASE REACT AND SHARE♡

#happymonday

#happyreading

INSERT 18

GUN

Noun

(Plural: guns)

1. A device for projecting a hard object very forcefully; a firearm or cannon

2. A very portable short firearm, for hand use, which fires bullets or projectiles, such as handgun, revolver, pistol or Derringer

I waited outside like a homeless dog desperate for a home and love like all the times I was alone growing up, silently crying for my parents to take me into their arms and love me. Instead – they shut me out – and left me all by myself.

Senzo and Zah came out. Zah had my bag in her hand. Mthobisi came out running, he immediately threw himself at me. even though he's 16, he is almost as tall as his father and uncle.

“Goodbye aunty Rainbow,” he said under his breath.

“Goodbye boy! Behave okay, don't give your father trouble,” he nodded still holding on to me.

“Mtho, that's enough,” Mtho released me at Zah's command and headed back to the house. She threw the bag at my feet.

“Zah, come on...” she walked away. “Zanele,” I

shouted but she was set on ignoring me. Menzi came out also with a bag in his hand.

“Disappear. Let it be like you never met him,” he dropped the bag at my feet and marched back inside.

I can still smell Guy inside this taxi, which is now being driven by Senzo. I’m tired, physically that is and mentally; emotionally, I’m just numb. I don’t know what to do with myself. A part of me keeps telling me that Guy is grieving, he’ll probably come around.

“I WANT BABA” I jumped at hearing Sam’s voice. Senzo glanced at me. I think I might be going crazy!

“You okay?” he asked.

“Yeah, I was just dozing off,” I heard Ndumiso’s voice as clear as day as well, now Sam. What’s happening to me? “Can you pull over for second?”

“You got it!” he stopped the taxi. I got out and went to the back. Pulled out sweatpants, takkies and a clean vest. I took off the clothes I was wearing with not even a single care in the world, they were still drenched in her blood.

“Whoa...” he cried. “So you’re just going to...okay, sure...that’s...I’ll look away,” I got dressed and then we off.

We’re here. At this guy’s place...the car guy. Senzo called him asked him to come outside.

“Sven,” called Senzo as the guy approached us.

“Senzo this had better be good,” he’s coloured.

“The vrou is annoyed inside,”

“I’m sorry man, we need a car,” he says.

“I’m sorry for disturbing you. It’s an emergency, I really need a car to buy right now,”

“Most of them are at the workshop in town, I have about 4 at the back. You can come through,” we followed him. I didn’t care what kind of car he had; I just needed a getaway car as in yesterday. So long as it had 4 wheels and a working engine.

The first car he showed us was a maroon Citi golf. I didn't need to see the other cars, it's perfect.

"I'll take it," I announced.

"You don't want to see the rest. I have something more feminine,"

"This is perfect!" I sighed loudly. Finding a car, at this time is the best thing to happen to me in a while. Excuse me if I'm a little relieved. We gave him his money and he gave us the keys. Senzo and I went our separate ways. I was alone, I felt like that little girl again that was always alone in a big house, except this time, I was in a car. I drove with my window down so I

don't fall asleep. I stopped by a garage and bought chips and an energy drink. Guy's home is just outside of Durban, the drive is usually an hour or 2 at the most.

"MISS, RAINBOW, IT HURTS."

"Sammy," I jumped almost swerving the car off the road. I stopped on the side of the road to gather myself. I can't lose myself, I'm all I have. "Sammy, I'm sorry baby..." I cried. I got out for a breather. I'm on my own now, I need to get it together. I have to. "Rainbow," I paced up and down. "Get it together, you can't lose it. You are on your own again...you have to be brave and look out for yourself." after a few minutes, my heart beat had calmed down and my body wasn't burning. I think I can drive safely now. "Tumelo, I need you," I whispered getting behind

the wheel. "You too Sammy,"

From this moment on, I need to have my back. I need to be alert and awake. There's no more Guy; if Ndumiso comes again, I need to be ready.

I didn't sleep last night at all. I did book myself into a lodge and paid for a week's stay. I can't go back to my flat now, but I will eventually. Right now, I need to secure a steady flow of income, Menzi's money won't last that long. I have a plan and in order for that plan to be executed, I need someone to help me and fortunately for me, I know just the perfect person.

I knocked. He lifted his head up and laid his eyes upon a girl in black jeans, a long sleeve t-

shirt, black boots and a black hat.

“What are you doing here?” he asked. I came in and closed the door.

“I need your help?” I sat down and took off my hat.

“I’m sorry, I can’t help you. They told me what happened,” he said and picked a pen to continue with work.

“Please!” my voice cracked. I need to get my emotions in check if I’m going to be riding solo. “I have nobody else,” added.

“I can give you a few hundred rands, flee the

country. Your husband will never stop until he has you and if the Dlamini are out, then, so am I?"

"Flee?!?"

"That will give you a little peace, but eventually he will catch up with you. If he was able to find you last time then he will again,"

"Then what the hell am I supposed to do?"

"Young lady, I don't know. I can't be sniffed anywhere around. Come back tomorrow; I'll have some money for you,"

"Dammit, Mhlongo!" I banged on the table and

rose up. "I don't need money,"

"What do you need? Papers?"

"I need a gun and for you teach me how to use it?" his face grew pale.

"Rainbow," he stood up and rested his hands on the desk. "Whatever are you going to do with a gun? You are just a little girl"

"I am 25 years old and like you said; Ndumiso will never stop. If the person that suggested I flee the country 2 minutes ago is the same person standing before right now then surely you will understand the need for a gun," I inhaled.

“You are putting me in a very tight position,” he retreated by sitting back down.

“Well I’m between a rock and a hard place,” I also sat. He blew out air and looked up at the ceiling. “Please Mhlongo, I am begging you. I have no one else...you’re my only hope.”

“Fine!” he leaned forward and rested his elbows on the desk. I exhaled in relief. “but, I cannot be implicated in anything you decide to do after. The Dlaminis cannot know about our shenanigans,”

“We never spoke,” I stopped myself from smiling, I stood getting ready to leave.

“Where are you staying now?” he asked.

“I booked myself at a lodge for a week, I’ll go back to my flat after,”

“The same flat where he found you?” there was concern written all over his face.

“Yes, I’m going to fix the locks and you’ll be getting me ready for when he comes,”

“Give me the lodge address, I’ll come by later,”

“Its over on Umbilo road, PLM lodge,”

“Okay, now go and be safe,” before I could leave. I just needed his opinion on something.

“Before I leave; I want to cut my hair, what do

you think?”

“All of it?” he leaned back on his seat.

“No, I want it short and bright,” he grinned.

“Bright how?”

“I don’t know, maybe pink or Blue or purple”

“Rainbow Rainbow Rainbow...I have never met anyone like you.” He scoffed. “Here’s an idea,” he says, “You can try all the colours of the Rainbow. Not at once...just 1 each time,”

“Hmm,” I smiled, “I like that idea...I’ll try that.”

After ambushing Mhlongo and basically guilt tripping him into helping me; I found a salon where I had my hair cut and dyed. I dyed it purple...I bought a few things like clothes, food, a pocket knife, a taser, a pepper spray etc. On that topic of clothes; I bought a lot of black things, I'm kind of feeling that vibe. It brings out a different side to me and I like it. when I got to the lodge, I had a little fashion show for myself, with myself and by myself. at around 20:00, Mhlongo showed up with doughnuts and coffee.

"You done?" he asked licking his fingers. I nodded avoiding to open my mouth full of chewed up doughnut. "Get up," he ordered. I obeyed. He got up with me. he then pulled out a gun from the back of his pants, "Take it," I did. "That's a Glock 34. Having a firearm doesn't mean you're tough and it's not as glamorous as

the movies make us believe” I nodded. “And just because you know how to use one doesn’t mean you know when to use it and when not to,” I nodded again taking mental notes while my eyes studied this this very deadly weapon in my hands. “Now rule number 1: always assume a gun is loaded,”

“Is it loaded?” I asked.

“What did I just say?”

“Always assume the gun is loaded...”

“This is going to be one heck of a ride,” I giggled under my breath as Mhlongo sighed loudly.

Mhlongo left around 00:00, he left the gun with me. I couldn't sleep after the lessons. I stayed up looking at it and practicing everything he had taught me. I kept imagining Ndumiso trying to hurt me and how I'd shoot him on the kneecap, he'd have no choice to but fall then I'd threaten to shoot him in the head but only end up shooting his dick instead. I giggled to myself at the thought of shooting Ndumiso's penis and have him cry like the little bi**h that he is.

I've been alone all my life; this phase won't be hard. In fact; I was alone until Guy found me and then I got used to having someone care for me. I got used to having someone ask if I'm okay. I got used to hearing him sing in the shower and or in the kitchen when he's making food. I got used to having him sit down and look at me when I'm talking to him and then talk to me like I mattered. I got used to having him

walk in with a bag from McDonald's smelling like weed or cigarettes, beer and everything that makes me feel good. He'll come around. Guy will come back and then everything will go back to normal between him and I. I just have to be patient.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INSERT♡

INSERT 19

NOVICE

Noun

(Plural: novices)

1. A beginner; one who is not very familiar or

experienced in a particular subject.

2. Synonyms: amateur, greenhorn, learner, neophyte, newbie, newling

A week has gone by since Mhlongo and I started our lessons, though I feel like he is taking too long to get to the shooting part. He is busy with lessons and rules and all the boring stuff and I just want to know how to shoot at an unwanted and uninvited guest like Ndumiso.

I met him outside in his quantum waiting for me with a cigarette in his mouth.

“Do all Dlamini snitches drive taxis?” I asked hopping in.

“Careful what you say about those people, that’s family,” he drove off.

“I’m sorry,” I said. “Mhlongo please tell me we are shooting today, I just can’t with all the rules and things to remember, I have no more space left in my brain.”

“Today is our last day together...” he nonchalantly said releasing smoke through his teeth.

“I haven’t shot yet” I said almost complaining.

“You will shoot today, don’t worry. You’re a smart girl, you’ve got this. In fact; had things turned out differently, you’d have been an awesome addition to us.”

“Except, I’m not a criminal,”

“I have a feeling that’s all about to change,”

We arrived at the destination. He insisted I drink some water before we got started. We’re at an empty and open land. We took a little walk to get away from the taxi. “Now, pull out your gun,” I did. “Do as we had practiced,”

“Okay, hold with dominant hand first,”

“No, don’t say it...do it. When an intruder comes, you won’t have time to recite the steps...do it,” I held the gun like he had taught me and then looked at him.

“Good! That’s it, that’s perfect,”

“Where am I aiming?”

“I know we practiced aiming but, don’t worry about that now. Fix your standing...stand firm!”

“I am firm!”

“I am telling you are not firm, stand firm” he said sternly. I sighed and tried to fix my standing. “Fine. Fire away!” he says.

“Okay,” I breathed in.

“There’s no time to think about Rainbow, shoot!” he shouted.

“Wait!!!” I cried.

“Pull the fucking trigger!” he raised his voice and without even blinking, I pulled the trigger. I stumbled and fell on my back. I opened my eyes and saw Mhlongo standing over me. I was breathing heavily, my heart was racing, my hands were sweating and my tongue was dry. “What’s rule number one?” he asked. I squeezed my eyes shut. “Answer the question!”

“Always assume the gun is loaded” I uttered.

“Did you assume that? Were ready for that force?” I shook my head.

“I thought it was empty, I thought you’d give it to me empty since it was my first time pulling the trigger,”

“I’ll get you some water,” he walked away. “Get ready for round two,” he shouted running back to the taxi. I don’t think I want to do this again. I feel nauseous and scared, I can’t do this.

5 minutes later, Mhlongo was back with a bottle of water.

“I’m scared” I said, “I don’t know why?”

“Its all normal. Shooting a gun causes the brain to release various hormones which can cause a novice shooter, such as yourself, to be overcome by fear, aggression or even anxiety after shooting,” he handed me the bottle of water already open. I gulped down without wasting a single second. “And when I say stand firm, I mean stand firm. Don’t argue with me”

“Yes sir” I nodded.

“Okay, round 2. Just pull the trigger and try not to fall. Remember, stand firm. Mark your territory,” I did as he instructed. This time I dug my feet into the ground making sure I was firm and immovable. “Pull,” I didn’t think about it, I pulled at the sound of this voice. I staggered but didn’t fall. “Good. Again, this time aim at something,”

“At what?” I asked.

“One of the trees or...” he came closer, “You see that abandoned house?” I nodded, “Take the window on the right?”

“Mhlongo,” I cried, “That’s too far...”

“Just shoot Rainbow” he stepped back. “The firmer your grip is, the more accurate your aim will be,” I pulled the trigger and the window immediately shattered. He looked at me, “Mhlongo, that’s too far,” he imitated me. “Rainbow, you are a handful. Let’s go.”

“I’m done?”

“For today, but for more practice you need to go to a shooting range. I found a good one in Congela, on 88 Blake road. Whenever you go, they’ll pull money from my card so you don’t have to worry about that,” we started walking back.

“Thank you Mhlongo, I really appreciate this.”

“We’re laying the little angel to rest tomorrow. It’ll be an intimate thing!” he said and my brain immediately travelled to that day. How she was gasping for life only to draw blood into her lungs. How she wasn’t moving, scared and wanting her father and a few seconds before that she was asking if I was her mommy.

“Do you think I can may...”

“No! keep away from them, especially Lucky.” That hurt me. it hurt me really bad. More than anything right now, I need to be with Lucky. I want to be there for him. To comfort him and just let him know I care and that I’m deeply sorry.

“Yes sir,” I said lowly.

“I have something for you,” he said opening the driver’s door and hopping in. He pulled a phone from his front pocket. “That’s for you. Its set...loaded with airtime and my number is already saved,”

“Mhlongo!” I whimpered.

“They said that one has a nice camera, for when you want to take selfies and post to your tweets,” this man that didn’t want me anywhere near him because of his loyalties to the Dlaminis literally bought me an iPhone11. I don’t remember the last time I held a phone with my hands. I opened the camera and

switched to selfie mode.

“Say cheese!” I said clicking numerously taking selfies with Mhlongo.

“Cheese!” he sang.

“Thank you, I really love it. I really do...and you can't post to your tweets. That's legit not a thing”

“We take care of our own,” he smiled.

After Mhlongo dropped me off at the lodge I was staying at; I had a little visit I needed to make. I don't know what's going to happen, or how they are going to receive me but I have to see them. I met them at school; where they spend most of their days and time. The

receptionist led me to my father's office as if I suddenly forgot the way around my former school. I found them both in there. It looked like they were having a rather clandestine meeting. I barged in and threw myself on the visitors' seats next to mom who was shocked by my presence that she jumped to her feet.

"Father, mother" I said.

"Ice-cream" cried my father.

"Tumelo. Ndumiso has been worried sick about you...he"

"Mom...don't. Please" I stopped her from speaking any further. She just made me sick to my stomach.

“He wanted to pull his hand away from the school, how dare you put what me and your father built in jeopardy,” I banged on the table out of anger and rose.

“Mama. Shut up!” her eyes grew wider as shock took over her face.

“Love, talk to her!” I looked at my father waiting for him to yield to my mother’s word. I waited for him to succumb to the pressure she always puts on him, that pressure that always makes him cower and forget about being a man, a husband and a father.

“Tumelo my angel!”

“Daddy, don’t call me that. Don’t...” I lost it.

“Tumelo died, I am not Tumelo. Can’t you see what you and this woman have done to me? You broke me...you made seek refuge in foreign places and offered me as a living sacrifice to the devil himself” I poured out my heart.

“Your husband is not the devil,” my mom’s eyes bore into mine, “If you want someone to blame for your misfortune, I suggest you take a look in the mirror,” before I could even blink, my hand had travelled with the speed of light and smashed across my mother’s face filling the office with an unpleasant ambiance. She gasped in disbelief.

“Tumelo!” my father rose up. Tensions were rising in this office.

“Ndumiso found me and then beat me up, drugged me and took me back to that dungeon of a house that is filled with nothing but torturous memories for me and then had his way with me. I couldn’t speak for days, I couldn’t walk, I had to be helped by strangers just to bathe. While my mother – who has never cared about me – was in the luxurious side of the province enjoying his money. I told you two that he was hurting me, but money...” I scoffed, “Money did not allow you to help me. Having multiple ugly and expensive wigs was more important to you than the life of your own child you wicked woman.” My eyes never moved from hers’ she was even starting to tear but I didn’t give a rats’ ass. “I am so glad that God took my brother away from you because you are evil...you are the most hypocritical, two-faced, lying, cold, greedy, manipulative and pretentious bi**h on this side of the equator”

“Don’t talk about my son!” her voice quivered.

“and you walk these corridors looking all high and mighty, like you are actually a good person,” I giggled, “Take off the make up and let the world see you for the evil and black hearted person that you are.” I shifted my attention to my father, “And as for you daddy, I love you but grow a pair. A big pair”

“Don’t talk to your father like that,” she cut in

“All of this will come crumbling down one day and you will not believe it. If any of you try to tell Ndumiso I’m in town, I promise you all your luxury will burn down right before your eyes. You broke me...both of you and I hate you so

much,” I headed for the door and exited. When I got inside my car, I took a minute to breathe. My three-pound brain could not come into terms with what just happened. My hand was still burning from slapping my mother’s ugly face.

I just got to my flat. Yes, where Ndumiso captured me. I froze by the door as a memory of that invaded my head space. Mhlongo came here alone one of the days to change the locks and also to add more secured locks and. I have a gun now that I can use when trouble comes, I can try to protect myself when trouble comes. As I was just closing my eyes, Mhlongo called.

“Yes sir!” I picked up.

“Can you come by the rank quickly?”

“On my way,” I fixed myself up and was on my way. I parked my car where Guy usually parks his taxi and walked up to the office. The taxi drivers saw me and greeted. I found Mhlongo all clean and fresh in a leather jacket.

“You have a date?” I asked barging in.

“No, I’m driving down for the funeral. Here” he handed me an envelope with money.

“What’s this for?” I asked.

“For you. Keep it. You will need it.”

“Mhlongo, you’ve done more than enough for me. I can’t take this money...”

“Like I said; we take care of our own,” he came around the table, took my hand and led me out. “I should be on the road,” he locked the office, “Sgora” he called and a very muscular man came running.

“Skhulu sam,” (My boss) he said.

“Walk this lady to her car, please,” he nodded. “Take care of yourself and be safe,” he opened his arms initiating an embrace. I obliged. “Take his number, just in case,”

“Okay” he ran off the opposite direction. This Sgora character walked beside me without even uttering a single word to me. I felt a swift and deliberate pat on my shoulder so I looked back. It’s him.

“Hello,” he spoke. He is talking to me.

“Do you know him?” asked Sgora ready to get him away from me.

“Wait...” I said. This guy has been running away from me yet haunting me since I set foot on this rank.

“Rainbow, it’s me. Tumelo...” I covered mouth with both hands. I got closer and studied him. It’s him. A cold and stinging sensation rushed through my body. “Say something,” I don’t know what to say.

“Are you dead?” I asked the most stupid of questions. Just a few days after losing Sam,

after praying to him, he shows up alive. He shook his head as response. What the fuck is happening? "Am I dead?"

"I don't think so," a corner of his mouth turned up.

Yeah! No...I'm dead. Certainly!

PLEASE REACT AND SHARE♡

INSERT 20

INCARNATE

Adjective

1. Embodied in flesh; given a bodily, especially a human form; personified.

2. To make carnal, to reduce the spiritual nature of

3. To put into or represent in a concrete form, as an idea

Hey! Tell me, what do you say to your brother that had died 15 years ago and is now standing right before you? 'How was the grave?' 'Were you in heaven or hell?' those were some of the questions that were running through my head as I searched in his eyes for the boy that was once my big brother.

So, there I was, in my car, with Tumelo, the

original Tumelo Jaxa, driving to my flat. Silence was so thick you could cut through it with a knife. We kept glancing at each other and quickly looking away. This is wrong right? “I’m sorry” I parked my car on the side of the road. “I can’t do this. I’m scared. Are you dead?” I hopped out of the car and so did he.

“No, why would I be dead? It’s me Bow-bow,” Bow-bow, it’s him. He was the only one who called me that. It was only my big brother who called me Bow-bow and nobody else.

“Why? How?” my voice started shaking.

“You don’t know, do you?”

“Know what?” I paused and caught my breath.

“You died! You are dead, I cried for you and

buried you. We had a funeral Tumelo...”

“That’s what she told you. She was able to even plan a funeral...your mother is the devil incarnate,”

“Right?”

“I see she’s shown you her true colours too!” he smiled wryly. I figured he was hungry and he looked dirty so I suggested we go home and get him cleaned up and then maybe pray. I don’t know...anything.

We got home and I ran him a bath. He had to use my feminine hygiene things, because well; I wasn’t expecting my dead brother to resurrect today or ever. I had to run to the shops and get

him a few clothes, toiletries and food. I bought McDonald's for us both. McD's will always remind me of Guy and Guy...oh Lucky! I miss him, but my brother needs my attention, so let me keep my focus on that. I found him in my room looking out the window with a towel wrapped around his waist and a cup of what appears to a hot beverage in his hand

"I don't remember the last time I was in a clean space," he said admiring the view.

"I got you a few things;" I started pulling out the items from Mr Price. "I got you some drawers, jeans, sweatpants," I called out every item as I pulled it out. "Vests, socks, t-shirts. Some hygiene stuff, flipflops and these takkies. Size 11 right?"

"So, you basically went shopping?" his eye brow

rose.

“Yeah! Basically,” we both giggled. I am not going to lie or even pretend I’m baffled by this but at the same time – I am very excited to help my brother and basically resuscitate him back to life. No pun intended.

“Thank you, Bow-bow,”

“I will be in the lounge,” I awkwardly said and then gave him some space. I started laying out our food on the table making sure that everything was here. I just want him to be comfortable. He walked in wearing sweatpants and flipflops smelling like me. it’s really him. His birthmark is still there. Right under his left bosom.

“It’s really you,” he smiled revealing his mustard yellow teeth and brown gums.

“It’s me sis,” he immediately started eating hastily. I watched him, I know I shouldn’t but, I can’t help it. My big brother is here.

“Why did you run away from me?” I asked.

He scoffed, “I wasn’t sure it was you and I didn’t know what I was going to say if it was you. What brings you around there anyway? A taxi rank is not your scene.”

“It’s a long story. The story you need to tell me right now is why you are not dead? How did you treat the cancer?”

“Cancer?!?!” he looked at me.

“Well yeah! I mean that’s what killed you...” he sighed as he leaned back.

“I never had cancer. Fuck your mother is evil! She went as far as coming up with the cause of death...” he swallowed what was left of his food inside his mouth. “I started using cocaine. That’s why I got skinny and sickly. It wasn’t cancer. Your mother found out and sent me to rehab,”

“I think I remember you being away for some time. Mom said you went to camp with your friends. I was too young to understand much.”

“I came back and relapsed. It was worse the second time around and it was surely going to get the crème de la crème talking. I started stealing from her and dad and their friends when they came over. She caught me using when she decided I no longer had a place at home. You were little, dad was always away and it was the perfect opportunity for her to make sure her image remained intact. So, she called me a driver and had the driver drop me off anywhere far away from the house. I managed to get to Jozi, stayed there for a while and then I found myself here again; homeless and helpless,”

“Tumelo, why didn't you come back?” I am shocked by what he is telling me. Is it possible for a mother to be this evil?

“I did, numerous times but I guess the guard was told to not let me come in. it was hard Bow-bow, life in the streets is hard. You either kill or be killed...she told me that you tried to kill yourself because of me and said if I loved you then I should stay away”

“I will never judge you Tumelo. You did what you had to do and that was all a lie, she lied to you” he grinned. His mind wandered away as the silence got awkward. “Get this, she made me change my name to Tumelo,”

“Get the fuck out of here!”

“Oh! my word! She was putting up an act...she made it seem like she couldn't cope with your death so she started calling me Tumelo, eventually she made me officially change my

name to yours.”

“And dad? What’s he saying about all this?”

“Well, dad is...”

“Hold on! What about the body, my body?” he interjected before I could answer.

“She cremated you. Said it was your dying wish. Didn’t even give dad a chance to take one last look at his son. She had you cremated in a split second and it always kind of confused me how she did everything without talking to dad or when he wasn’t around”

This day has been eventful. I shot a gun; I

confronted my parents and slapped Lucifer's wife and then my brother who was dead for 15 years turned out to be in fact not dead. One might actually have a mental breakdown with all this baggage.

I allowed Tumelo to use the bed while I took the couch in the lounge. I bet it's been a while since he's slept in one. I left him in my flat and I took a little trip. I left him with some cash to go and cut his hair. I booked him an appointment with the dentist and a doctor to run some tests, he's been in the streets for too long, I just want him to be safe. Where am I going, you're wondering? I am going to Sammy's funeral. I know it's a bad idea but I can't not be there to witness the day they lay her to rest. She died in my arms for crying out loud, I mean heck! Sammy might have been my best friend. I will stay hidden. I won't even make a sound.

Mhlongo was right; it's very intimate. There's probably not up to 50 people. I left my car down the road and walked up to the house. They have a Barbie tent up; which is cute. I sat at the very back where they won't see me and just tried to control my tears. This is so hard; I feel like I have just lost my own child. A fair skinned woman with a long weave and a blanket around her shoulders rose up and stood next to the white coffin, I knew exactly who she was. She was a spitting image of Sammy. Her eyes were red; skin white as milk with perfect plump cheeks.

"I don't know what to say" she said and smiled, "My baby was so young. She wanted to have magical powers like Barbie..." I just couldn't sit through this, I got up and scuttled towards the gate. Suddenly there was commotion, when I

looked back, I saw Guy rushing towards me. My heart stopped beating. The world came to a stop but somehow, I kept moving.

“Is that her?” her voice sounded over the mic. What have I done?

“What are you doing here?” Guy asked grabbing my arm.

“I’m leaving, I’m sorry,” I was shaking and on the verge of crying. I looked over his shoulder as she took large steps towards us. “I really must go...let me go,”

“Is this her?” she asked breathing heavily as she stood firmly next to Guy. “Is she the one that killed my Sam?” she looked at me with eyes

filled with tears and pain but that I was ashamed to admit I understood because well, I wasn't a mother. Never been and probably will. But I felt exactly what she was feeling.

"I'm sorry," I whispered.

"Mia, go back let me handle this," Guy ordered still holding on to my arm. Just like I had slapped my mother yesterday, Mia slapped me. I couldn't fight back; I can't fight back. She's grieving and if throwing a slap my direction will help her in anyway; then I offer myself.

"Sorry will not bring back my child, I hope something really bad happens to you. I hope you lose someone you love too, then I'll accept your apology!" she marched away. Guy looked at me and for a second there, I could swear I

saw a human man.

“Guy, I’m sorry...I just wanted...”

“You just wanted what?”

“She died in my arms; her blood was all over me...” I cried.

“This is not about you Rainbow,”

“It’s not Rainbow, it’s Miss,” he shook his head as a tear slid down his cheek. Heaven knows I wanted to clean it for him. I want to hold him and tell him I was there and that everything was going to be okay.

“Leave. Let me bury my daughter in peace...”

With my pride and dignity not intact I dragged my feet out the gate and went to my car. I sat behind the wheel and cried.

“MISS RAINBOW,” I heard her voice as clear as day.

“I’m sorry Sammy, it should have been me. I’m sorry for hurting you,” I cried apologizing to a dead little girl.

“Aunty Rainbow,” I jumped. It’s Mtho. I got out and embraced him. “You okay?” he asked.

“I’m okay boy. But your father won’t be happy

that you're here with me," I said.

"I asked him. He gave me 5 minutes..."

"Give me your number, I will text you!" I said pulling out my phone from the back pocket. He dialed in his number and saved it. "You can call me anytime, okay?" he nodded. When I looked up ahead, Mhlongo was there watching us.

"Okay, run back now and be good okay,"

"I will" he shouted running back. Mhlongo subtly nodded to acknowledge me and I did the same.

I sat there for a while. I pondered, contemplated and questioned my entire existence. Why is my life like this? Why does it feel like I am constantly banging my head against the wall?

Every turn I make is a wrong turn and every time I open my mouth to speak, I choke or bite my tongue. Fuck it! I thought I'd wait a while before executing my plan, but it seems like I have to start acting now. My anger won't allow me to be patient. I can't.

REACT AND SHARE♡

INSERT 21

PINOTAGE

Noun

1. A variety of red wine grape grown in South

Africa, produced by crossing Pinot Noir and other varieties

2. Red wine made from the pinotage grape.

I drove back to the city without making a single stop. I found Tumelo shirtless outside watching the view. He smiled when he saw me appearing with food in my hands.

“There’s my Bow-bow,” he has some scars that I want to ask about but I dare not. I really don’t know what him and I are doing right now? Are we back to being brother and sister or what?

“You look nice,” before I got into the elevator, I composed myself and assumed a gay, delightful, bright and enthusiastic demeanor so he won’t ask questions I’m not ready to answer.

He dished for us and set the table like I did yesterday. "Sooo," he sang.

"What?"

"Tell me something? You have a boyfriend that I need to meet?" this is Tumelo, my brother. Tumelo was my smile keeper. He always knew how to completely ignore all the negatives and just smile.

"What I'm about to tell you is mind blowing but its all true..." he smiled. "Short version. I got married at 22, he was abusive, I ran away this year, met a sweet guy I call Guy but his name is Lucky, but his real name is Nhlanhla and he sings a lot of love songs. I went back to my husband, ran away again and Guy took me back." His forehead creased. I caught my

breathe, “Ndumiso, my husband kidnapped me but Guy’s brother rescued me. Their father is an ex-criminal that works for the government and they work for him using taxis as a front. About a week ago, Guy’s daughter died in my arms after being shot by a guy in a black tazz, now Guy wants nothing to do with me because he thinks that Ndumiso ordered that hit and therefore with Ndumiso out of reach, I am the next best best thing. The end.” I smiled.

“Your life is a fucking movie...wait, where’s Ndumiso now? Please tell me this Fortune guy and his criminal/police father killed him,”

“He escaped when they came for me, so” I clicked my tongue

“But why didn’t you leave? Why didn’t you tell

dad what was happening?” I laughed. It really should be that easy right? When you’re in trouble – you should just run to your family and they’ll automatically protect you.

“Ndumiso’s family was the biggest investor at the school, when he took over the ropes from his father, he still continued to be a financial pillar. I told them what was happening they suggested we go for therapy” he looked at me with sadness in his eyes.

“And I wasn’t there to protect you,” he lowly said.

“You couldn’t, you were dead,” I rubbed his shoulder. He chuckled softly. “Listen,” I stood, “I need to go somewhere, I will be back tonight or tomorrow morning,”

“What are you a spy? An assassin?”

“I’m Rainbow,” I winked and marched to the room to get a few things and then I was out.

I’m a fool. I’m stupid and crazy. What I’m about to do will lead to one of two things. One: I could walk out victorious and having avenged myself and also settled my score, or, two: I could come out on a stretcher, DEAD.

The thing about living in darkness your whole life is that you get used to it. Initially you’ll be scared but you get used to it. you get used to it to the point where it becomes a part of who you are. It becomes you, and you it. There’s a lot of misconception about it; people see darkness

and immediately think danger, evil, negativity etc. etc. But sometimes darkness is a good thing...it depends how you look at it. Right now, it's do or die. If there has to be a dead body in the series of events that are about to unfold – if it's mine or not really doesn't matter, just as long as I do damage.

It's still the same, nothing has changed. It looks like a promising home of a lovely couple. A couple that loves and protects each other, it looks like a home. A place where kids are conceived and raised in love by both mother and father. But the walls speak, they speak a different story. Every cry, slap, kick, punch, insult and push echoes through the walls of this façade. The pictures hanging are just masks, a cover, a front. But the walls speak and they tell no lie because the walls see and hear everything.

I went into our bedroom and got changed. Can you guess what I wore? That's right I wore the black ensemble he bought for me. The one that he loves so much...the one that he made me wear the day I met Lucky. Then I got started on dinner. I made his favourite; Garlic fried rice with crisp pork.

The first thing he does when he gets home is to go to the fridge and grab a bottle of water, and then maybe go upstairs to change or go straight to his office and get busy. Either way, I'm good.

I set up the table for two and waited for him in his office. My palms are sweating, my heart is about to jump out of my chest and fear keeps telling me to run but I lost Sammy and Guy, and I need to abate that loss and the pain he has

caused me. This isn't just about avenging myself and Sammy, it's about more than that.

The door opened. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. I'm scared. He waltzed in whistling, but that slowly faded. I think he just saw what was on the table. Now he's probably trying to think if he made that? Juggling his memory in attempt to make sense of what's before his eyes.

"What the fuck?" he said to himself. I heard the fridge open and shut! Jackpot! I'm glad to see he hasn't changed. His footsteps got louder; he should be coming here to fetch his gun. '3...2...1' I counted down in my head

"Boom" I whispered. He froze when he saw me in his chair wearing that outfit that he loves.

"Hey baby," I said.

“Tumi,” his eyes wandered around.

“Don’t worry, I’m alone,” I stood and approached him.

“Baby I thought you were dead,” his voice cracked. Dear God I am so scared. “I’m so sorry about the last time,”

“Me too...I’m sorry that I left. I just realized that I really love you Ndumiso and you are my life partner. I was stupid for leaving you,”

“Come here baby,” I let out his hand and I looked at it. I don’t trust him. “I won’t hurt you. I will never hurt you again...” I bravely took his hand. I am trying to hide the fact that I’m scared

but I'm just failing. He pulled me into his chest and hugged me. I held him too, and made it believable. "I'm glad you came back to me baby. I knew you wouldn't make it out there without me," I let out a soft sigh to accompany the idea that I am happy to be home and that I love him and that he's right.

"Let's go and eat love, I made your favourite!" said looking up at him. He took my hand and then we went to eat. I ate too. I was hungry and there is nothing in this world that could ever stop me from eating. I love food. And I am enjoying this plate.

I lifted up my head and found him looking at me with lazy eyes. "What's wrong sweetheart?" I asked.

“What did you do?” he asked.

“what do you mean?” I smiled revealing my teeth.

“I feel funny,”

“Oh!” I giggled, “I forgot to mention, I drugged you. Oops!” he looked at me with lazy and half open eyes. I got up, went over to him and sat on top of him.

“What did you do?” he asked again.

“Did you think I was actually here to apologize and make you food?” I cupped his face in my hands. “You are a fool and weak dickless

motherfucker...you are going to pay," his head fell back when he finally gave in to the drug. I got up and stared at him. "What the fuck are you doing Rainbow?" I whispered to myself. I got up closer again and slapped him and then ran to stand at a distance. He didn't move. I let out a snicker. I tip-toed back to his lifeless body hanging lopsided on the chair and slapped his again, harder this time. I laughed out loud like a crazy person. "Fight me, get up and fight me you Pu**y," he didn't move. He can't hurt me right now. "Oh God," emotions took over me. I couldn't help but cry. I fell to my knees and cried. Sammy is dead because of me and Guy wants nothing to do with me...he must be in so much pain right now. Why did it have to be him that saved me that night? Why? "And you?" I rose up swiftly. I grabbed his neck like he usually did to me and squeezed. "I hate you. I hate you. I hate you" I spat in his face and then backed away breathing heavily.

I marched to his office and got myself a bottle of Pinotage from his collection. I don't know what the fuck this is but I will drink it anyway. I got a coffee mug, poured myself loads amount of wine and then connected my phone to the tv. I went to my Joox, clicked on the playlist I titled LUCKY and played the first song I ever heard him sing by Michael Bolton:

HOW CAN WE BE LOVERS IF WE CAN'T BE FRIENDS?

HOW CAN WE START OVER WHEN THE FIGHT HAD NEVER END?

HOW CAN WE MAKE LOVE IF WE CAN'T MAKE A MESS?

TELL ME HOW CAN WE BE LOVER WHEN WE CAN'T BE

CAN'T BE FRIENDS?

I drank and finished my cup of red wine while grooving to my playlist inspired by Guy. I cried. I lamented to myself and to my unconscious husband. I danced and slapped him every now and then, I was just literally spiraling out. I took a good look at him for a fair number of seconds. I just stared at him and wondered what happened to him? why was he broken? Why did he hurt me like that? is he mentally sick or was he abused as a child? Nevertheless, I don't care...he is going to feel my wrath and know just where to hit him. I tied him up in that chair and gave him an injection, he won't be up anytime soon.

I left his house very late and headed for my place. of course, I ordered a whole lot of food with his card and took it home to enjoy with my

brother. I also grabbed that very expensive bottle of wine I was drinking – which – by the way tastes like dog pee and liquorice but it did well to abate my anger and bring me to my senses.

As I'm walking down the passage to my door, I see the gate is open but Tumelo is not outside. I got to my door and found that it was open.

"Tumelo!" I called and there was no response, I immediately put everything I was carrying down by the door. "Are you okay?" I asked tiptoeing down the passage with a gun in hand, holding it tight like Mhlongo had taught me. "Please say something, I have a gun with me," I noticed that the kitchen was a mess. Cupboards were open, including the fridge. Some items were lying all over the floor. I pushed open the door to my

room and found the wardrobes opened and the first thing that came to my mind was my money. I searched through the wardrobe looking for a black duffel bag but it was nowhere to be seen. Dear whatever power that is bigger than me out there; please let it be that Tumelo went for a walk and then I got robbed. Let it be not what it looks like. I noticed a piece of paper on the bed, it read;

I'M SORRY BOW-BOW

“Fuuuuuuuuck!” I cried and threw myself on the bed. It is exactly what it looks like.

#bonusinsert

#happyreading

#React

#share

#comment



INSERT 22

PUPPET MASTER

(Plural: puppet masters)

1. A person who entertains with, or operates puppets; puppeteer.

2. A person who control other people

“You’re stupid Rainbow,” that’s all I’ve been saying to myself since I woke up. So, I open up

my space to him and let him be free. I cleaned him up and bought him clothes only for him to repay me like this? He stole my money! All of it! what the heck am I supposed to do now?

“You’re stupid Rainbow,” I said to myself.

Tumelo is a hobo and admitted to have used drugs, cocaine but yet I somehow let my guard down and allowed the fact that we share DNA cloud my judgement. How can I be so stupid? I’m a fool and naïve. Tumelo is a fucking junkie. I even gave up my bed for him.

I thought about going to the rank but perhaps he is smarter than that. He’ll probably move to another spot and buy drugs with my money. Now I’m literally broke. I have nothing but the R500 I had on me yesdaerday. I have to get something to eat and...

Wait a minute...not all is lost. I am the wife of the now reduced to nothing Great Ndumiso Scott Gumede, why the hell should I suffer when he is swimming in money? Our money? I bathed and threw on that yellow floral dress Guy got me the morning after he picked me up beaten and battered. It compliments my very bright hair. I wore that with flip-flops and I was out.

I parked my car outside the front gate and walked in. There he is right where I left him, still tied up and unable to move.

“Tumelo, is that you?” he shouted as I walked in.

“Tumelo is alive, I’m Rainbow again.” I stood in front of him. the dishes from last are still here.

“I need to pee, please...” he begged. I found myself squeezing my wrist, I haven’t done that in while. I really feel bad for him. I’m not a bad person...I don’t tie people up and drug them. I’m nice. “Untie me you bitch,” he lowly said. Well then fuck it! I formed a fist unintentionally and then punched him right across the face.

“Shit!” I cried, because I didn’t only hurt him when I threw that punch, I also injured myself.

“I said. I want. To pee.” His tone got more aggressive with every word. I took a step back forgetting that he was tied, that I was in control this time and he can’t hurt me.

“Fine!” I marched to his office, took one of the pot plants that were decorating his office and giving it a serene look, as he’d say and then

went back to him. "it's time to water the plants anyway," I unfastened his belt, zipped down his pants, unbuttoned one button of his boxers, reached in with my hand and pulled out his dick.

"You're crazy!" he smirked.

"Eew! don't even..." I hung his penis over the pot plant and then looked at him. "Go on,"

"Yes ma'am," he released, rested his head back in relief.

"You want me to shake it," he giggled and nodded. I carefully shook his penis so the last drops of urine can wiggle off. I dressed him up again and then went to the bathroom to wash my hands. "you hungry?" I asked coming out of

the bathroom,

“Yeah!”

“You want a burger?” I asked, “I won’t be cooking,” he nodded.

“That’s fine.” I took his phone and placed an order for 2 McDonald’s burgers, chips and Milkshakes. Then we just sat there in silence looking at each other.

Truth be told; I hadn’t really planned this properly, I don’t really know the ebb and flow of kidnapping or holding one hostage.

“So,” he broke the silence. “How are you really?”

“Don’t ask me that. In this scenario, you’re the weak one. You are at my mercy so don’t ask me how I’m doing with that sincere tone,” I clicked my tongue.

“Why are you doing this Rainbow? Did your boyfriend put you up to it?” he asked.

“No...Lucky doesn’t even know I’m here,”

“I can give you money...” I looked at him and laughed.

“Give me...” I laughed, “Honey, I will be taking your money. What you talking about giving me money. It’s mine, all of it. The cars, this house, the memberships everything is mine.” He

grimaced. “That should be a fair compensation for all the pain and suffering I endured under your hand.”

“Tumi don’t do this...”

“I am not Tumi,” I argued. “He is alive...I can’t be him anymore!” I added.

“What do you mean Tumelo is alive?”

“I found him, well he found me. We found each other...it’s a long story,” the intercom rang. I ran and picked up the phone.

“MR DELIVERY,” said a man on the other end of the line.

“I’LL BUZZ YOU IN, COME THROUGH,” I put the phone back up. “Our food is here!” I danced my shoulder excitedly. I walked out making sure to close the door behind me.

“Here’s your food ma’am” he says with a smile I’m sure he was told by his manager to always wear.

“Thank you,”

“Nice home you have here...”

“Thanks again, my husband and I work very hard. I’ll buzz you out,” he smiled and nodded as he walked away. I walked in, stood by the door and pressed the button that opened the gate.

He looked back and waved. I waved back like a nice person. I placed the food on the table right in front of him.

“It smells nice,” he says.

“I know,” I took my bag and pulled out my gun. “I will untie you, try anything stupid and I will shoot your balls,” he nodded. I untied him slowly and carefully. I was scared, that he might do something stupid even after I warned him not to. I started eating and of course the gun was right next to me with an injection. But he wasn't eating. “What's wrong?” I asked with a mouth full of food.

“Is it drugged?”

“No! The drug wasn’t in the food yesterday. It was in your water bottle...”

“How did you know I was going to take water and which bottle, there’s like 5?” he questioned.

“When you live with a monster, you learn his ways. The smallest of movements mean something. I paid attention to everything from the very beating of your heart to the tone in which you speak. You are a very organized person, I little OCD one might say. So I laced the first and the last bottle. There was no way you were going to disrupt your order and take from the middle.”

“I’m not a monster Tu...” my eyes shot up at him, “Rainbow” he corrected himself.

“I’d beg to differ,”

“I love you. You know that right...”

“Ndumiso, I am trying to eat my burger in peace, don’t make me sick.”

“But I do my love, that’s not a lie,” I rolled my eyes and continued eating.

“You say you love me? Then why did you beat me? Why did you hurt me? You son of a bitch, I couldn’t speak or walk. How the fuck do you do that to someone you claim to love?” the entire time my eyes bored into his. I could feel anger invading my entire body and all I wanted to do was to scream and shoot him right between his

eyes. "Don't ever use that word with me again."
This man is going to ruin this meal for me. Nop!
Not today...

He also started eating. Good, because it might
be a while till he gets something to eat again.

"Thank you for the food,"

"Yeah, you should be thankful because it's my
money."

After eating. I pointed a gun at him and told him
to march upstairs while I followed behind him. I
ordered him to shower while I waited in the
bathroom with him like he did to me.

“You remember when we met?” I reminisced.

“We met in the 11th grade. It was my first day and your father asked you to give me a tour of the school.” He spoke above the noise of the shower.

“You were so nice to me. You were the only boy that wasn’t scared of my father; I cannot believe that you went to ask his permission to ask me to be your date to the valentine’s bash at school,” he came out of the shower and grabbed a towel hung behind the door. “That was the night that I realized you were not a good boy, you tried to have sex with me when I didn’t want to,”

“Please don’t go there...it’s the past,”

“No, you don’t get to beg. I go wherever I want, I’m the lady with gun and the scars. Karmer’s a bitch, right?” I scoffed.

“So is a woman scorned,” he walked out like I didn’t have a gun in my hand. Freely and nonchalantly. I watched moisturize his body and dress up.

“What did you do?” I asked.

“What are you talking about?” he sat on the edge of the bed like a good little boy.

“My parents spoke to me the following morning and begged me to give you a chance. They convinced me to forgive you and I did...what did

you do or say?”

“I told my father what happened and he felt I shouldn’t be punished for one little mistake so I guess he threatened to pull his hand out,” he explained. “Your parents have always been leeches; especially your mom. She doesn’t care who she hurts in the process of sucking and getting what she wants, just as long as she does.”

“Leave her out of this...” I don’t care how evil my mother is, I can’t allow this piece of trash to speak about her like that.

“How when she is the puppet master? This is her story and we are all just puppets doing whatever she wants unwillingly. Do you have any idea how long she’s been sleeping with my

father? I found out in grade 11 when we had dinner at your place, right after the valentine's saga”

“That’s not true. She may be evil but I know she loves daddy and she would never cheat on him especially with someone so close to the family.”

“When I took over from dad; she made sure I knew she was available. She invited me out for dinner...”

“Shut up you liar!” I was breaking.

“Supper, lunch and every senseless and stupid thing she could find just to flirt with me.”

“You are a liar!”

“I was tempted; I mean your mom is quite something but...I couldn't,” I slapped him and his head instantly cocked to the side. I pointed the gun at him.

“Why are you telling me this?” my voice trembled.

“So you know that I'm not the only monster in your court. Why don't you ask your mother who the father of Tumelo is?”

“My word Ndumiso! My word! You are sick and disgusting and sick...you are sick. My father is Tumelo's father.”

“Ask her...point blank”

Wait...no. I mean...wait.

If Tumelo’s father is Ndumiso’s father then...what the fuck? No...let me not entertain him. he is just trying to get to my head. He’s trying to get me to let my guard down so he can attack me.

“Get in bed,” I commanded trying to keep my voice steady.

“Are you going to drug me?” he asked. I nodded. I didn’t want to open my mouth seeing that I was on the verge of crying.

“Stay here!” I went downstairs to get an injection and also to cry. I cleaned my face. Took a deep breath in and out and then headed back. Just as I turned to go back upstairs; I found him behind me at a slight distance and immediately pointed my gun at him. One step closer, I would have been at his mercy. “I said; stay there” I took on a thick staccato. “You think I can’t use this? you think I’m fronting?”

“No, I’m sorry!”

“You’ve already pissed me off so behave!” I shouted deliberately shooting right above his head. He rushed to the floor and covered his head.

“Are you fucking crazy?” he asked panting and crying on the floor.

“Don’t test me Ndumiso because anything could happen with this weapon in my hands. Now get upstairs,” he trembled upstairs with his hands up while my gun propelled him to keep moving from behind. I made sure to keep a distance between us so he doesn’t even think of attacking.

He got into bed; I gave him the injection to inject himself – which he did. When he was weak enough to not do anything. I tied him up. I tied both his legs and left arm to the corners of the bed. I left a bucket with a plastic fitted inside and a roll of tissue. When or if he wakes up, he’ll find a note on top of him which reads;

FOR YOUR BATHROOM BUSINESS

I’m not as evil as Ndumiso is. I left him water,

fruits and snacks to keep his energy levels up. The drawers are clean. I removed everything that might help him escape from that room and locked him inside.

I need to see my parents.

#friday

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 23

DARKNESS

Noun

1. The state of being dark; lack of light.

2. Evilness, lack of understanding or compassion, reference to death or suffering

“Mama!” I shouted barging in through the door.

“Tumi, is everything okay?” asked the helper, sis Lindiwe. She’s always been so nice to me. She practically raised me when my parents were too busy.

“Where’s mama?” I passed her without even looking at her. I swear my feet aren’t touching the ground, I’m just flying.

“Check the kitchen, or the bedroom...” she responded when I was long gone.

“Mama” I called out.

“What is it child? Why are you here? And stop shouting in my house.” I found her in the kitchen pouring herself an alcoholic beverage.

“I thought you stopped drinking,” she rolled her eyes and took a large gulp of her drink.

“Here to slap me again and pour out your heart?” there was a note of sarcasm and tease in her tone.

“Where’s daddy?” I asked, “Daddy!” I shouted on the top of my lungs.

“Tumelo! Your father isn’t here...he went on a

business trip with your husband's father”

“Oh, you mean Tumelo's real father...” I dropped the bomb. She looked at me and giggled and then took another sip.

“What are you trying to stir up now you troublesome child?”

“Mama, stop with your wits. I know you've been having an affair with Melusi Gumede, my husband's father and to top it all off your selfish ass tried to come after Ndumiso in attempt to keep them in,” she took her glass and sauntered to the couch bear footed in a silk night dress and gown. She just remained calm and that made me angry. Angrier than I was when I walked in. “Mama, say something!” I demanded.

“Tumelo...”

“Don’t call me that!” my words fell out fast and sharp.

“Fine. Little girl...I don’t like entertaining rumors, it’s like pouring fuel to a fire, it only makes it real and gives it life,”

“Okay...I’ll come back when daddy’s back and see what he says about it...” she rose up slowly.

“You ungrateful brat,”

“Better to be ungrateful brat than a greedy cheating harlot,” before I knew it, she had

slapped me,

“If you will stand before me and judge me and call me names then please child walk in my shoes for a mile or two and endure what I have endured” she looked at me with eyes void of any maternal compassion. “Then and only then will you judge me,” she scoffed. “Yes, I have been sleeping with Malusi and I still am but you will not utter that to your father. I am the reason your father is in the big leagues. He’s in the midst of the crème de la crème because of my greed, my cheating and my harlotry. I am the reason we have this big house and I am the reason you have that big house to call your own. So please, Tumi...don’t! Do not!”

“No one asked you to those things for us. You didn’t do them for daddy and certainly not me

because heaven knows you've never felt an ounce of love for me; you did everything for yourself to keep up appearances. To please the audience and belong to the first class..."

"And so?" her forehead creased as she grimaced. "What is wrong with wanting to live a good life?"

"Everything is wrong if you hurt people along the way mama; if you lie and cheat your way to the top of the ladder, then everything is absolutely wrong. And I know Tumelo is not dead; how sick do you have to be to fake your own son's death?"

"He had to leave, I had to get rid of him," she wasn't shocked at all by the fact that I knew Tumelo wasn't dad.

“Why? Because he was using? “

“You wouldn’t understand...”

“Then make me understand, you vile woman!” I swear I am fighting the urge to not swing my fist across her face. She makes me mad; no one makes me as mad as my mother does. She’s sickening. “He was messing with your image? Huh?”

“He tried to rape you!” she said on the top of her lungs commanding complete silence to take over the room.

“What are you talking about you?”

“I had to get him away Tumi,” her voice shook. “I caught him trying to rape you at night, you were asleep”

“That’s not true!” I whispered.

“I would have had locked up in rehab if that was the only case but I saw him. It was after he had come back from rehab for the first time. I thought he was clean and determined to get his life back together.” She sat, “Oh dear God!” she muttered. “What would I have done if he had succeeded? I had to get him away from you, for good!”

“And you want me to believe you? You think your tears are going to make me believe you?”

After everything you've put me through?"

"it's the truth," she sobbed. I'm not even moved by her crocodile tears. This woman has showed me more than once that she is capable of anything. You know? Now that I think about it, she and Ndumiso deserve each other. They are both cold hearted little devils looking to control everything and anything that moves and breathes.

"Woman! What is wrong with you?" I asked.

"It's the truth," she repeated.

"He's my brother, he loves me, he would never hurt me like that!" I defended Tumelo.

“He was under the influence of cocaine and probably still is. Where is he?”

Why is my heart burning? Is it because it senses that there might be some truth to what she’s telling me or it’s just fury?

“I’m going to leave now mama,” I headed for the exit.

“Be careful little girl. You will not tear my life apart while I watch. If you attack, I will attack. And as for your brother, don’t let him anywhere close to you if you really found him; I’m just warning you as a mother,”

“Do you even know what that is? A mother?” she gulped down what was left of her drink and

then rose up. I walked out with doubt and more questions than answers

What's real around me that I have? Who's tangible and genuine? I don't know where stand with anybody now are days. I feel as though I'm alone. Well truth be told I am...I thought I had a big brother but he took off with my money.

It's another morning. Another day and I am still myself. Guy still hasn't tried to reach out, Tumelo still hasn't returned, and Ndumiso is still a powerless man tied up in his bed.

I spent the night here but in the guest bedroom. I drank a lot of alcohol so my head is now having a party of it's own. When I stood to my feet, the party got even louder, I ran to Ndumiso's room and found him awake.

“I can smell you all the way here...”

“Shut up!” I went into the bathroom and washed my face. I moaned under my breath.

“I take it the talk with your parents didn’t go well,” he said.

“My dad wasn’t there,” I began washing my face with cold water. He laughed. “What’s so funny?” I brushed my teeth with my old tooth brush.

“You and I are married and we share a brother” he said with a high-pitched tone that was accompanied by annoying snickers in between. “Does that constitute as incest, because if it does, we might want to keep it on the DL .”

“We are not blood related,” I tried speaking with the toothpaste in my mouth.

“We don’t know that for sure...”

I rinsed my mouth and then waltzed out of the room into the guestroom, got my gun and came back to him. I untied his legs and arm. “Go and freshen up,” I ordered.

“Yes ma’am,”

I sat on the bed and waited for him.

“May I ask you something Ndumiso?”

“Go on...”

“Why did you beat me?” I walked to the bathroom and leaned against the door.

“Please don’t ask me that...” he said looking at his reflection in the mirror.

“No,” I rubbed my forehead trying to calm the throbbing. “I ask and you answer. You can’t dodge questions. Why did you beat me? Why did you always want to control me? why were you so cruel to me?”

“Tumi!” he raised his voice and punched the mirror. I raised my gun and pointed it at him. My heart had started beating faster, my palms had started sweating and the party in head didn’t get any quieter. He turned around and faced me. “I won’t hurt you,” he said lowly and leaned against the sink.

“You always said that but somehow I always ended up tasting my own blood,”

“You need to be firmer on your feet,” he said and I recoiled in confusion. “When holding the gun; if you’re standing is firm, it makes the shooting easier – well not easier but maybe more accurate,”

“Why did you beat me Ndumiso?”

“I don’t want to answer that question...”

“You’re mentally sick you know that?”

“Yet you’re the one pointing a gun at me and

holding me hostage in my own house,”

“Move! Downstairs! I’m hungry...” I commanded.

“I can make breakfast today...” he offered. I just nodded and kept the gun pointed at him while making sure to keep a reasonable distance between us so when even when he jumps at me, I have some space.

I watched him get busy in the kitchen while I sat in the dining table gulping down wine.

“You need to take it easy on the alcohol love,” he said that like he actually cared. Every day when I come here, I tell myself I am going to make him pay. I am going to make him suffer for all the times that he made me suffered, for

all the times that he hurt me but somehow – I never. I am nice to him. I let him bathe and eat and brush his teeth. Shit! He never extended me that courtesy when he kidnapped me.

"Did you kill Sam?" I deviated from his statement.

"Who's Sam?" he asked casually minding his own business in the kitchen. I got up, took a large gulp of the wine and then picked up my gun and pointed it at him.

"Don't play games with me. Did you or did you not order that shoot. Was it meant for me? Did your guy miss and shoot a little girl...a child Ndumiso! she was only 6" my voice started trembling.

“Jeez Tumi, a child. A 6-year-old child, just to get to you. No never!” he stopped what he was doing and gave me his undivided attention.

“Stop lying to me!” I tear trickled down my face but I quickly cleaned it away and then sniffed. “You killed Lucky’s baby and now he wants nothing to do with me and Lucky was the only person who cared about me in this world,” I broke down.

“Tumi, after I sent someone to do some digging for me, he found you. I came to get you myself because I am not scared to get dirty. I hold you so dear to my heart, I wanted to get you myself because you were mine. You are mine!”

“Sam is dead!” I shouted.

“If anything, I would have killed Lucky but I don’t know him. I tried looking for him with my guy but your Lucky is hard to find. Baby, I can assure you...I promise you; I did not kill his child. I would never kill a child. Never!” he shouted. “I can tell that you care deeply about this Lucky character, I’m sorry that all of this happened to him,”

“You’re sorry?!” I questioned annoyed and on the verge of having a mental breakdown. The thought of Sammy covered with blood, lifeless in my arms visited my head and it made me sick to my guts. “She died in my arms and there was nothing I could do...and and it was all your fault. Had you been a loving husband or even half a decent man, then maybe I wouldn’t have

met Lucky and his daughter would still be alive and he would be happy.”

“But you don’t know that Tumi,”

Without even thinking, my anger propelled me to pull the trigger, “I am not Tumi!” I shouted on the top of my lungs.

“Okay, Rainbow...I’m sorry. Please put the gun down, please my love,” he begged.

“Remember all those times I begged you to not hurt me? Remember? Huh?” tears fell out my eyes like a waterfall.

“I know I’ve caused you a lot of pain in your life

and I do not deserve your forgiveness but please, don't hurt me. It's not who you are, you don't hurt people. Don't let me change you...Rainbow, once you allow that darkness to invade your heart you will regret it for the rest of your life,"

"Don't talk to me about darkness...do you remember when I cried under your fist, begging you to stop but you never did," I got closer, "Do you remember?" I shouted.

"I do" his breath quivered. "I do. I remember how I made you suffer. I remember how I hurt you. I do baby, I do. I remember everything and I am so so sorry." I closed my eyes and rubbed the gun against my forehead.

"I think I might be losing my mind. I hear

Sammy all the time and I am so scared to close my eyes and sleep. I have to drug myself..."

"Let me help you, I can get you help. You can talk to someone..."

"Lucky hates me and I need him." I whimpered. I went back to the table, refilled my glass and then drank straight from the bottle. "And this wine tastes horrible but it makes me feel less, so cheers!"

"Rainbow, that is not the answer. There is no solution at the bottom of that bottle,"

"Shut up and make breakfast, I'm starving" he finally exhaled.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INSERT♡

#happymondayeveryone

#happyreading

INSERT 24

ROOKIE

Noun

(Plural: Rookies)

1. An inexperienced recruit, especially in the police or armed forces.

2. A non-professional; amateur

We sat in silence while we kept glancing at each other, both trying to stay alert and aware of the other's movements. He started setting up the table. "Tell me about the drug business" I broke the silence.

"What about it?" he sat. "Dig in,"

"You have international contacts?" I asked.

"Not yet, I'm still working within borders" he swallowed. "Apparently our dealer has international contacts."

"Who is 'our'? Mthembu?" he nodded. "What's his name, your dealer?"

“I can’t tell you that,” he chuckled.

“Ndumiso...” I closed my eyes and called out his name annoyed

“They call him Lenny, I don’t know his full names,” he sighed loudly. “Look, whatever it is you want to do, don’t,”

“What does he do to cover for the drugs?”

“You see all these convenience stores owned by foreigners?” I nodded. “He owns a lot of them. He buys the spaces, rents it out to them for free as long as they receive his packages every month with their deliveries,”

“Where can I find him?” I asked,

“Why?”

“Because I’m about to take over your drug and diamond business,” he chuckled sarcastically.

“Stop playing around. You will get killed, you’re an unripe rookie”

“Here’s what’s going to happen; all your shares at G&M mining you will handover to me to have full control and that's includes the drugs, everything will still be in your name but I will be the boss”

“Why?”

“Because I need money. I don’t work, I don’t have an education and all that you have I will take as compensation. Like I had mentioned earlier.”

“I can give you a job, or you don’t even have to work, I’ll give you money...lots of money monthly,”

“No. I want nothing to do with you, I don’t want to have anything to do with you...”

“What about me and my family?”

“I can either kill you or help you get to Mexico where you’ll start a new life. I will obviously give you some money to start over. New identity and

everything.” I said, “And if you think about turning me in, know that I will do everything under your name and if I ever get arrested, I know where you are; I can tell them you forced me to do it all and of course your father will be incriminated too, you did take over from him,”

“You think this is a movie? No one will believe that I forced you to do anything illegal,” he smirked. He's trying to maintain a nonchalant facade but I can see right through him. A part of him still thinks I will cower and run, but there's another part - that part keeps telling him to believe every word that comes out of my mouth because maybe this time I might just surprise him.

“There's cameras outside; remember when I told my parents that you were beating me?”

When we came home that evening you dragged me out of the car ever so violently,” I smiled.

“The night I ran away for the first time? I’m sure the camera picked up my bruised face. Oh, and also not forgetting how I was carried out of here half dead by Lucky’s brother,” I didn’t sleep last night. I didn’t sleep last night. I was in the basement playing through the footage, trying to find every and anything that can help to incriminate Ndumiso. I copied every incriminating footage I found into 5 different USBs, just to be on the safe side. One I will hide here. One at my flat, one at home, one will always be with me and then the last one...I will give to him. “And in case you were wondering, I already have the footages. I’ll give you a copy,” I grinned.

“You want me to change my identity?”

“I did, it’s not that bad.”

“What about my family?”

“You can say goodbye to them. We’ll have dinner with all your business partners and you shall make the great announcement!”

I feel crazy! I feel like I am losing my mind. I haven’t had proper sleep in a while because every time I close my eyes to sleep, I hear Sammy and I see her in my arms letting go of her life. I keep smelling her blood all over me and in order to make sure that it doesn’t happen, I either drug myself with sleeping meds and alcohol. But when I finally fall asleep, I feel like I can’t breathe, I feel this weight coming over me and suffocating me then I drown my blood in coffee and energy drinks. I am not fine at all.

Again – I'm on a mission – I can't waste time paying attention to my mental wellbeing. I have to make sure that everything goes well tomorrow so that I can secure a future for myself, a life that I deserve.

My plan is to save enough money so I can flee the country. I want to start over somewhere far and peaceful. Maybe somewhere in Greece or Europe. I just want to be secure enough to be free.

"RAINBOW," Mhlongo picked up his phone.

"ARE YOU BACK?" I asked

"YES, WHAT IS IT?"

“CAN I COME AND SEE YOU PLEASE?”

“LET’S MEET AT THE SHOOTING GROUND IN AN HOUR,”

I needed to see a familiar face. A face that I could trust and the person closest to that is Mhlongo. He’s been very good to me. I mean going against his boss for me was all the loyalty I could ever ask for.

Every single piece of clothing that belongs to me at Ndumiso’s place just reminded me of the old me. which – by the way – am not sure if I’m not anymore. It’s hard these days, I don’t know anything, I don’t even know where I stand with myself. I found a pair of blue jeans, a white oversized chopped t-shirt and navy blue adidas takkies.

I found Mhlongo's already taxi parked. I parked my car behind his taxi and joined him inside.

"I told you that you and I cannot keep meeting anymore,"

"I brought prawns and calamari," I sang dangling the food at his face.

"fine," he took one box and indulged. "What's happening?"

"I just need someone to talk to. How's Lucky?" I asked completely dampening the mood.

"He's fine. I think you need to concentrate on yourself now and how you're going to get your

life in order..." he said.

"I am working on that..." my eyes are keeping darting between him and my food.

"What do you have in mind?" he licked his fingers.

"I...hmmm" shit! I hadn't really thought about a cover story. "I went back home. We spoke, we're all trying to reconnect and stuff,"

"That's very nice..." he says. for some reason I looked at the rear-view mirror and saw a number plate on the seat directly behind the driver.

“Why do you have that here?” I inquired trying to stray away from the topic at hand.

“I’m supposed to drop them off at a friend’s this evening,” he answered.

“Do you think I should forget about Lucky?”

“You love him?” he asked.

“No, not love him. I just care deeply about him. What’s love anyway? You know what I mean?”

“You are too young to be talking like that,”

“Mhlongo, I gave myself to a man that said he loved me but he hurt me all the time and on top

of that, my parents, the people that are supposed to love me unconditionally regardless of anything didn't only reject me but never loved me. So, if you want to tell me that there's love, you may as well tell me you're a wizard. It's all a lie created to make us weak and vulnerable. Let me tell you something old man, run the hell away from anyone that claims to love you...run..." Mhlongo laughed.

"You sure do have a lot to say with that mouth," he smiled looking at me.

"It's the truth. I may be young in your eyes but the things that I've been through speak volumes..."

"But, let me be straight with you; forget about Lucky...just move on and thank God that he was

there to help you and that you are still alive, but you have to let him go.

“Yes sir,” I threw away a salute his direction. When I get home, I will pop open a bottle of whatever can numb me inside and cry over Lucky. I can feel it. It sounds like he is moving on perfectly without me.

#impromptuinsert

#bonusinsert



INSERT 25

ARREST

Noun

(Plural: Arrests)

1. To seize someone with the authority of the law; to take into legal custody.

2. The process of arresting a criminal, suspect etc.

3. A check, stop, an act or instance of arresting something

2 MONTHS LATER

Nothing has changed, yet a lot has changed. Nothing has changed in the sense that I'm still fucked up mess. I still drink my problems away. I spend most of my days at Ndumiso's place

because it's big and has alcohol, I'm always eating unhealthy meals. Well I order most of the time because I'm always too worn out to do anything. Ndumiso is probably living his best life in Mexico now, probably has a sexy Mexican girl in his bed. I wonder if he ever thinks about me and how I did dirty. I bet he didn't think I had it in me. I have taken over everything he owns and I am running it using his name so I have nothing implicating me. I don't really know how to be a drug dealer but I think I've been doing a great job. I have a guy that I trust. I met him at the taxi rank, I went to see Mhlongo and when I went back to my car, I found him leaning against it with a cigarette popping out of his lips.

"Excuse me," I said to him. "That's my car,"

"I know, I was waiting for you," he released

smoke. I looked around to see if he was alone. "It's just me," he offered me his cigarette.

"No, I'm okay. Who are you?" I asked. He didn't look familiar at all. He was just a lanky little light skinned boy.

"I'm Sthandwasam," he said with a mischievous smile. I giggled.

"Boy, what do you want?" I rolled my eyes opening the door.

"You need me," he declared. I stared at him waiting for clarification but clearly wanted me to keep digging.

“Listen, I don’t have time for this, do you want money for food,” I pulled out R200 from my pocket.

“Actually, no ma’am, but thank you...” He took it without even thinking twice and shoved it in his pocket. His persona is just lively and happy. My mouth opened unintentionally. ‘who the hell is this spaghetti standing before me?’ I wondered to myself. “A lady like you needs a guy like me,”

“what’s your name?” I asked. There is no way his name is Sthandwasam. He probably just wants me to call him that.

“Sthandwasam,” he pulled out his ID card and flashed it in my face like a police would his badge - and to my surprise – his name is Sthandwasam.

“Okay, Sthandwasam,” I uttered.

“Oh Nkosi, yes my dali, yes my queen...” he rubbed his chest as his eyes batted at me.

“You seem like a nice guy, but I have a boyfriend
” I couldn’t help but grin here and there.

“I am a nice guy, and I have a girlfriend. But where are you going with this my dali?”

“Aren’t you hitting on me?” I was so confused.

“I would but I shall remain forever faithful to the love of my life, Nomthandazo,” he gazed into space and I guess pictured his girlfriend.

“Then what do you want?”

“Like I said, a woman like you, need a guy like me around her. Listen, I’ve been watching you for a while; you know what you are doing and I am here to offer my services to be you guy...your go-to guy. I’m skinny, I can hide anywhere, I’m fast on my feet so I will be quick to take that bullet for you and...and...I am quick with my tongue. Basically, I will be robot,”

The day Sthandwasam is the day I started feeling like I belonged again. It was only a day or two after Ndumiso had left. He just came and made himself useful in my life. I’ve met his girlfriend, Nomthandazo and they are an odd couple. Nomthandazo think I’m his cousin because she can’t really know what or who I am.

Surprisingly, Sthandwasam knows a lot of people that aren't known and he can get to the bottom of things faster than you can say 1 2 3. The day he approached me I knew he was special; I took him out for lunch and got to know him better without revealing anything about me of course. When I say he is connected, I mean he is connected. He managed to get Lenny to give me his attention. I don't know how he did it but as we speak, I am getting ready for dinner with Lenny, Ndumiso's drug man.

"Are you sure you don't want me to come with you?" he asked from the bedroom. I'm in the closet putting final touches to my outfit.

"I am sure, I don't want him to think I'm scared of him or anything," I said and walked out.

“Wow my dali,” his eyes lit up when he looked at me. “You are beautiful like a diamond in the sky,” he sang. This guy though. Whenever I’m with him I always laugh.

“Thank you Sthandwasam,”

“How are you getting there?” he asked walking up to me.

“Uber,”

“You are Rainbow, you need to make a statement,”

“Don’t worry, I will make a statement alright,”

Lenny thinks he is meeting with Ndumiso, a man. I don't know how he is going to react seeing a woman instead of a man. But this is my game now and I play to win.

Here I am at Little Havana in Umhlanga. I've been to this spot with Ndumiso, it was his way of saying 'I'm sorry' for slapping me after I messed up his meal. There's a very large man by the entrance way wearing black from top to toe. I approached him.

"The restaurant has been closed down for the evening ma'am," he said signalling me to not move any further. I wasn't aware he was going to have the whole restaurant closed just for our dinner meeting.

“I know, I am here for Lenny. Tell him Ndumiso Gumede is here...” his mouth set in a hard line as his brows drew together. I fluttered my lashes at him. He turned around hesitantly and went inside. As soon as he disappeared, I exhaled and fixed myself. He came back.

“Please follow me,” I obeyed. Wow, it’s really empty. A white man stood as I approached the table.

“Good evening,” I extended my hand which he gladly took and kissed.

“What game are you playing?” he asked softly.

“The same one you’re playing, I’m just probably a level or two up.” I pulled a smile. "Or three"

“Who are you little girl,” he cleared his throat while fixing his sitting.

“I am Ndumiso Gumede,”

“Bullsh*t! Ndumiso is a man. You have about 5 seconds to tell me what’s going on here...”

“I’m Rainbow but I’ve been operating this business as Ndumiso Gumede. You’ve been messaging with me this entire time. Well for the past 4 months or so...”

“You took over from him?”

“Yes sir!”

“You ordered twice the amount he does and in half the time...” I nodded, “How did you do that?”

“Well, I wouldn’t be doing myself any favours if I told you my secrets,” he let out a deep and raspy chuckle.

“Why did you want to meet with me?” he deviated from the topic. “I don’t usually meet with my buyers, unless they’ve really caught my attention. Your guy Sthandwasam made sure I do...”

“I just wanted to meet the man I’m working with and also for him to know me. Who knows, maybe I will be the next Lenny,”

“Now now...let’s not get ahead of our ourselves. Before we order and get to know each other, I have a surprise for you,” he pulled out his phone. “Mark, bring in the stone. Be careful!” he cut the call, “This is for you and your business to sell at your own price. I just want to see what you make from it and then we’ll talk about being business partners,” his eyes travelled to the entrance then his face lit up. “Uuuh, bring it here,” I looked back out of curiosity. My heart stopped as I laid my eyes upon the man with the briefcase walking up to us.

“Guy,” I said under my breathe. I don’t think Lenny even picked it up.

“This is Mark, newest member to my guys. Mark, this is Ndumiso Gumedede...”

“Nice to meet you ma’am,” he shook my hand.

What is Lucky doing here? And why is he Mark?

"I...hmm," I stammered, "Pleased to meet you too, Mark" I smiled. I couldn't even look him in the eyes. I am so lost and confused. He took a step back. Lenny drew my attention back to the briefcase. It's an uncut diamond. I don't even know how to react right now. I mean Lucky is here and I just want to throw myself at him and kiss him but I also have to assume the semblance of a criminal. "What do you think?"

"This is gorgeous!" I cried. My eyes keep darting between Guy and this very sublime stone in front of me.

"You think this will make you and your partner Mthembu some money..." he smirked.

“I am certain Lenny,” I got closer and studied it. I know nothing about diamonds either than the fact that they’re a girl’s best friend. I looked up at Guy; he didn’t flinch or blink. I even started wondering if he forgot who I was; or maybe he can’t recognize me with the short and purple hair. Maybe this is not Guy, he just looks like him. Jah...

“Okay, everybody hands up,” Guy ordered.

“Mark, what the fuck is this?” asked Lenny.

“This place is surrounded by police. Put your hands on the table,” Guy said. Before I knew it, men in blue uniform started flooding in one after the other.

“Did you set me up?” I shouted at Lenny. Fuck! I fucked up.

“No! did you?” before he could answer, a policeman came and cuffed him.

“Lenny Ginn, you are under arrest for illegal mining, drug trafficking and distribution and tax evasion,” while I was listening to Lenny’s offenses, my hands were pulled to the back and cuffed. “You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in the court of law. You have the right to legal representation. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you” he dragged Lenny away.

“This is bullsh*t man, I’m an honest citizen,” he cried. The police that was cuffing me went to Lucky living me cuffed and scared for my life. Lucky came, took my arm and started walking out.

“Ndumiso Gumede, you are under arrest. You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in the court of law. You have the right to legal representation. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you.” I looked at him, he wasn’t even looking at me.

‘Luc...’

“Don’t say a fucking word!” he said sharply under his breathe. He led me to a police van and helped me inside. The door made a loud

bang as he shut it, leaving me inside, petrified, embarrassed and perplexed.

PLEASE REACT AND SHARE THIS INSERT♡

INSERT 26

PRIMA FACIE

Adverb

From Latin, literally “at the first appearance”

1. At first sight; on the face of it.
2. Apparently correct; not needing proof unless evidence to the contrary is shown.

It dawned on me that Guy and his family worked for the police department. But what I don't know is whether he set me up on purpose as Rainbow or as Ndumiso. I've been in this cell since last night. No one has said anything to me, no one has come to see me and I haven't attempted to speak to anyone because I don't know what's happening. I don't even have an attorney so I don't want to say the wrong thing to the right person.

I'm still in my evening gown from last night with Lenny. The nightmares I've been having since Sammy died, coupled with fear and pondering have kept me up all night in this cold and dark cell. If I played my cards right, I just need to show them the evidence I've gathered which suggest that I was forced into this by Ndumiso.

“Get up!” an officer opened the gate. “Arms together,” he ordered. I obeyed. He then cuffed me.

“Where are you taking me?” I asked. He didn’t say anything. We took a right and walked down a passage. At the very end there’s an elevator which we got into. When it arrived at the requested floor, a short tune played as the door opened. We got out and walked down a passage, we passed doors and eventually stopped at the very last door on my left. He opened and ushered me in.

“Wait here!” he shut the door. This is an interrogation room. I’ve seen it in movies; they’re about to question me. They’ll scare me, threaten me and maybe offer me deals if I spill

the beans, unless they gave prima facie evidence to pin against me.

An hour later, a man in a black shirt and blue jeans walked in with a recorder in one hand and a notebook and file in the other. He sighed loudly taking a seat before me.

“Good morning, I’m detective Sibeko” he flipped through his note book and stopped at an empty page.

“Morning,” I uttered.

“Do you know what you’re in for?” he asked.

I swallowed what tasted like fear in my mouth,

“I need to use the bathroom,” I said. “Please” he nodded. He took me to the bathroom, uncuffed me and waited outside while I did my business. I came out and found him still standing there waiting for me. He cuffed me again.

“All good?” he inquired. I nodded. We returned to the very scary room and assumed our positions; I, that of the criminal and he, that of the law enforcement officer.

“Again, do you know what you are in for?” he asked. I shook my head. “Did they read you your Miranda right?”

“Miranda rights? Is that when the officer says, ‘you have the right to remain silent. Anything you blab la bla’?” he nodded. “Well then yes, they did.”

“Do you understand what that means?”

“Yes, it means that I have to be careful how I play my cards because my getting out of here depends on what I say,”

“Or it just simply means; you have to tell the truth,” I stared at him. “Okay then! Ndumiso Gumede, you are in for drug distribution and illegal mining. There could be more but this is all we have evidence on for now,”

“I’m not Ndumiso, I’m Tumelo Gumede, his wife. He forced me to do all this.” I pulled out my card.

“He did say you were going to say that” he sat

back.

“Who said?”

“Ndumiso Gumede...”

“What are you talking about?” what the hell is happening?

“Your husband Ndumiso Gumede. He said you would try to pin everything on him but you forgot that everything is in your name,”

“No, it’s in his name. he owns everything, he was abusive.” He pulled out a paper from the file and displayed it before me.

“That is the registration for the company G&M,” I looked at it, read every single letter. “Your name and Mthembu’s name are on it,”

“He must have changed it. Ndumiso is a conniving son of bitch, I am sure he changed it not so long ago.”

“Actually, it hasn’t changed for three years ago...”

Son of a bitch! That man played me...when we got married, he put my name on his dirty things. That’s why he didn’t even put up a fight when I threatened to take over. He knew that I was just walking into a trap willingly.

“I didn’t have anything to do with anything,

swear” exhaled tremulously.

“Your signature is on every document. The deed to the house, the cars...every single thing.”

“He forged it,” I declared.

“Can you prove that?” he looked at me with concern.

“Not in here I can’t. but he used to beat me, he was abusive. I have proof,” my eyes grew wider as hope that having any kind of evidence against Ndumiso would exonerate me.

“He admitted that too and said he was willing to turn himself in if you decide to take action,”

“Fuck!” I cried.

“Like I said, maybe you can just tell the truth. There’s someone here to see you...” he got up. before he could exit, he looked at me. “Do you know a lady by the name of Nomonde Jele?” I shook my head.

“Am I supposed to?” his eyes brows drew together.

“You look exactly like her. If I didn’t know her then I’d say you two were twins. She’s actually supposed to be handling this case but she had to take the stand in court, maybe you’ll see her tomorrow,”

“Tomorrow!?” I cried. “I don’t want to be here tomorrow,” I added.

“Then play your cards right” he winked and then exited leaving the door slightly open. Now they’ll probably bring in the bad cop to scare me into speaking the truth. The door opened, it’s Lucky. I jumped to my feet. Before I could open my mouth to speak, he shook his head while his eyes bored into mine. I didn’t know what that meant but I just chose to shut up. He sat down and so did I. He looked at his watch – in fact – he watched it as it ticked and tocked around wrist.

“Okay we can speak!” he announced in relief. “What the fuck Miss?” even though he is speaking lowly, I can tell he’s angry.

“What’s happening?”

“Why did Lenny introduce you as Ndumiso?” he leaned in closer.

“Guy, Ndumiso framed me, my whole marriage is just a huge fraud.”

“Listen, you have what they need, give it to them!” he kept my eyes in place.

“And what is that?” my forehead creased.

“You know who Ndumiso worked for and with. You are not a threat, they are...offer them for immunity.”

“Those people have families...kids Guy,”

“You are looking at 3 to 5 years to life on the drugs alone. Who knows what else this bastard was up to?”

“But I didn’t do anything,” my voice squeaked.

“Then put whoever did something behind bars. If we can get one to break, I am certain they will snitch on Ndumiso that means your name can be cleared.” I nodded. “You will do that?” I nodded again. I am fighting the urge to cry right now. I badly just want to hug him and ask if he’s okay. “Don’t talk, I’m getting out now,”

“What?” he was looking at his watch again.

“I will see you soon.” He left. I am so scared, God knows I am. I have never been arrested before and to find out that my husband was using me all along is just sickening. Had I stayed with Ndumiso – eventually I would still end up here, answering to charges I don’t know. Detective Sibeko came back,

“You are free to go. You’ll be back here tomorrow for more questioning and to sign some papers.” He said. I got up and took large steps to the door.

“Thank you,”

“Lucky is waiting for you outside,”

And like he said, I found Lucky waiting for me

outside his taxi. I don't know what to say to him.

"Get in," he ordered. I hopped in, fastened my seatbelt and sat tight. He drove. I was looking out the window, but I could feel him glancing at me every now and again.

"Why did you pose as Ndumiso? And everything is in your name, it looks bad." he asked.

"Guy," my voice quivered. "I'm tired, and confused...can we just not please," judging from the route, we are going to his flat. The nice one in Morningside. "Can you take me to my place please,"

"I can't. I have to keep an eye on you"

“Okay,” I will not cry. I will not cry. I will not cry. I want Guy to see how strong and independent I’ve become after we went our separate ways.

We finally arrived at his place. He dropped me off and immediately left. He didn’t say where he was going, he just said he’d be back in an hour. I showered, then threw on a clean shirt I found in his wardrobe. I made cereal and coffee and ate quickly and then went to bed, I didn’t want him to find me lurking around. Not so long after, I heard the door opening. I got up and tip-toed out of my room, into the dining room and there I waited behind the couch for the door to open.

“It’s me,” he said. I exhaled. “You ate?” he asked.

“Yeah. I’ll be in bed,”

“Miss, wait...” he came up to me, “can I hold you?” he has no idea how much I’ve been holding myself back from hugging him and kissing him. I’ve been dying to be in his arms. I nodded. He opened his arms and held me; I held him too, tight. He let out a loud sigh and then kissed my forehead. I feel so at home here in Guy’s arms. He makes sense, he adds up, he’s perfect. He balances my equation. I looked up at him and then held his face in my hands and admired him with my eyes. A corner of his lips turned up as he gazed into my eyes, I could tell he was still hurting but not as much. He’s getting used to not having her around.

“Can I kiss you on the lips?” I asked. He didn’t respond, he just kissed me so I indulged. He still tasted like him and felt like him. his hand went under my shirt and grabbed my butt-cheek.

He stopped and looked at me puzzled.

“You not wearing underwear,” he says.

I chuckled feeling a little embarrassed. “Yeah, I washed it when I showered. I’ll wear it as soon as it dries, I promise,” he started unbuttoning the shirt,

“No no...underwears don’t matter,” he kissed me, “I like you like this,” he said and kissed me again, “forget about it,” he picked me up and walked to the couch. He gently laid me down on my back then took a second to look at me.

“What is it?” I asked, he was making me nervous now. He smiled. “Lucky, staring is rude,”

“I’m sorry,” he got up and started taking off his clothes until he was butt naked. I cleared my throat at the sight of his hard penis. “Why are you smiling?” Oh bloody hell, I wasn’t even I aware I smiling at his d*ck. It’s a sight for sore eyes. I shook my head as response. He got between my thighs and started rubbing it back and forth against my vagina. I closed my eyes and bit on my lower lip softly. Without even thinking about it; I stretched my arm down and grabbed his penis, he looked at me. I placed it at the entrance of my vagina.

“I want you inside of me Lucky,” I whispered. He leaned in to kiss me and pushed forward at the same time. My breathing came out quivering. He started moving back and forth slowly, setting the mood and pace for both for us. He pushed his hand between the couch and myself

then grabbed my ass and squeezed as he thrust harder and harder and harder. My nails started digging into his skin with every push every kiss and every grunt he released. He came out, turned me around and made me stand on my hands and knees. He came in from the back and set the pace again which increased by the minute. The louder I cried the faster and harder he pushed. With the way my back was arched, I swore it was going to break, but I didn't care, all I wanted was Lucky.

I got up and made him lay on his back as I climbed on top of him. I have never ridden a man before and I must admit, sitting on top of a hard penis isn't as nice they make it seem in the movies, but it does allow room for a minor soft moan. Well I moved my waist back and forth and in circles. He sat up straight and held on tight to my butt as I rode him. I didn't even know

if I was doing a great job but I was enjoying it. He slightly lifted me as he put me back on my back. He did his abracadabra on top of me. I could barely feel my knees, they were shaky and wobbly. He buried his face in my neck and kept thrusting forward. He started groaning more than he usually does. He stopped pushing and just held on tight to me. He was crying.

“I’m here,” I said. “I won’t let go.” He got louder as he sobbed on top of me. He had completely let go of himself so all his weight was on top of me, making it hard for me to breathe. I wrapped my arms around him and held him. “I’m sorry,”

We stayed in that position for a few good minutes. Just holding each other and feeling and hearing each other’s inhales and exhales.

“I’m glad you’re here Miss. I missed you...” he finally uttered still buried in there.

“I missed you too Guy”

PLEASE SHARE THIS INSERT♡

INSERT 27

DOPPELGANGER

(Plural: Doppelgangers)

1. A ghostly double of a living person, especially one that haunts such a person

2. A remarkably similar double

Guy and I sat there, in silence, wrapped around each other's arms. He kept kissing the back of my neck and I kept kissing his hands. We sighed in relief every now and again. Everything makes sense with Guy. We could be sitting in silence and just communicating with our breathing and nothing would get awkward. My soul matches his, we're the same kind of broken. We're both souls lost in a world that rejected us but found home on the way. I don't love Guy; I can't risk uttering such words or even thinking them. They'd break me. I made a vow to never love again...to never be fooled by such words and to never let anyone say those to me. So, I don't love Guy, I care deeply about him.

"Turn around, let me see you," he said. I obeyed. I turned around and faced him. He kissed my

forehead. I went straight for his lips. “Hey Miss,” he smiled.

“Hey Guy,” I kissed the tip of his nose. “I want to protect you and your heart and your eyes,” I babbled. I have no idea what I’m fucking saying but I mean it. I want to make him feel safe.

He giggled, “How are you going to protect me?” he asked.

“Well, with my gun. I can shoot now...”

“No ways,” he raised one eye brow.

“You best believe. I want to wash your hair and cook you one of those nasty meals you eat at

the rank and I want to have sex with you all the time,” he stopped smiling and put on a rather disheartening look. “What’s wrong? Did I say something wrong?”

“I need to tell you something,” he said. I bit my lower lip. I don’t like his tone; I can’t take any more bad news please. “I met a girl and…” my lips folded together.

“And what?” I murmured.

“And I think I’m in love with her.” I swear my heart stopped. “I’m marrying her, next week,” I sat up straight. How does hearing this make me feel? Imagine a hundred people, each getting a turn to stab a dagger through you one at a time and even though they’ve cut through all the areas that are supposed to kill you instantly –

you feel the pain – but you don't die so it'll stop.
I think that's a fair analogy.

“You're marrying her?” he nodded. He is looking at me with a smile like he's expecting me to get excited and congratulate him. I just told this man that I want to protect his eyes and wash his hair and have sex with him all the time. I fear I have made a fool of myself.

“And you know what this means” I shook my head. “You and I can no longer be having our ‘just sex’ sex”

“Just sex! Yes...no, we can't. Hmm...nop” I stuttered.

“Come here,” pulled me back into his arms.

“Let’s just enjoy this last moment of nakedness together.”

I don’t know what to do. Guy says he loves this girl, and he is marrying her. How? Why? He was supposed to be my Guy forever and now he can’t because he’s in love; what kind of pussy weakness is that? I stayed there in his arms thinking and thinking about Guy and this girl he met. I wonder what’s her name? is she pretty? Thick? Maybe has big bums. I’m not any of those. I’m just an average girl. Fuck, I’m so mad.

I felt a heavy weight coming over me. I can’t breathe, I can’t move. Now I’m back there, back to that spot where Sammy died. I’m looking at the whole thing, I can see her and myself. She’s in my arms, bloody and not moving. Her eyes opened.

“Sammy,” I charged for her. She was awake. I looked at the other me and everyone round, they were still crying. Could they not see that she was alive? “Look, she’s awake,” I shouted.

“They can’t here you,” said Sammy.

“Sam...you are alive.”

“You need to stop coming here Miss Rainbow,” she wasn’t moving or blinking. The only part of her that was moving was her mouth.

“I didn’t come here Sam, I just found myself here.”

“Miss Rainbow if you keep coming here, I’ll have to take you with me,”

“Take me where? Where are you my angel?” I asked.

“Look, you’re already bleeding” I started tasting blood in my mouth, I spat it out but it kept coming out. “Stop coming here” I choked on the blood and started having difficulties breathing. I jumped and sat up straight while still coughing.

“It’s a dream, it’s a bad dream,” I assured myself. Guy is passed next to me; he looks so peaceful. I sat there for a minute and gathered myself. I kissed his cheek and got up. I went to the kitchen and started searching around the cupboards for a strong drink. I looked in the fridge, moved things around haphazardly.

“Hey,” Guy was standing by the door.

“Hey” I smiled and continued with my quest. “Do you have any sleeping tablets or...wine?” I asked scavenging through his cupboards.

“Wine? No...”

“Anything strong?” I stopped and looked at him.

“No!” he came and cupped my face in his hands. “Are you on something?” he shouted. I shook my head. “Have you been taking cocaine? What have you been taking?”

“Nothing!” I pushed him away. “Nothing, I’ve just

been having difficulties sleeping. I usually take tablets or drink alcohol. Or I take coffee and energy drinks to not sleep because..." flip! Will he take kindly to me having nightmares about his daughter? What if he thinks I'm overstepping or making her death about me? He is clearly not over death, he's still hurting.

"Because what?" he came closer and took my hands, "Talk to me Miss,"

"I've been having nightmares about Ndumiso. It's nothing new..." he held me to his chest.

"Maybe you should see someone. I can get you someone..."

I nodded agreeing with him, "but I need to sort

out this mess first..." he kissed my forehead.

"Sit down, I'll make you some coffee,"

I heard my phone ringing from the room so I ran to it. it's Sthandwasam.

"HELLO" I answered.

"THANK GOODNESS! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN MY DALI?"

"STHANDWASAM, LISTEN, THERE'S BEEN A HUGE MESS BUT I'M OKAY. REMEBER LUCKY? I ONCE TOLD YOU ABOUT HIM,"

"YES MA'AM"

“I’M WITH HIM. I NEED YOU TO LAY LOW FOR A WHILE OKAY,” I turned around and found Guy standing behind me.

“ARE YOU OKAY?” He asked.

“I’M OKAY. DON’T WORRY ABOUT ME. JUST LAY LOW, AND BE SAFE I WILL CONTACT YOU WHEN THE SMOKE HAS CLEARED.”

“YES MA’AM. BE SAFE” he ended the call.

“Sthandwasam?” Guy questioned.

“It’s my guy.” I said.

“Your guy?”

“Yeah!” I smiled. “My go-to guy. Honestly, he has become a little brother of some sort. The way he cares about me is so genuine.” Guy gave a very confusing and forced smile.

Our first stop was my flat this morning. I needed to shower properly and wear some underwear and clothes. I wore a white vest, black torn jeans, black biker boots and a black denim jacket to top it all off. I like to let my hair be the center of attention, you know like the main attraction, dress up subtly and allow my hair to speak. As I walked in, the lady in the front desk stood.

“Detective Jele, you look different” I looked back to see if maybe she was talking to

someone else.

“I’m sorry, me?”

“Yeah! You cut your hair...” she says.

I smiled politely, “I’m not detective Jele?” is this the same detective Sibeko was talking about? I have to meet her, she’s probably my doppelganger. Now wouldn’t that be fun. She signed me in and told me where to go. I used the elevator to go the 2nd floor where I walked into a swamp of people looking and sounding busy making that office noise. I walked to one of the desks to ask for help.

“Morning,” I said.

“Monde!” cried the lady behind the desk. “What did you do to your hair?” she said. Who the fuck is Monde?

“Jesus Christ! I’m not detective Jele or Monde. I’m Rainbow...I’m Tumelo actually. I’m looking for detective Sibeko”

“I told you you looked like her,” said Detective Sibeko walking out of the elevator. “Follow me,”

“Where is she?” I looked around. “I really want to meet her.”

“She’ll be with you soon. I told her about you and she’s also dying to meet you,” he ushered me into a boardroom where he offered me water and asked me to wait. They have big

windows that are overlooking the city, the view is both scary and exhilarating. I poured a second glass of water and gulped it down at one go and then paced up and down the room.

“Tumelo,” Sibeko walked in with a man that carried his presence on his shoulder. He wore a police uniform, except his had a lot of badges. “This is colonel Grootboom.”

I waltzed up to him with my hand ready to shake his. “For my own sanity, please call me Rainbow,”

“Nice to meet you Rainbow,” we all sat. “You’ve been distributing drugs around my city, my country for years”

“No. I’ve been doing that for months. My husband and his father have been distributing for years. When we got married, he connived so it seemed like I was the one in control of everything.”

“Why did you start selling cocaine?” I looked at Sibeko. I don’t really know this man, now I have to tell him my dark secrets.

“If you want to get out of this scorch free then you have to tell him everything.” said Sibeko.

“You want me to trust you, then I suggest you start playing along,” said Colonel Grootboom.

“Yes sir! I got married at 22, I was very young. So then he started beating me. He was

controlling and possessive. Eventually I ran away. And Lucky found me...”

“Lucky, Dlamini's boy?” he asked. I nodded.

“But when his daughter got killed, he thought Ndumiso had something to do with it, so he chased me out of his home and life. Long story short, I was broken, broke, no tertiary education, tamed and angry for losing the only person that actually cared about me. I wanted an easy way out, I needed money so...I held him hostage for a little while and planned and planned. He agreed to flee to Mexico and leave everything to me. I told him not to change names on any document, he agreed. And I thought, ‘I'm home free’ only to find that everything was already set for him.”

“Even if we find that what you are saying true, you still did distribute.”

“Yes but I have something bigger. I’m just a drop in the water so putting me behind bars won’t earn you another badge,”

“What do you have that can possibly convince me to let you walk out of here scorch free?”

“Well, aside from Mthembu, I have 3 more. Shangase, a dirty cop. Blacks; drugs, money laundering and possible human trafficking. Langa; Construction, I thought he was the transporting the drugs but he isn’t, Lenny has his transports but he is involved. I’m sure there’s more,”

“You mean Shangase, the one and only?” said Sibeko

“I wine and dine with that man and his wife,” I sat back feeling a little power coming back.

“Sir, Monde has been on the hunt for all those names...and she’ll just hand them to us on a silver platter”

“This man hurt you so bad that you’d take everything he worked for...and go to such lengths to get him behind bars”

“Karma’s bitch and so is a woman scorned.” I said. “If we can get one of them to break and turn on Ndumiso, you’ll see that I wasn’t lying,”

“Excuse us, would you” said the commander getting up. He and Sibeko exited the boardroom. I wasn’t sure what this man thought, he’s hard to read. I got up and walked around again. A soft and deliberate knock resonated and disturbed my train of thoughts.

“Hi,” said a lady that looked everything like me.

“What the fuck?!?” I staggered a few steps back.

“Whoa...tell me about it? my colleagues kept saying I have a twin so I thought I should come and check. I’m sorry I’m late, I’ve been dealing with case and,” she sighed loudly. “I was supposed to handle your case but I told Sibeko to take it because of the amount of work I have. I’m sorry I’m just operating on 2 hours of sleep and...I’m fine. This is so scary, you look like

me...like you are me," I just froze, I couldn't speak. I am legit looking at myself. "Say something,"

"I'm sorry, how are we so alike?" this is not happening. I thought I was just going to meet a random girl that reminded them of me but I met myself. I met me...I am looking at myself.

"Okay, hmmm, let's say our birthdays at the same time, 1 2 3," she said also trying to compose her emotions.

"February 4th" we both said and then stared at each other.

"Detective Jele, I think you want...what the fuck am looking at?" this white guy barged in and

then froze by the door after seeing 2 people that look almost identical. "Is this the her? People have been talking since she arrived in handcuffs, I didn't think they meant she was an exact mirror image," he said.

There is no way 2 people can look this identical unless they are twins. Something is not right somewhere. It's either I'm asleep and this is all just a dream or...I'm being pranked and she's just wearing a mask that looks exactly like me. Or, we are twins and why we are meeting in our mid 20s is anyone's guess. We just might have a huge problem.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 28

BAD

Adjective

1. Not good; unfavorable; negative
2. Seemingly non-appropriate, in manners
3. Tricky; stressful; unpleasant

I always wondered about my existence in this world and lifetime. What is my purpose? I always asked myself. Like who am I meant to be? What am I meant to do? Or am I just a traveler passing through with no purpose? I have never really found the answers until a few months ago when I was with Ndumiso; I figure maybe my

purpose was to be a bad person and be on the opposite side of good. I'm sitting in this boardroom with Monde who happens to look exactly like me; and its all just making sense. I am on the other side, the bad side. She's a law enforcement officer, doing good and making a difference in this world and I'm a criminal, a drug dealer – she catches people like me and puts them behind bars.

“We might have a problem” I uttered after a long and awkward silence.

“I think so too,” she agreed. “I'm sorry,”

“About what?” I asked.

“Whatever happened. For not growing up

without your real parents,” she says.

“How do you know your parents are your real parent and mine aren’t?”

She smiled, “My parents love me Rainbow and they have pictures of me as a baby. I know that means nothing but I can assure you – if there is any foul play – it’s from your end,” I totally agreed with everything she said. My parents have a lot of skeletons in their closet.

“I agree with you. My parents aren’t particularly parents of the year or even parents at all,”

“Listen, can you give me your mother’s details and I will use my badge to get some information from the hospital I was born and

then I'll get back to you," maybe she isn't as squeaky clean as she might appear to be.

"Yeah! That'd be great. Hmmm give me your number," I gave her my phone and she gave me hers'. "And, I think we should not mention this to either parents before we are sure that...you know," I said.

"I'm already sure, but I hear you," she stood. "I'd better get back to work then..."

"Okay! I'll be waiting on you then..." she grinned and left, hesitantly so, but she eventually made it out of the door. I picked up my phone and called my dad. There's just a lot going on right now, I just need to hear a familiar voice.

“HEY DADDY,”

“ICE-CREAM” I never told him about mom and Ndumiso’s father, I just couldn’t bring myself to break his heart.

“I JUST WANTED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE AND SAY HI,”

“IS EVERYTHING OKAY? I THOUGHT YOU WERE MAD AT ME?” He says.

“I AM DADDY, BUT YOU ARE STILL MY DADDY, RIGHT?” I squeezed my eyes shut fighting the urge to cry.

“OF COURSE, SWEETHEART, I WILL FOREVER

BE YOUR DAD. NOTHING WILL CHANGE.
PLEASE COME HOME SOON,”

“I WILL. I HAVE TO GO NOW...”

“I LOVE YOU MY ICE-CREAM”

“I LOVE YOU TOO BIG GUY...” I ended the call.
Hey, if anyone has a manual to life, kindly lend
me or just make a copy please.

The colonel came back, alone this time,

“Rainbow,” he said, “Sit down,” I obeyed. “what
do you want to do with your life?” he asked.
What the fuck is this an intervention?

“I don’t know, but I know I don’t want to go to

jail for dealing drugs for some odd months and I don't want to be a bad person"

"You think you're a bad person?" I nodded.

"Why?"

"Because I'm not good. I held someone hostage and I sold drugs. I hate my mom and I think I might kill her soon. I hate my brother for stealing from me and I hate myself for not being able to protect Lucky's daughter. I am just angry, I'm not at peace and that's not a good thing; therefore, I am a bad person," I looked at him and then looked away. "You may as well just put me behind bars really. I'm not good for the world, at all. I'm too broken and a mess."

"I want you to work for me,"

“I’m sorry, did you not hear what I just said?” I looked at him.

“I heard everything you said. I came in here to tell you to put your affairs in order and prepare to serve your time, Sibeko was fighting for you. He says you’d be a great asset to the underground team”

“The underground team?”

“Yes, you know Lucky, his father?”

“You mean criminals, the snitches” he nodded.

“I can’t”

“Little girl, I am offering you a second chance and you are telling me you can’t”

“Dlamini offered me the same opportunity, I took it back then but things got messed up. All I want is to make an exchange; information for my freedom.”

“You say you want to be a good person and do good?”

“Yes.”

“And you think working for me, the government is not doing exactly that?”

“I...well” I stuttered.

“You think change will announce itself when it’s about to come through. You were offered the same opportunity twice and you think that’s a coincidence? I didn’t even know Dlamini wanted you to work for him. Listen, to be a good person doesn’t mean retreating and laying low. The fact that you sat there and told me you want to be good means you are already good darling and that is just what I need on my team,”

“Someone that’s broken?” I chuckled.

“Someone who knows they’re broken and wants to do better,” he said. Why is this man speaking to my soul right now?

“I can’t. I’m just Rainbow, I fuck up things...I can’t do anything important”

“Give it a shot! You will receive a steady income monthly and it’ll be good and honest money. Maybe after a few months you can apply at with the police academy,”

“Like become a real cop?” I felt my eyes getting wet so I smiled to try and hide that.

“Why not? With what you just pulled with the drugs” he leaned forward. “Lenny said, and I quote, ‘that girl has made me more money in half a month than any men has ever in 2 months and if you are not careful, she just might be the biggest criminal south Africa has ever seen and she’s very young’”

“But, I can’t be a law enforcement officer. I’m too clumsy”

“You’ve got skills little girl and you better put them to good use,” what fucking skills is he talking about? “but at the end of the day I can’t force you to do it, you’ll just go to jail,”

“Even if I have very important information?”

“I’ll subpoena you for that.”

“Fine!” I said. “I will work for you and I will think about joining the police force,” he smiled proudly.

“Be here tomorrow to make it official and remember, you cannot tell anyone. Not even the Dlaminis”

“Why not? They are already part of the team?”

“Just until things are official with the commissioner. Remember not a lot of people know about this, just elected parties. 50% of the stuff doesn't know about this underground force, only people who have proven to be of great value are let into this circle,”

“Does the president know?” I nodded. “So I work for the president?” I smirked.

He got up and headed for the door, “No you work for me. Go home...”

There it is again, that feeling of belonging. I feel I'm a part of something again and I got a feeling this time it might be permanent. Maybe I am not a traveler with no purpose. I work for the fucking president. I am a member of an elite underground team that a lot of people don't know about. I am excited a bit, you know? I have something to think about when I wake up and it's a good thing. I walked out of the boardroom with a bounce in my step, mostly because I'm not going to prison and secondly because I work for the president.

"Rainbow," I turned around to pay attention to whoever was calling my name and it was the girl that looks like me. Shit! There's still her.

"Monde," she bit her lower lip like I usually do.

She had on glasses this time.

“Are you leaving now?” I nodded. “So, I hear you’re like a big bad criminal. You work with big people like Lenny,”

“Yeah actually and I hear you’re a cop and you’ve been on a wild goose chase for them for a while now,” the entire office stuff is like gawking at us and it’s just weird. I get so self-conscious when a set of eyes are on me and now it’s like probably 20 sets.

“What a coincidence hey?” she chuckled awkwardly.

“Totally...why are they staring at us?” I just couldn’t anymore.

“We look like each other,” she pushed her glasses in. I nodded. There is that factor.

“Well, I’d better get going then,”

“Okay, I’ll call you or text or video call...I’ll see how I feel when I have to call you. Okay bye!” she turned around and started walking away. So, I did the same. “Rainbow” she called again.

“Yeah” I gave her my attention. I watched her taking large steps to me. She threw her arms around me and squeezed me. I took to holding her too.

“I’m glad I met you,” she said releasing me.

“Me too,” I smiled. She nodded and walked away.

“Bye Rainbow’s sister” said one of her colleagues.

Guy was still waiting for me in his taxi. I hopped in.

“Can I go to my place now?” I looked at him.

“Yeah, you have to. Why are you so giddy?” he asked starting the car.

“I have a sister, possibly a twin sister,”

“What the fuck are you talking about?” his

forehead creased as he maintained a smile.

“She’s a detective. Her name is Monde...she looks exactly like me and I’m excited. If I have someone else in this world, that’s awesome! Even better when they look exactly like me. And I might have new parents”

“You walked in there and came out after 3 hours with a twin sister! How do you explain that?” he laughed.

“It’s crazy, they all kept saying I looked like her and some called me by her name – so I thought – it’s probably just an ordinary girl that reminded them of me, but in actual fact it was someone who looked exactly like me. You can imagine our shock”

“Hey, you have me,” he took my hand and locked his fingers into mine.

“Not anymore!” I looked out the window.

“What do you mean?” he asked.

“Well, you’re getting married next week. Things won’t be the same,”

“Miss,”

“Guy,” I squeezed his hand, “Get married, be happy. I am happy for you but we both know that things won’t be the same.”

“Okay, but I’d like for you to be at my wedding

and I'd like for you to meet her actually!" he said.

"Yeah! Sure...I can, okay" Guy wants me to meet his wife-to-be right after we literally had sex. This should be fun.

"What did Sibeko say?" he asked.

"I can't really talk about it,"

"Oh! I see...not even with me," he sounds rather disappointed.

"Lucky, don't do that. You of all people should understand."

KINDLY SHARE PLEASE♡

INSERT 29

BIG BROTHER

Noun

(Plural: Big brothers)

1. A sibling's older brother used especially by children or by parents in speaking to their children

2. Any omnipresent figurehead representing oppressive control

Guy just left an hour or two ago. He came in and looked at the place. We had coffee and

chatted about Mandisa, his fiancé. I hated every moment, I wanted to die. I wanted it to be my name that came out of his lips so many times a minute. But Guy is weak now, he has fallen in love and people that love are not particularly strong. It's almost 20:00, all I want to do right now is to be curled up in bed, drink shit loads of wine and watch funny videos on Youtube.

I had just finished washing my face when there was a knock on the door. I looked through the looking hole and saw who it was.

When dealt with a choice to either swim and save yourself or save yourself and someone else but increase your chances of sinking, what do you do? I opened the door. He was carrying a backpack and a remorseful look on his face.

“What are you doing here?” maybe I should grab my gun and blow his brains out. I think that will make me feel better.

“I’m sorry Bow-bow,” he said.

“That’s what the note said. Sorry for what Tumelo? Stealing from me? Leaving me? what exactly. Be specific”

“Everything Rainbow. Sis I’m a mess and I need your help. Please...” he looks skinny and sick. I grabbed the keys from the kitchen counter and opened for him.

“You know where the shower is, I’ll make you some food,” so I chose to save myself and someone else but increased my chances of

sinking. I made him food while he showered. When he was done, he joined me in living room. "You'll be taking he sofa this time,"

"That's fine, I don't mind, thank you." he sat down and started eating. I wasn't even sitting in the same couch as him this time around. "Bow-bow, I'm sorry for what I did last time. Its just the drugs...I need help. Please I need rehab, I don't want to die,"

"Just stay put and don't steal from me. I will make some calls and see if I can get you admitted tomorrow or the next day,"

"Thank you so much. I promise I won't let you down. I will get clean and be your big brother again," my days of yearning for a big brother are along gone.

“Let me guess? You used the money on drugs?”

He nodded, “Paid off a few debts and bought some food and clothes which got stolen but the rest was on cocaine,”

I can't help but wonder what if the drugs he took were from me?

“What made you come back?” I asked.

“I missed you, I couldn't stop thinking about you. I had to,” I nodded.

I gave him a blanket and a pillow for when he's sleeping. I kept my gun under the pillow right beside me. What mama told me about him just

kept replaying in my head as I closed my eyes trying to sleep. I'm not saying it's true, after all mama is a snake but...what if it is? Whenever I feel sleepy, I make sure to not disturb myself seeing that I hardly ever sleep.

When the nightmares started, I sometimes use to freeze and not be able to move even though in my mind I was completely okay. The internet called it 'sleep paralysis' I read that sometimes staying calm and not panicking helps with ridding it faster – so I started practising that. Like now, I can feel an unusual and unsettling weight over me. I'm scared but I know it'll go away in a matter of seconds and I'll be fine. I started breathing heavily, it's a scary thing for one to experience but it's here and I need to deal with it. I felt a warm breeze hitting my face and then a hand came over my mouth. That's when I opened my eyes. This is not a sleep

paralysis, it's Tumelo.

“Shhh,” he said. I felt his hand going in between my thighs, that's when I realised what he was trying to do. I screamed as loud as I could but his hand pressed harder over my lips. “Stop fighting,” he whispered in my ears. He then pulled my underwear tearing it and leaving me naked for him. He shoved his finger inside of me. I cried pushing him off, the more I pushed the harder he pressed his weight upon me, “Don't move!” his breathing became laboured and loud. I remembered that I have a gun. Withholding nothing, I reached for it under the pillow and pulled the trigger, his body just let go on top of mine. “I'm sorry Bow-bow,” he said.

It stopped. Everything stopped. My heart stopped along with the world. He was still on

top of me, not moving, not breathing and not trying to hurt me anymore. I pushed him aside, he fell on his back on the other side of the bed. I got up and switched the light on. I shot him right in the guts. There was blood all over me and my bed. I pulled off the night dress I was wearing quickly then sat on the floor.

Again, when dealt with a choice to either swim and save yourself or save yourself and someone else but increase your chances of sinking, what do you do?

I'm supposed to be crying but I don't feel the urge too. There was a knock on the door.

"Ma'am it's the supervisor. We heard gunshots. Is everything okay?" I quickly threw on a gown and ran to the door. "We heard gunshots,"

“I...yes!” breathed in tremulously. “I have a licenced gun; it was in my bag and I was looking for something. it just went off. I’m so sorry,” I held on to the gate so he won’t see my hands trembling.

“Are you sure, you’re okay?” he asked his belly was hanging out from under his shirt.

“Yeah! I’m also a little shaken but, I’ve got it under control. I removed the bullets and put it back in my safe.” I don’t even have a fucking safe.

“Okay” he sighed. “that’s good because I wasn’t about to call the police. I’m binge watching Suits on Netflix. Phew!” he wiped off imaginary

sweat from his forehead.

“Phew indeed,” I imitated him.

“Alright goodnight then, just be careful” I shut the door and leaned on it. I can’t get my hands to stop shaking and I can’t get myself to start crying. My brother, who is, by the way, also my husband’s brother just tried to rape me. Mama was right and I didn’t listen to her. my knees feel heavy, like I’m dragging something with my feet, but I dragged them back to the bedroom and he was still there. Eyes open, blood all over and me by the door, staring at him, anticipating to hear him gasp loudly. I kneeled by the bed and waited for him to wake up. I stretched my arm forward and shook his foot.

“Tumelo,” I called under my breathe. “Wake up” I

shook his foot again, “What were you doing? Why were you hurting me?” I rested my on the bed still looking at him. “Wake up,” I got up and got my phone and called guy.

“MISS, IT’S 1 O’CLOCK IN THE MORNING,” he moaned.

“PLEASE COME AND GET ME,”

“WHAT?! NOW? MISS, MANDISA IS HERE...”
frankly, I don’t care about Mandisa right now. Firstly, she stole my man and secondly; she probably has a sickening personality and that’s not good for Guy.

“PLEASE...”

“HANG TIGHT MISS, I’LL BE THERE,” there you have it Mandisa, leave him. He just chose me over you. He really cares about me but he’s in love with you so...fuuuuck! I don’t think I want to do this living thing anymore. Yeah no, I wasn’t made for it. You see this whole being a human being shit? I’m not quite good at it. Just yesterday I was offered a job with the police, my dead brother – no pun intended – came around and ruined everything. I killed him. I’m a murderer now. Guy is calling.

“I’M OUTSIDE,” he said.

“I’M COMING”

I went out to open for him. The minute the gate opened he hugged me. I don’t know why? It was as though he had heard what happened already.

But I'm fine, he shouldn't worry about me.

"Are you okay?" he asked holding me to his chest.

"Yeah! Are you fine?" I asked. He cupped my face into his hands and looked at me.

"Why did you call me? I thought something had happened to you," he kissed my forehead. He does look unsettled and panicked.

"Come," I took his hand and dragged him into the elevator. I felt him squeeze my hand and was instantly overcome by the urge to cry. I'm not sure what for? We got out, turned down the passage and came to a stop by my door. I made sure to lock just in case someone comes

lurking around. Although, I'm not sure who'd lurk at 1 in the morning. That's the thing about having a skeleton, you always want to keep your closet locked at all times. You don't take risks. He followed behind me as I led the way to the bedroom. I unlocked the bedroom, swung the door open and walked in. He came in behind me and as soon his eyes set upon a man laying in a pool of blood, they grew wider.

"What is this? Who is this? What did you do Miss?" he hugged me again. He looks like he needs the hug more than I do. "Is he dead?"

"Yeah!" I nonchalantly responded.

"Who is he and why is he dead in your bed?" his breathing became loud and heavy. "Did you kill him? Is he your boyfriend? I'm so confused," he

took off his jacket and threw it in the floor. I waltzed out. "Where are you going?"

"I'm coming!" I shouted. I went to the kitchen to get a bottle of wine. I came with it and gave him. He drank it like it was pure water, "Hey, leave some for me," I snatched it away from him and also had a go at it. "Lucky this is Tumelo, my brother. Tumelo...this is Lucky" I sat on the floor.

"Rainbow, I really need you to get serious right this very second. What the fuck is going in? You have a brother and why do you have the same names and why is he dead?" Guy has a lot of questions as I can imagine.

"Remember the guy from the taxi rank? The one I ran after this one time?" he nodded. "It's him. I knew he looked familiar. He's my brother..." he

tip-toed closer to the lifeless body of what used to be a hobo lurking around the taxi rank.

“Okay, we’ll talk about who he is later. Why is he dead?” I looked up at him. He blinked.

“He was trying to rape me” I said and had a drink.

“Miss!” he sat on the floor right in front of me.

“He didn’t hurt me, he just tried. Luckily my gun was right under the pillow,” he took my hand and kissed it. “So I took it and...”

“BOOM” we both said.

“I will take you to my flat with Mandisa and I will come here and sort this out with Mhlongo okay?” I nodded.

“Just make sure that it doesn’t come back to any of you guys,” he nodded.

“Get dressed. Grab a few things for tomorrow, I will call him,” I nodded and did exactly as he instruct.

I’m not really keen on meeting Mandisa under circumstances such as these but I have no choice, I just killed my brother and I need to let guy help me. He opened the door and I switched on the light.

“Let me go and get her, wait here.” it feels

different. This flat, it feels not like Guy's flat. I stood behind the couch with a bag in arm and waited for Guy to bring out his fiancé. The door opened, Guy came out and there she was behind him. I smiled as I laid my eyes upon her. She had a doek wrapped around her head, she looked grown up and mature, like Mia Sammy's mom. Her body was like I had imagined, thick and sexually appealing to most men.

"My love, this is Rainbow," Guy started introducing us to one another. I was looking at her and she was looking at Guy. "Rainbow, this is my fiancé Mandisa," I'm imagining how good it would feel to have my hands tightly around her neck right now. She looks like a wife; no wonder Guy is all weak about her.

"Hello Rainbow," she came forward with her

arms open. I opened mine and met her half way. She smells delightful.

“Hey, Mandisa. I’m so pleased to meet you,” I politely said.

“Is everything okay pumpkin?” she put her arm around Lucky’s arm. “Are you okay Rainbow?” she asked.

“I...hmm...” I don’t really know how much she knows about. “Let’s just say I will be okay,”

“Rainbow is a strong girl, she’ll be okay. In the meantime,” he turned and faced his fiancé. “I need to go and sort something out my love. Please make her comfortable and take care of her. she’s family,”

'I know my way around this house and around your body, Lucky' I thought to myself.

"You have nothing to worry about pumpkin. You know she's in good hands," she says.

'Your fiancé was in good hands last night,' another thought visited my mental. They kissed and hugged.

"You'll be okay here, she'll sort you out," he patted my shoulder and passed. I looked at Mandisa and grinned. This is going to be awkward.

"Please, drop your things in that room. Let me make you some chamomile tea," she said

pointing at the door that once led to my room.

I came back and sat on the couch like a visitor at a stranger's house. Guy and I had sex on this couch.

"So, Lucky told me how you guys met," she says walking carefully with a cup in each hand. "I'm so sorry about all of that. It's so sad...but I can see that you are very strong, like pumpkin said," for a second there I was puzzled as to who pumpkin was.

"I just take it one day at a time," I smiled.

"It must be really nice to have a big brother figure in your life. I know my Lucky is very fond of you and I really wanted to meet this Rainbow.

You are very beautiful,”

“Big brother figure” I echoed her words. “Its really nice to have someone like him and thank you, I think you are very beautiful too. You are just wow,” I sipped on this chamomile tea, it’s horrible. It tastes like boiled vomit.

“You know, I never saw myself marrying a taxi driver but look at me now. You are coming to the wedding, right?”

“That is definitely what Lucky is, a taxi a driver and you are marrying him. Things don’t always turn out the way you planned them hey” please make this end. Make her go away, I can’t keep up.

“And the wedding? You are coming?” her face lit up.

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world,”

#bonusinsert

KINDLY SHARE PLEASE♡

INSERT 30

CATACLYSMIC

Adjective

1. Of or pertaining to a cataclysm; causing great destruction or upheaval; catastrophic

What is life? Is it a game? Is it a book? A story?
A puzzle? A riddle? A maze? What is it?

We are born, we live and then die. Some live longer than others, some shorter. Some don't even live at all. They never see the world or even breathe its air for a single second. Some die before even developing into human beings and some are never born. Why are we even born if at the end of the day some Mighty god is going to come and judge us and then bring about rapture. Why is he judging us when he is the one who made us, who controls us and everything around us? Why cast me out of heaven when all I did was all in your control. I killed a man, does that mean I should forget about going to heaven? Should I prepare myself to burn eternally in hell with Lucifer? Where do I stand in this world of good and bad?

Every day when I open my eyes. I always have this fear in my heart. I got used to it because it's always been there since I was able to feel. I've always been scared that someone or something might come and take my life away and I wouldn't be able to fight for myself because I'm not strong enough. I feel as though my life isn't mine and sooner or later, the owner might come and want it back. This feeling is always at the center of my chest, the back of my throat and the back of my head. It's real, some mornings I swear it's tangible. Often times I believed that if Ndumiso would beat me hard enough, it would break along with me and never be able to recover. I always recovered and so did it.

I'm a ticking time bomb, a series of cataclysmic events each waiting it's turn to create a huge catastrophic and perilous damage wherever I'm

bound. I fear if I carry on like this, I might hurt myself and those around me. I don't sleep, I don't have proper meals, I don't gym and to top it all of – I drug myself with pills and drown my blood in alcohol. I need help but I'm afraid to cry out for it. Let's face it, who would I ask?

By 08:00 I had already bathed. I hate the fact that I have to knock in Guy's room. I need him to open for me, I have a meeting with the colonel again this morning. I breathed in and out and knocked. Guy opened.

"Morning, could you open for me downstairs please," I looked at my shoes.

"Where are you going? It's early in the morning," he rubbed his eyes.

“I have a meeting with the colonel,” I said, “I need to go to Ndumiso’s first to pick up my car,”

“Okay then, let me take you,”

“No, stay with her...I got it. I’ll just take a cab and then...”

“Nonsense,” he said. “Make some coffee or whatever. Let me take a quick shower...” he went back inside.

I wasn’t really hungry – if anything – I was nauseous. I sat on the couch and patiently waited for him.

“You know it’s off right?” she disturbed my train of thoughts.

“I’m sorry what?”

“The tv...you’ve been staring at it. Usually it has to be on for you to stare at it that hard...”

“I’m just lost in my thoughts.” I shook my head bringing myself back to reality.

“Would you like some tea? Coffee?” she asked.

“No, I’m okay thank you.”

“Ready?” Guy appeared. Thank heavens.

I hurriedly jumped to my feet. "Yes..." I rushed to the door.

"Love, I will see you later," I heard them kiss. "I love you,"

"I love you too Pumpkin. Bye Rainbow,"

"Bye Mandisa, thanks again for everything."

This drive has to be about the longest and most suffocating. I can't even look at Guy. I don't know what to say to him and I think I'm angry at him. But what for? I guess a lot of things but I need to put them together so they make sense.

“Your place is spotless, Mhlongo and I sorted everything out so you’ve got nothing to worry about,”

“Thank you, I owe you one.”

“Are you going to tell me what the meeting with the colonel is about?” he parked the taxi outside the yard so we walked in by foot. “Miss,” he called after a moment of silence dwelled longer than it should have.

“I can’t tell you and I will not tell you,” I said.

“Why not?” I unlocked the door and opened. It’s still a mess from when I was still camping in here. I should probably call the cleaner back. I told her to stop coming until I called her.

“Lucky, because I can’t” I started looking around for my keys.

“What’s wrong with you?” there was a note of cheekiness in his tone.

“Nothing,”

“Look, I understand that life has been dealing you with nothing but bad cards but you don’t have to be shitty to me. I actually care about you so the least you can do is talk...”

I chuckle softly. “Let’s not do this Lucky. Not now...”

“Let’s not do what?” he walked up to me swiftly.

He grabbed my arm and looked me in the eyes.

“Let’s not talk”

“Don’t touch me!” I pulled my arm away.

“I am fucking trying to be there for you and talk to you but you are just shutting me out,”

“Fine!” I uttered sharply. “You want to talk?”

Yes!”

“Okay, let’s talk then. Sit the fuck down...” he pulled a chair out and sat. “Let’s talk about how you chased me out of your life and blamed me for your daughter’s death and..”

“Rainbow that’s not...”

“I am talking. You said you wanted me to talk, so let me,”

“Go on,” he rested his arms on his knees and kept his eyes on me.

“Let’s talk about how you left me high and dry, no money nothing after your father offered me a job. I had to sell drugs and now...now I will forever have the cops on my tail. Jesus Christ! I held someone hostage Lucky. How about we talk about how you just waltzed back into my life ready to save me on some, ‘may I hold you?’ bullsh*t...we can’t forget the nuclear bomb you dropped on me right after we had sex, right after I told you how I wanted to take care of you and have sex with you, you told me you were

getting married! You want to talk about all of that? And lest you forget Knight in shining armor, the story has changed. I am no longer the damsel in distress I once was, so please do not feel obligated to jump and save me whenever I twitch sneeze or blink because in this story, I save myself. Not you or Ndumiso or my parents or anyone else for that matter.”

“I had every right to think Ndumiso was behind that shooting and I still think so...”

“But I am not Ndumiso. I can’t sleep Lucky; I have nightmares about Sammy and I see her and hear her all the time. I feel like I’m losing my mind.”

“You said the nightmares were about Ndumiso,”

“Because I didn’t know where you were and or where I stood as far as Sammy is concerned. And then you just walk back into my life like everything is fine, like you didn’t just blame me for your daughter’s death. That’s not fair Lucky and I hate you for making me feel the way I do...its all your fault.” His head fell. “And Ndumiso didn’t do it” I added.

He looked up at me. “Who did it then? Who?”

“Have you checked your own court?”

“Do you know something I don’t?” he stood.

“No, I’m just saying that sometimes things are hidden in plain sight. You can never be too

careful,”

“You are standing before me ever so confidently telling me to look into my men? Those men would have died for Samke and you know it. I will not make them question me or my father...”

“I am just saying...”

“Open the fucking gate,” he marched towards the door.

“I gladly will Lucky. Frankly I can’t stand your ugly face as well...go!” I clicked my tongue as I watched him take large steps to the gate.

“Calm down Rainbow,” I whispered to myself.

As soon as he exited, I shut the door behind me and tried to calm myself down. "You can't keep doing this to yourself. Calm down," my eyes got filled with tears, in a matter of seconds, they fell down my cheeks. I formed fists and tightened willing the urge to cry to disappear. I marched to the bathroom and washed my face with cold water. "We don't cry Rainbow. We are done with that bullsh*t. Get it together"

There. I'm calm...though I have a headache, I'm calm. I found my keys and left. Colonel Grootboom wasn't happy with me, apparently, I was late and I told him that he didn't set a time he just said to be here in the morning and it was still morning. He told me I was witty but if he says I should be there in the morning then I should be the first person to arrive. I signed a few documents officiating my position in the team. I took a few pictures for my ID card, ran

my fingerprints and was given a gun. A legal gun.

“Congratulations Rainbow,” said Sibeko shaking my hand.

“Thank you and thank you for rooting for me. if it wasn’t for you, I’d probably be behind bars,”

“The colonel lied. He wanted you in the team from the moment he set eyes on you, he just doesn’t like to be transparent,”

“I knew he liked me,”

“Sibeko, please excuse us!” Monde came in flying.

“Monde, is everything okay?” asked Sibeko picking up his belongings.

“Yeah! I just need a moment with Rainbow please...” she looks terrified and frantic. Sibeko ran out and closed the door. She threw a bunch of paper on the table.

“I didn’t sleep, I was going through yours and my mom’s medical records the whole night and morning. I just came in now...”

“What did you find?” I asked.

“Sit down” what the hell did she find that is making her panic this much?

#happymonday

#happyreading

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 31

LOVE

Noun

1. Strong affection. Affection towards someone.

2. A deep and abiding liking for something

3. A profound feeling of trust and security towards a person or deity.

Sometimes I dream that I'm falling from a very tall building. The feeling is both exhilarating and gut wrenching. I even jump in real life when I finally hit the ground. In the dream, I'd always expect that when I hit the ground, I will die seeing that it's always a pretty high fall. But, I somehow always land just perfectly. You can imagine the relief when I realize that I'm not dead. That's how this moment is...what Monde is telling me is exhilarating in the sense that, everything is starting to make sense. Why I was never loved or even seen by my own parents. And gut wrenching in that; why would they do such a thing to me. it all feels surreal. I feel like this is that moment where I landed perfectly on my feet. Still scared and breathing heavily but when I start to look around everything is fine.

“So my parents are not my parents” I repeated what she said and she nodded. “Which we knew, but how your parents not your friends?”

“I don’t know,” I can tell that she’s scared and saddened by all this. Plus, she hasn’t slept.

“But we are twins?” she nodded. “Do you need a hug?” I asked. She got up and threw her arms around me. “I’m sorry,”

“Rainbow, how am I supposed to deal with this?” her voice broke.

“You have a twin, we can deal with it together” I held her. There was a knock on the door. A lady who was not at all in touch with her feminine

side was standing, waiting for permission to come in.

“Babe, you came,” said Monde.

“Yes,” she walked up to her, “Are you okay?” she kissed her on the lips. I had to look elsewhere, just to kill this moment. My twin sister is dating a girl. Good for her. Men are trash.

“Rainbow, this is girlfriend, Ayanda. Ayanda, my twin sister, Rainbow” I stretched my hand forward and shook hers.

“Rainbow, that’s a very beautiful name.” she said.

“Thank you, it’s nice to meet you,”

“She...wow!” she paused, “I’m sorry, I’m just shocked. I feel like I’m looking at the same person,” we all giggled. “When she told me about you, I was certain my baby was losing it. I had to come and see you myself. You are here and you have blue hair, like she said.”

The three of us went out for ice cream and got to know each other. We still haven’t decided how we are going to deal with this. It’ll be harder for her than it will be for me. She strongly believed that any present foul play was from my end but the deeper she dug, the scarier and darker the answers she found.

Before I left Ndumiso’s house, I called Sthandwasam and asked him to do a little digging for me on Mandisa. I didn’t know anything about her but her name, so when

Sthandwasam texted me saying he has something; I was shocked. He said he was outside my flat. I quickly said my goodbyes to Monde and Ayanda and rushed to my flat where I found Sthandwasam waiting in his car. He jumped off and joined me in mine. I drove into the premises and parked my car. The first thing we did when we jumped off was to hug.

“I missed you my dali,” he said. This guy is very soft hearted and emotional so I’m very careful with him.

“I missed you too Sthandwasam. Are you okay?”

“Yes ma’am,”

We made our way inside to unpack what he had found for me. He first made us coffee and then got down to business.

“So I obviously had to go to Lucky’s place and at least get a photo of her, which I got easily. And then I did my magic tricks. She is Mandisa Maphumulo, a student at the university of south Africa studying, law,”

“Okay, nothing shady there.” I said.

“I thought the same thing too, I dug through her social media and came across a very familiar name. Mhlongo,”

“Mhlongo?”

“I had the same thoughts, this particular Mhlongo had Mhlongo as both his name and surname. Not an active account and has only posted once in his life, and it was a picture of this man.” He pulled out a picture of a man from an envelope he was carrying and threw it on the table. I picked it up.

“This is a picture of a picture?” I confirmed. He nodded.

“My dali, I might be mistaken here but that man looks an awful lot like your boyfriend, Lucky.” I got a closer look at this very unclear picture. And this man looks like him.

“Firstly; he is not my boyfriend and secondly...you are right. This is good work Sthandwasam,”

“Hold on, one last piece. While I was busy digging this up, I asked someone to keep an eye on your Mhlongo just in case Mhlongo Mhlongo was Mhlongo. This is what they sent me,” he took his phone and pulled up an image of Mhlongo with Mandisa. “he sent me this video,” he scrolled while I carried his phone, “You can’t hear them but from the looks of it, that conversation is very clandestine.”

“What the hell do these two have to talk about. How the hell do they even know each other, it doesn’t make sense,”

“At all...” he agreed with me.

“Do you think this man is Lucky’s father?” I

looked at him

“It could be, or an uncle. But my dali, I can assure you this man is related to your boyfriend in one way or the other” There’s a knock on the door. We both looked at each other. “Were you expecting someone?” he asked. I shook my head then went to the door.

“Lucky!” I said loudly trying to warn Sthandwasam. I know he’ll know what to do. I opened the gate and allowed him in. He waited for me to close the door and then followed behind me. I walked into the living room with Lucky behind me, I sighed lowly relieved that he was able to understand what I was trying to say without having to say much.

“I wasn’t aware you had a visitor. I’ll come back

some other time,”

“Oh no! Lucky, please stay...I was just leaving,” he got up, extended his right hand towards Lucky. “I’m Sthandwasam by the way...”

“Sho, Lucky. Nice to meet you Sthandwasam. Play nice now while I’m gone...” his eyes kept Lucky’s in place.

“Sthandwa behave yourself,” I ordered.

“I’ll see you my dali, you call me if you need anything.” He kissed my cheek and left. I don’t know how he plans on going out the gate when he doesn’t have a disc but this is Sthandwasam, he probably does have one.

“Yes,” I looked at Lucky seated on the couch

staring at me.

“Why is it an issue?”

“Why is what an issue?” I’m just standing by the door. I can just tell that his ass is here to start a fight with me.

“Why is the fact that I am getting married an issue?”

“You came here to ask me that? Maybe if you had cared to ask earlier then...”

“Stop fucking around Rainbow, now I asked you question. Why?” his eyes are red. Like he had been crying for a while.

“Why are you getting married? What am I supposed to do? You are my Guy and I’m your Miss. Why are you marrying her?”

He rubbed his forehead and laughed. “You are selfish, you know that? You are always preaching about how there is no fucking love and how you don’t ever want to be weak and fall in love and now you are standing there telling me that crap just a few days before my wedding,”

“This has nothing to do with love and you know it. Lucky you and I are each other’s people. You can’t be in love, that only makes you weak.”

“And you think you are invincible because you

haven't brought yourself to admit that you love me?" he asked.

"This isn't about love Lucky so..."

"It fucking is," he jumped to his feet. "It is about love because I love you Rainbow and I don't care how weak you think I am. There I said it!" he came closer. So close that I had to keep my head down to avoid things that shouldn't happen between a woman and a man that is to marry another woman. "Look at me," he demanded. I shook my head. He cupped my face into his hands and lifted it up.

"This isn't about love..." I uttered. I couldn't hold my tears back when I saw his flowing out of his eyes uncontrollably.

“It is, I have loved you since you bumped into my taxi and insulted me. But you have this wall up Rainbow and I respect it but...I cannot accommodate it. I held myself from telling you because I didn't want to be called weak, it has always been 'just sex'. I'm not weak for loving. You are for not,”

“Don't marry her. Please...” what the fuck did I just say. “Please Lucky, stay, we can be together...just you and I”

“I can't. Mandisa is real...she's tangible she loves me,”

“But you are tangible to me too Lucky, I swear.”
I stood on my toes and wrapped my arms

around him. He didn't hold me.

"Tell me how you feel about me"

"I care about you Lucky and it hurts me to see you with someone else..."

"Tell me how you feel about me! Tell me you love me" he firmly said then pushed away.

"Well fuck you Lucky! Fuck you. How dare you even want me to say such stupid and meaningless words when you know that I've been hurt by people that were meant to love me. You know what I've been through and...and...and,"

“That’s the thing, I’m not people and if these words are so stupid and meaningless, why is it so hard for you say them. I’ll see you at wedding, come if you want but I’m marrying that woman whether you like it or not. I need to settle down,” he stormed out the door. I ran after him.

“Lucky!” called.

“Go back Miss,” he started walking faster. I also increased my pace. I grabbed his arm and hurried my feet and stood in front of him. “What is it?”

“I...” I opened my mouth in attempt to speak and then I remembered what I said to myself earlier, ‘we don’t cry Rainbow, we’re done with bullsh*t’ and then composed myself. “I will see you at the wedding,” I cleaned my face and fixed my

standing before him to assume the semblance of a woman capable of withstanding everything and anything. I survived Ndumiso, my brother and my parents, I wasn't about to cower before Lucky and willingly make myself weak. He's a human man eventually he will hurt me. He kissed my forehead and then ran down the stairs. I went back into the house and got the keys then took the elevator down. I found him standing there waiting for God knows what. I opened for him and he left.

Lucky doesn't love Mandisa. If love works the way they say it does then he definitely doesn't. He was willing to end it with her if only I said I loved him then he doesn't really love her. Maybe she was there for him when he was still in the early stages of grief. Now he is under the impression that they are in love. Whatever it is they are doing I will not be a part of...the only

things I need to concentrate on are my newly found sister, my job and - as much as I hate to get my hands dirty – the relationship that Mhlongo has with Mandisa.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 32

SKELETON

Noun

(Plural: Skeletons)

1. Shameful secrets.

2. Shortened from: Skeletons in the cupboard or skeletons in the closet

So, the story is, my parents are not my parents and Monde's parents are not her parents. We were both taken from our biological mother's warm and loving bosom and also estranged from one another. It's the following day and I called my parents and told them I was coming. I have a lot of baggage that I am carrying on me and I can't expect to have a peaceful life without having offloaded. This job with the cops - though it means I will forever have them breathing down my neck - I am excited about it. I want to give it my all and fail knowing that I tried. Most importantly; I want to make Grootboom proud. Learning that he was rooting for me from the get go made me giddy. He's on my side.

I never knock at home; I just always barge in like I stay here. Mama's in the kitchen looking busy, looking like an actual wife. One with a heart, real love, compassion and all the works. When she saw me, she sauntered up to me with her index finger pointed at me.

"Little girl, if you are here to ruin my marriage, I swear," she whispered violently as rage invaded her eyes.

"Where's daddy?" I asked. She calmed herself down as soon as she realized I wasn't about to pick up my weapons and fight.

"I'm sure he'll be down just now," she gracefully retreated while her pride was still intact. She glanced at me then looked away fixing her dress. "What's wrong with you? You look tired,

are you sleeping enough?" her nose was in the air.

"Ice-cream!" daddy sang climbing down the stairs. I like it when daddy wears jeans and golf t-shirts. He looks more approachable. He looks like an ordinary man, rather than a principal. He looks like a man that could have been a good father to me.

"Daddy," I ran to him like I always did as a little girl. He swallowed me in his big arms and kissed the top my head.

"You changed your hair colour again," he says.
"You look beautiful my angel,"

"She looks tired love, like she hasn't been eating

properly. Perhaps you should give her some monthly allowance.” trust mama to disregard any good thing headed my direction.

“Let’s sit down now ladies. Look at both of you making an honest man out of an old man,” we pulled out chairs and sat. Mama was right in front of me. “Ice-cream. I’m glad you called for this meeting. We really do need to come together as a family and talk things out.”

“Just as long as this girl will not be causing discord love, then I am all for talking.”

“Vuyiswa,” my father gave out a soft yet very commanding and reprimanding tone. “She will say whatever she feels she needs to say, if it’ll make her feel better. My angel the floor is yours,”

“Thank you, daddy. Hmm...I plan on starting afresh with my life but I can't do that without offloading the baggage that I carry” they both listened. For the first time in ever, I felt like my parents were listening to me. It feels good. “You both loved me, but you just didn't know how to because you were busy. Tumelo left us when I was very young and after that my whole world just became an abyss. I felt alone and unwanted; especially by you mama. You hate me and now I know why. I am not your child daddy, I'm not your child mommy,”

“Blasphemy!” cried my mother.

“Ice-cream, what are you talking about?” daddy took my hand.

“Daddy, there’s a lot that you don’t know but I’ll only tell you the ones that involve me because I know you love mama and I believe you trust her enough to be honest with you. I found my twin sister. She too – was stolen from our mother and she’s also telling her very loving parents about what she’s come to learn.”

“Wait, hold on now Rainbow,” he called me Rainbow. I haven’t heard him say that name in ages. “You are my daughter. Darling,” he took my mother’s hand. “tell her.” I looked at my mother waiting for her to tell me I was lying. She couldn’t speak.

“Nomonde Jele, my twin sister is a detective. She did some digging and found that our parents are Mbongeni and Suzanna Sibiya. Mama I know that you had a miscarriage again,”

“This is all not true Rainbow, there has to be a mistake somewhere,” I pulled out my phone and opened a picture of me and Monde and showed it to them. My father immediately stated crying. “Oh lord! What did you do woman?”

“You little devil,” she says with tears in her eyes. “You can’t stand it that your life is so miserable, you had to drag my marriage into it.” before I knew it, daddy shut her up with a slap. I jumped to my feet out of terror.

“You blame an innocent child for your own evil doings you whore,”

“Daddy!” I called, “Don't talk to her like that.”

"I have watched you and allowed you to ruin this family for far too long. I want you to pack your things and get the hell out of my house,"

"My love," she threw herself at daddy's chest. "I was scared to tell you. I had had another miscarriage and I knew how much you wanted to have kids but they just kept dying and dying. I was doing it for you,"

"I supported you through the one before Tumelo and the one after Tumelo, what made you think things were going to be any different. And don't think I don't know about you and Malusi Gumede and Tumelo."

"You told him?!?" she looked at me with eyes void of humanity.

“No, I didn’t I swear!” I defended myself.

“He told me himself when Tumelo died. I waited for you to tell me yourself but you never did so I chose to let it go because you were going through a tough time!”

“He’s dead. Tumelo is dead...”

“And he has been for 15 years if not more, so all these lies have been brewing in this house for almost 2 decades” said daddy.

“No, a few months ago he showed up very much alive. Mama chased him out because he was using drugs,”

“No because he tried to rape you!”

“What?” dad looked at me.

“I tried to help him daddy, and mama you were not lying. He tried to rape me again and...I killed him,” my father pulled out a chair. “He’s dead for real this time,”

“Timeout!” said daddy. I need a drink. “Can we just take a breather; we’ll resume in an hour. I can’t...you have blood in your hands Ice-cream...”

1H30M LATER

My father really took that break. He got into his car and drove off. He just drove in now and found me sitting outside.

“Getting some fresh air?” he asked.

“No,” my voice cracked. “Mama told me to wait outside, that she didn’t want to be alone with the devil,”

“How dare she? This is my house; she too has no place here. I hope she has started packing,” he opened the door and walked in. “Come on in baby,”

“I will be there daddy,” just when I was about to stand. I heard them arguing.

“You are a weak man and you know I always

wore the pants in this household, so I made some very hard decisions that your cowardice self would have never been able to make,”

“Name one?” shouted my father, “You mean sleeping with your daughter’s husband’s father and getting pregnant?”

“I did that to protect you and your school. If it wasn’t for me, you’d be down and out!” my mom said to her defense.

“I would have chosen to be down and out but retain a happy family than to degrade myself any day! You have ruined our daughter’s childhood and not to mention she’s not even my child,” when daddy uttered those words, I had already made it through the door. “Ice-cream, I’m sorry...I didn’t mean that.”

“It’s okay daddy, I understand.” I really can’t be mad at him. He is also getting dealt a pretty mean stack of cards.

“This meeting really wasn’t about you two, it was about me. I wanted to let you guys know that I know the truth and that I’m sorry daddy for everything that’s happening.”

“I’m sorry daddy,” she echoed my words mocking me. “You think your father is the victim in all of this?”

“He is. This family is a victim of your wrongdoings mama and until you can accept that and realize how much you’ve messed us up, then there could never be peace in this household”

“Well, tell her why Philip. Tell your precious Rainbow how everything got messed up in this marriage. Tell her who started it” I looked at my father, I don’t know if I want to hear this.

“Please don’t tell me this is about Dambisa because...” he chuckled lightly.

“Who is Dambisa?” my eyes rested on mama,
“What happened?”

“Your father had an affair with her. Dambisa is the grade 10 English teacher” What the fuck is this? An episode of The Bold and the Beautiful?
“That’s what broke our marriage, your father broke me and made me feel like I was not good enough. Not young enough, not sexy or tight

enough”

“That was years ago and I owned up to that,” he threw himself on the couch.

“But you went back is it not so?” she planted herself before him.

“Because she respected me!” he yelled. “She respected me Vuyiswa and she saw me for the man that I was. She didn’t degrade me or invalidate my efforts. She saw me and respected me...that is more than I could say for you,”

“You see Rainbow,” she walked up to me and cupped my face in her hands. “You see, I’m not the root of this evil. Your father is...”

“We need to take a break again. Daddy...go into your study. Mama...let’s just go for recess.” I stormed out.

I came here to make peace with my mom and dad but instead a whole lot of shit is coming out of the closet. My father had an affair with the English teacher and I remember her. My mom had to go to work and see her every single day, well damn that must have been hard. I can’t fix my parents’ issues; they are beyond me. I think it’s best if they just get a divorce because I don’t see them coming back from this. These scars run deep.

1H LATER

We're all back in the dining area. My parents are seated and I'm standing. It's about to be another episode. Brace yourselves.

"Like I had mentioned earlier, this meeting was supposed to be about me," I reminded, "so can we go back there please" I demanded. "Mama, why did you make me change my name when you knew damn well that Tumelo wasn't dead?"

"Tumelo was the only child that made it out of my womb alive. When I had to give him up, it felt like I was back to that hospital room and the doctor was telling me that he was dead. That wasn't an act, I really couldn't cope with that psychologically..."

"But you could cope with making me change my name at 10 years old? I didn't understand what

was happening? After Tumelo left you just got cold towards me”

“There I was chasing my own blood, the only fruit of my womb out of my house for a girl I bought from a dirty nurse. I think the hate was directed at the right person...”

“I would sit with the devil and accept him and as my Lord than to stay with you,” said my father under his breath. I couldn’t believe my mom and the things she was saying. I was at a loss for words. Who says such things about anyone?

“Tell daddy how you tried to sleep with Ndumiso several times...” I brought this up out of anger and spite.

“He said I tried...” she let out a soft chuckle,
“Okay” my heart started burning instantly. It
backfired.

“Daddy” I took on a high pitch tone as I broke
down in tears.

The three of us sat there in silence. We kept
looking at one another. At some point my father
went to the kitchen and came with a tub of ice-
cream and three spoons. We all indulged in
silence. All our phones kept ringing and chiming
but we didn’t pay attention to them.

“I could never connect with you Rainbow, I
mean, I loved you but I just didn’t get you. I think
this all makes sense now,” daddy broke the
silence.

“That’s okay daddy. I understand.”

“Tumelo...” mama murmured.

“Mama, please stop calling me that.”

“No, Tumelo, he...he tried with me too” she finished off.

“Tried what?” asked my father.

“He tried to rape me too. He had to leave...I had to do something.”

Seems there’s still more skeletons in the closet

and they just keep coming out one after the other. Whenever I think everything is out in the open, another one jumps out unexpectedly.

“Yeah well, he’s dead now and he deserved it.” I took a spoonful of ice cream and shoved it in my mouth.

“He was the only fruit of my womb,” she started breaking down in tears. No one is strong enough to hold her and comfort her.

“Its okay mama,” I said lowly.

“Rainbow, I think you should see a therapist. You’ve been through way too much.” Suggested daddy.

“I will daddy, I just need to sort a few things out.”

ENJOY AND SHARE PLEASE♡

Leaving home, my heart was heavy but I'm glad today happened. We all needed to hear those things and vent. My parents have caused themselves, their marriage and me immeasurable pain that I don't even think time can subside or humble. I don't know what they are going to do but as for me...I'm building a relationship with my sister, concentrating on my job and digging on this Mandisa chick and Mhlongo. Something isn't right.

INSERT 33

WEDDING

Noun

(Plural: Weddings)

1. Marriage ceremony; ritual officially celebrating the beginning of a marriage.

2. Joining of two or more parties

If your own wedding doesn't count, then I've never been to a wedding. Today is a big day for Lucky and I intend on behaving myself. I don't want to fight with him and most importantly, I don't want to ruin this day for him. But you know me, I'm Rainbow. I do need to create a little commotion with a certain individual. I will not ruin this day for him, I promise.

I am feeling nervous a little – the last time I saw

his family was on that day. I don't know if they saw me making a fool of myself on the day of the funeral. I know where I stand with Mtho, Zah and Menzi, as for their parents, I have no idea. I'm wearing a plunge satin dress with spaghetti strips and a slit. I paired that with blue open toe baby heels to match my hair. They chose powder pink as their colour, cute. I parked my car outside the yard at a distance, I think I'm starting to accept my outcast calling. I really don't like to mix with people now and growing up it's all I yearned for, the company of other humans.

It's either I am very early or they have chosen to make this ceremony very intimate. I walked into the yard and instantly felt out of place. I didn't know where to go or what to do. I did at some point recover in this house after my husband almost killed me and I was chased and thrown

out like a thief. Menzi saw me looking around, he came up to me.

“What are you doing here?” he grabbed my arm pulling me to the side.

“He asked me to come,” I said pulling away.

“You better behave yourself Rainbow, otherwise I swear! Don’t ruin this for him...”

I nodded. Just as he was about to go back, I stopped him.

“Can I see him please,”

“What for?”

“I just want to see him, wish him luck.”

“He’s in his room, he’s about to come out so hurry,”

I ran to his room with nothing in my mouth to say. I don’t even know why I want to see him. Oh yes! Probably because his wife-to-be is in cahoots with one of his workers, but if I tell him point blank without real and tangible evidence, he might think I’m just trying to ruin things for him. I don’t want Lucky to marry Mandisa, but I would never use this information as a way to stop this wedding. I knocked.

“Come in Miss,” how the hell did he know it was me.

“How did you know?” I asked shutting the door.

“I heard you gathering yourself, breathing in and out. No one does that...but you of course,”

“How are you?” I asked. He was staring at me which made me feel awkward. “You are staring at me and you know how I feel about that. Stop it.” I looked at my shoes.

“I’m sorry, I just...wow! You look amazing. You look different. You look like a dream”

I smiled coyly, “Thank you. You’re not so bad yourself...”

“Thank you for coming. My Lord you look beautiful,” he took off his blazer then marched to the door and opened.

“It’s really hot in here, can you feel that? So hot...”

“Are you okay?” I asked walking up to him.

“You are beautiful,” he says again.

“Thank you, but you told me that. What’s happening?”

“Wedding jitters I guess,” you are not supposed to get like that when you see another woman, you dumbass.

“Okay,” I dashed to him by the door. “Well, I guess this is it. Goodluck!” I smiled.

“Thank you for being here, it means a lot,” my mouth wants to blurt out this very heavy secret I’m holding in my heart. As he was about to lean forward for a hug, I extended my hand initiating a hand shake. He obliged. It was very awkward for us both but we need to establish some ground rules.

The whole ceremony was a blur for me, frankly, I didn’t want to be there but it’s Guy; I had to be there.

They repeated after the pastor as they put rings in each other’s fingers’. Guy started.

“With this ring,” said the pastor

“With this ring,” he repeated.

“I take you...Mandisa Maphumulo,”

“I take you Rainbow...” oh my word, what just happened?!?! Did I hear correctly. Commotion grew in the tent as the guests whispered amongst themselves. Our beloved groom had said another name. a name that is in fact not that of his bride. You can imagine the trauma building up in me.

“Pumpkin,” said Mandisa, “Mandisa...” please God, fix this. I don’t think Lucky is aware that he said the wrong name. Menzi’s eyes kept locating me in the crowd. “You said Rainbow,

I'm Mandisa," she corrected him. What blew me away was the way she was so calm about it. Any bride would have questioned her groom and probably flew out of the ceremony no longer in the mood to marry.

"I said Mandisa," he disputed. Menzi got closer and whispered something in his ear.

"Shit! I'm sorry love. I didn't sleep. I take you Mandisa Maphumulo. I choose you and only you. Forgive me my love..."

"Slip of the tongue," Mandisa declared only she disguised it as a humorous and honest mistake. Most of the people in that tent don't know me, that's what saved me. Guy's eyes found mine, we looked at each other for about 2 seconds before he had to draw his sight back to his

beautiful wife.

It was time to party, I ran to my car and sat there by myself. I can't face people after what just happened, especially his family. I can see Menzi walking up to my car, he's probably going to yell at me. What did I ever do to this guy though? Why does he dislike me so deeply? I got out of the car.

"What did you say to him?" he asked.

"Nothing, just wished him luck,"

"Rainbow, please. I am begging you, just stay away from him. He said your name instead of Mandisa's, stop all this bullshit! Stop! Please just let him be happy,"

“I can’t.”

“Why? Because you love him?”

“Menzi, something is not right,”

“What the fuck are you talking about?”

“Can we drive somewhere to talk? Somewhere private?”

“Give me the keys,”

Menzi drove to a very secluded area. Not far from his home but it was still good to discuss

things such as what I'm about to tell him.

"I think Mhlongo killed Sammy" I blurted. I've been longing to say that to somebody and if there is anyone that can help with this situation, it's this big and angry log, Menzi.

"Such accusations can get you killed. We don't play like that here"

I took out the files I had brought with all the information Sthandwasam dug up. I walked him through everything step-by-step like Sthandwasam had explained to me. He was as shocked as I was if not more.

"This information is very questionable but it doesn't suggest that he called that hit,"

“I know, but I have this gut feeling Menzi. I know it was him.” I protested. “Why the hell was he meeting with Mandisa and this Mandisa character showed up around the time that Sammy died now suddenly they are married.”

“Do you think this man is Lucky’s father?” he asked.

“If not father, maybe uncle. It makes no sense, why would Mhlongo post Lucky’s father or uncle on Facebook? Who is he?”

“Why didn’t you say anything earlier?”

“This wedding was my only opportunity to talk to you. You did chase me out of your home Menzi, and I didn’t want to raise any

suspicious.”

“Yes but...” his phone rang he picked it up.

“HELLO. OK, I’M ON MY WAY.” He ended the call and started the car. “It’s almost time for my speech,” he drove. When we got back, I didn’t go inside. I thought is I should disappear after that stunt Lucky pulled.

I’ve been driving for the past 20 minutes or so back to Durban. I stopped at a convenience store and bought gum and water. Although I am hungry – I will eat when I get home. I’ve become very vigilant and watchful. I inspect, study and analyze my surroundings more than one should, that’s a trait I picked up when I was growing up. I never spoke much after I changed my name and so my eyes were always wandering and scouting around. My ears were always open,

listening and alert at all times. This trait ameliorated when I got married. Mine was to look beautiful, stand up for and agree with everything Ndumiso supported and represented. So, I only got better at scouting and picking up things that ordinarily people wouldn't be able to.

For example; I have a tail. Someone has been following me for the past 10 minutes or so and they are driving a black tazz. I made random turns to gauge them and test if I was really being followed. Indeed, I was. I have my gun with me but I'm not feeling confident. I picked up my phone and called Menzi now that I have his number.

"RAINBOW," he answered. Thank God. I didn't want to have to call Guy.

“MENZI, I THINK I’M BEING FOLLOWED.
THEY’RE IN A BLACK TAZZ,”

“WHERE ARE YOU?”

“I HAVE NO IDEA, I MADE RANDOM TURNS TO
TRY AND LOSE HIM,”

“LISTEN TO ME, I WANT YOU TO SHARE YOUR
LIVE LOCATION WITH ME ON WHATSAPP. I’M
ON MY WAY...”

“MENZI, BEFORE YOU LEAVE, CHECK IF
MHLONGO IS THERE,”

“WILL DO. TRY TO GET A LOOK AT THE PLATE
NUMBER,”

“OKAY. HURRY! THIS AREA IS DODGY,” I quickly shared my live location with Menzi then threw my phone on the passenger’s seat. When I looked at the rear-view mirror, my tail was missing. I turned my eyes back to the road, and quickly stepped on the brakes and stopped the car abruptly. The black tazz was before me, facing me with the engine running. I reached for my phone and took pictures of the car, I know I just did a fucked-up thing but, here’s the thing. My phone automatically backs up my things on my google drive. So, if anything happens to me, I know they’ll be smart enough to try and hack it. Well, at least I told Sthandwasam to always hack my email if any ever happens to me. I take pictures of things. I write notes on my memo, I make voice recordings and take videos.

But that ticked off the driver, he came out of the

car, his face covered with a balaclava, shooting at me. I immediately opened my door and crawled out of the car using the door as my shield. I reached under my seat and got my gun. I started shooting at his direction hoping he would go away but he didn't he just charged for me. My shooting skills still need polishing, I can't shoot properly on my knees but I shot on to try and keep him at bay.

He let out a loud cry. I peeped and saw him limping back to his car. I think I shot him, somewhere on the leg. I ran after him; I need to see who he is and maybe kidnap him. When he realized I was coming after him, he limped even faster and made it to his car before I could get there. I pointed the Glock at his direction as he reversed with haste, when I pulled the trigger, no bullet came out. I was all out.

“Fuck!” cried. My phone rang.

“THANK GOD. YOU HAVEN’T MOVED, WHAT’S HAPPENING?” asked Menzi.

“MY FRONT WHEEL WAS HIT. BUT I’M SAFE,”

“YOU WILL SEE ME JUST NOW,”

Eventually Menzi showed up in a taxi.

“You okay?” he asked. Is Menzi concerned about my well-being? Oh well my eyes have seen my ears.

“I’m fine. Was Mhlongo still there?” I asked.

He nodded, "And the plate number?"

"GP. He came out of his car and came after me but I hit his right leg,"

"Did you know him?" he inquired.

"No, he had a balaclava on but that guy is not my people. I can assure you,"

I took my things from my car and dumped them in Menzi's. I am going back home with him. I did say I was going to go to a hotel or lodge but he refused. Said it wasn't safe after what just happened. He called for a towing truck, after they took my car, we were on our way.

ENJOY AND SHARE PLEASE♡

INSERT 34

COLLATERAL DAMAGE.

Noun

1. Damage to civilian property or civilian casualties that are unintended result of military operations

2. Unintended victims of an attack targeted at someone or something else.

Life for me is very unpredictable. One minutes, the smoke is clearing and the next, there is fire

all over again. To be frank – I didn't think that Guy would really get married. I thought it was just something that would pass but when I saw him kiss her earlier today something in me moved. It dawned on me that I had really just lost someone that I deeply care about. I saw the way he looked at her, he's happy with his decision and I will respect that. Perhaps maybe I will find another Guy or maybe I will fall for a girl like my twin sister. Or I will grow old and lonely. It would have been nice to grow old with Lucky by my side; but I don't think ours was 'written in the stars' as hopeless romantics would say. Lucky wants to be a husband and settle down – I – on the other hand – have been badly bruised by things such as settling down and giving in to 'love'. I could never be a kept woman again.

What worried me is that, Mandisa might be involved in his daughter's death and they are

married already. For her sake, I hope there's a very valid explanation because when Lucky learns of my findings; he might just shoot her in the head. Given that I don't shoot her first.

When we arrived at the Dlaminis; Lucky had already left with his wife for their honeymoon. I don't know whether this is a good thing or not but Mhlongo is here as well. Only Menzi and I are aware of what's been happening and what happened. Menzi seems to be of the idea that Mhlongo is aware I am catching up with his twisted plays and that he called that hit to kill me so there is no more snooping around. When asked why I was there; we said my car broke down and they all bought that idea.

I'm outside gazing at the stars. They always did make the night ever so sublime. I don't really

know what to do or where to sit. Zah hasn't said a word to me since I arrived. Mtho is nowhere to be found and Paul and his wife asked me to be gone by morning, said they don't want danger around their family.

"Your car broke down huh?" I jumped as my mind was forcefully pulled back to reality.

"Mhlongo," I cleared my throat. "What were you saying?"

"Nothing, you've been very distant lately. You don't call me like you used to. You don't arrange for our meetings in the field? Should I be worried,"

"I...no! I've just been very busy with the police.

Trying to clear my name and...stuff.”

“Yeah! Okay...be safe now and don't stick your nose where it doesn't belong. That shit's dangerous!” he dashed away leaving me with what sounded like a threat. Come on Rainbow! You can figure it out. Just think...think...think. I suddenly remembered Ndumiso telling me to not think and just look pretty. My mind is a bit finicky right now, I can't seem to think straight. Everything is just enigma impossible to piece together.

I went into Zah's room where I'll be sleeping. She was there also getting ready for bed.

“Hi,” I stood by the door.

“Here,” she threw a t-shirt at me. “We don't have

to talk!”

“Zah come on!” I begged.

“Menzi was right about you; you are nothing but trouble. I didn’t get a chance to tell you that day when Sam died but I hate you Rainbow, or Tumelo or whoever you are. I hate you for coming into our lives with your stupid tragic story and getting mixed with my brother,”

“That’s not fair, I didn’t plan that day...I am not a bad person, I would never do such a thing.”

“Lucky once told me that there’s a difference between Rainbow and Tumelo; that Tumelo was selfish, caged, fearful and tamed. And Rainbow was loving, warm and mushy. I looked at you

today when you walked in all high and mighty and I realized that whether you are called Rainbow or Tumelo, you are just a bad person.” I can hear everything she’s saying but her analogy is making sense in a very different way to me.

“Whether I’m Tumelo or Rainbow, I’m still the same person...” I mumbled to myself.

“I’m glad we’re on the same page,”

“Excuse me Zah, can we carry on with this later,” I stormed out. I marched around the house looking for Menzi. I found him outside with Mhlongo and a few other men.

“Menzi,” I called. He looked back at me.

“Can you help me and Zah in her room?”

“With what?” he asked.

“The bed...it, the bed”

“Let me look at it” volunteered Mhlongo.

“No!” I sharply declined. “We want Menzi...please. Follow me now...” I dashed back into Zah’s room. Menzi came in not a minute later. “Good, thank God!” I shut the door.

“What’s wrong with the bed?” asked Menzi as Zah sat up straight.

“What bed?” Zah recoiled in confusion.

“The bed is fine. Listen...something just hit me as Zah was lamenting about how much she hates me,”

“Okay” Menzi gave me a perplexed expression.

“When your family banished me, Mhlongo and I became very close. He taught me to use a gun. One time we were together and I saw a number plate in his taxi,”

“What are you getting at here blue haired lady?” he sat on the edge of Zah’s bed.

“It doesn’t matter which name I use, I am still the same person,”

“You lost me Rainbow; do you always speak like this?” he asked.

“Listen Menzi, the car that was shooting at me today could be the very same car that shot me and Samke that day, but they changed the number plates.”

“You got shot at today?” remarked Zah. “What did you do?”

“I shot back” I responded.

“That actually makes sense.” Said Menzi.

“Listen, it’s already hard enough that I have to stand there and cackle with Mhlongo, let me take him down.”

“What did Mhlongo do?” asked Zah.

“Let me go and snoop around his taxi, you keep him busy,” we both stormed out.

There I was looking around Mhlongo’s taxi looking for anything that could pin him to Sammy’s death. Or anything that would make things make sense. Bingo! I took a picture of the number plate and sent it to Menzi. and then texted:

DON’T MOVE, STILL LOOKING.

He responded saying:

IT'S ND, THAT'S ALL WE NEED.

FOUND SOMETHING, I texted back.

I found a picture of Mhlongo and the guy he posted on Facebook ages back. They both look very young. I turned it around, it was written: Smilo and Themba Vilakazi. My entire body immediately ran cold. Lucky's real surname is Vilakazi.

"Holy-"

"Shit!" he finished off and pressed the gun against my head. "What are you doing?"

"What are you up to?" I lifted up my hands.

“I told you to keep your nose out of things that don’t involve you,”

“Mhlongo, what did you do?”

“Get in, stay down or I will shoot your brains out,” he pushed my head with the gun. I got in and laid down on the seat behind the drivers. He got in and started the car. I could see the barrel of his Glock sticking out behind his seat on the side of the window. The expression ‘STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF A GUN’ became reality for me. My phone is about to die, ...it’s literally saying I should connect to charger and giving me a 30 seconds count down before it gives up on me. I quickly went on my WhatsApp and clicked the first contact on my chat list and it’s obviously Menzi.

LUCKY. COOKIES. The screen went blank. I

don't know if it went through but for my sake, I'll say it did.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked.

"Where no one will ever find you," he said.

"Come to the front. It's safe now," I did as he said; I jumped to the front.

"Are you going to kill me?"

"Eventually!" he nonchalantly answered.

"Why? What did I do?"

"Shut up," he softly said. "You talk too much. You snoop around and you are just there..."

“Oh my god! Watch out!” I cried. He lost control of the car when I created a scene. I used that moment to open the door and jumped out of a moving car. I fell on rocks and rolled over a couple of times. His taxi stopped. I panted on the ground attempting to get up, I injured my knee. It’s badly injured. I managed to get up but running was going to be a struggle. There’s a car coming...I waved at it and cried HELP but sadly it passed me right by. Mhlongo wasn’t even running after me; he was walking unhurried. Like he had all the time in the world.

“Come back young lady!” he yelled. I limped away not prepared to give up just as yet. “You know, you caused this? You brought this upon yourself. You are always snooping and snooping and snooping. I tried to keep you away. I told you to stay away...but you just had

to,” what was I thinking though? Jumping out of a vehicle in motion? If my knee isn’t broken, it’d be a miracle. “Honey, you are just collateral damage. Its really sad that it all had to come to this, I was really fond of you. You had become a part of me. Family. but you know what they say? all good things must come to an end.” He increased his pace and so did I. “Please don’t make walk faster than I should, I already hate running as it is. It’s bad for my heart,” his footsteps thumbed louder and faster behind me, I picked up my pace but it yielded no results seeing that he just ran and stood before me.

“What do you want?” I cleaned the blood coming out of my mouth.

“From you? Oh nothing. I’m done with you” he chuckled. “Hence I’ll be killing you, but we need

to go back now,” I shook my head. “Turn the fuck around and get back into the taxi Rainbow,” he raised his voice.

“No! let me go...leave me alone” he bent down, I thought he was going to carry me back.

“I really don’t want to do this, but you leave me no choice...” he says. I let out a loud scream when he started pressing on the injured part of my knee. Without even thinking about it, I punched him in the nose. He released my leg and tended to his nose.

“I hate you,” I took on a thick staccato.

“Fine,” he rose up with a large rock. “I’m sorry for this Rainbow. I really didn’t want to hurt you,

but you are proving to be very troublesome.”

The last thing I remember was feeling great pain in my head after he hit me with the rock.

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 36

FLATLINE

Noun

1. An unchanging state, as indicated in a graph of a variable over time.

2. Asystole the absence of heart contractios or

brainwavess.

Gabhadiya is intriguing to look at and to listen to. He's smart and different from his delinquent peers. It makes me wonder what sort of life does he lead. Where does he live? With whom does he live? Does he have family? Are both parents alive and present? What sort of childhood did he have? Does he have regrets and fears? Who is he and why would he work for someone like Mhlongo? Well to be frank, I'd have worked for him too before knowing all that I know now. I was watching him through the broken window conversing with his fellow criminal friends or colleagues earlier. When he laughs, all his teeth show and his eyes get smaller.

The door flew open, it's one of them. the mean

one. He stood by the door and stared at me.

“Where’s everybody?” I asked. “It’s awfully quiet?”

“They went to get food?” he took a step forward and then closed the door. I nodded. “It’s just you and I now” I can see from his eyes that I should be fearful. He got closer and I moved away.

“Can you stay there please?” I requested.

“You’re about to die anyway; I may as well pleasure you,” he knelt in front of me.

“Get the hell away from me,” I shouted. He grabbed my cheeks with one hand and

tightened his grip. I squeezed my eyes shut.

“Shut the fuck up” he got out a gun and shoved it inside my mouth. This man lives crime. He is a criminal by nature and I can see it in his eyes that he has done things far worse than this. I best behave myself if I don’t want to die. “take off your panties,” I shook my head and rubbed my hands together as I attempted to say ‘please’ with a gun in my mouth. He pulled out the gun, shot behind me then drew it back but rested the barrel on my forehead this time.

“Please, I am begging you. Please don’t hurt me like this,” I cried. He started unfastening his belt, then shoved his hand inside. He brought out his hard penis.

“You know what to do,” he says.

“Please” I could taste my tears. That’s how much I was crying. He grabbed my head from the back and started pushing it forward. “Stop!” I fought.

“Suck my fucking cock, you slut,” I pushed him away but he didn’t fall. Instead he pushed me to the floor and then spread my legs open causing the injured one to ache even. He came over me sweating and panting. He kissed my face while adjusting things between my thighs.

The door flew open. Everything came to a stop. He stopped and drew his attention to the door. They’re back.

“What are you doing Musa?” asked Gabhadiya.

“Come on G, you’ll have your turn after...” he said huffing on top of me.

“Come here,” he got up and I sat up straight. He fixed his pants and walked up to Gabhadiya.

“What were you saying just now?”

“I was saying, you’ll get your turn after me” he repeated. “We don’t have to be entirely bored while we wait for Mhlongo,” he smiled ever so enthusiastically, as if proud of himself for coming up with such a brilliant idea.

“Oh, I get you. We’ll all have our time with her,” said Gabhadiya while this dog nodded excitedly.

“We’ll all just rape her one by one...all four of us,”

“It’s not really rape if she’ll die...” Gabhadiya threw a punch across his face which landed him on the floor. The two other guys didn’t even come to his aid. When he attempted to get up, Gabhadiya sent him back to the dust with another punch. From there on he just started beating him senselessly. One of the useless guys had to calm him down. Now I’m alone with an unconscious bloody man.

I don’t want to be here anymore. I can’t be here...I need to get out of here.

“Please let me go,” I begged them. “I have money. I can give you all double whatever Mhlongo is giving you. Please”

“Did he hurt you?” asked Gabhadiya. I shook my head. “Stay put then,” he stepped outside with

his mates.

I had eyes fixed on the bloody individual on the floor. I won't let my guard down. I won't even blink. I need to be aware of his every move.

After some time; I was offered food which I couldn't eat. I had lost appetite after that eminently terrifying ordeal. I really thought he was going to rape me and then kill me. Gabhadiya walked in and shut the door.

"You okay?" he asked.

I nodded, "Where is he?"

"Outside," he says, "Don't worry, he won't hurt

you again.”

“He didn’t hurt me,”

A vibration resonated from his pocket. He reached in and pulled out a phone, definitely not the one Mhlongo called him on.

“YES” he picked up, “HE CALLED EARLIER SAID HE WAS ON HIS WAY. I HAVENT MOVED.” He looked at me, “HER KNEE IS BADLY INJURED, SHE COMPLAINED ABOUT A HEADACHE BUT I THINK WE CAN MAKE IT OUT BACK. THERE’S A BROKEN WINDOW,”

“Who’s that?” I questioned.

“YEAH, THAT’S EXACTLY WHERE WE AT,”

“Is it Mhlongo? Is he here?”

“YES SIR,” he put the phone back into his pocket.

“Listen to me, we are going to jump out the window and go into the woods but we need to be very fast.” He said kneeling before me.

“Where are you taking me?”

“Where you won’t die. Be very quiet,” he instructed helping me up. He carefully jumped out the window then helped me out as well. He carried me into the woods and ran as fast as he could. But it wasn’t long until we heard fast

paced footsteps and shouting behind us. I gun went off.

“Gabhadiya you devil!”

“Can you see them?” he asked running like he wasn’t carrying a human being in his arms.

“No,” I answered.

“We’re almost there,” he professed.

“Where?” he came to a stop. “Put me down, I think we lost them,” he carefully put me down, I stood on one leg and held on to his shoulder for balance.

“We need to keep moving straight ahead. We’ll find help,” he panted. “You know, you’re not as light as you look. I really underestimated you,”

“Gabhadiya” they called him.

“Listen to me,” he whispered. “they want you. I want you to lead them to the end of the bush,”

“What?!? They’ll just take me,”

“No, the police are there. I just want you to get their attention so they’ll come out of the bush. Got it?”

I nodded. “You promise you won’t let them take me?” he took my hand, wrapped his humongous

pinky finger around mine.

“I pinky promise,”

“Okay,”

“I’ll hide in case they try to make a run for it.
Now...go...”

I limped towards the end of the bush.

“Help me!” I shouted. I looked at Gabhadiya climbing up a tree so effortlessly. “I’m here, help me,” they appeared from the trees, both pointing a gun at me.

“If you know what’s best for you then you’d

come back,” I limped on, fearful that one of them might pull the trigger. I finally I made it to the end of the bush. There’s life this side. People living and houses standing.

“HANDS UP POLICE! PUT THE GUNS DOWN!”

“Miss!” a police van pulled up. Guy came out running.

“Lucky!” my heart rejoiced seeing him run after me. He was safe and alive and he found me.

“Rainbow get down” the next thing I saw I was on the ground. Gabhadiya was shielding me. I looked at Lucky, he was looking at me too then he fell to his knees. What’s happening?! The gun went off again, I saw the bullet hitting him

this time. Something in me died a thousand times.

“Lucky!” I cried, unable to move because Gabhadiya was still holding on to me. Another round of shots fired. “Let me go!” I fought.

“Stay down Rainbow. He will be fine” his voice sounded distorted and distant.

“Lucky say something please,” I felt a pit open at the bottom of my stomach. I need to be with him. He’s hurt. “Gabhadiya, the shooting has stopped. Please, let me go to him, please” he loosened his grip around me. I didn’t care about my injured knee, I had to get to Guy. I ran as quick as I could until I reached him. Some policemen were already surrounding him trying to help put him inside the van. “Lucky, I’m here.”

took his hand. They got him inside the van and the entire time I was holding his bloody hand. His breathing was labored and very traumatizing to listen to. "I'm sorry," I cried. "Listen to me, we are going to the hospital okay...just keep your eyes open." I remembered telling Sammy to stay awake. I remembered her blood all over me and her dying on me in the middle of the street. A tear fell out his eye and into his ear. "Drive faster!" I shouted.

I can't lose Guy. I know I'm being selfish right now but I cannot lose him. His daughter died in my arms; her blood was all over me. Lucky's blood is all over me and the more time he spends in this van the less I hear him breathe.

"Miss," I heard him say.

"I'm here," his eyes were closed.

“I...” he drew in air and then exhaled, “I love you,”

“No, Fuck you! Don’t say that to me...you will be fine.”

“I love you Miss,”

“Okay fine! I love you...I swear I love you. Please don’t die. I will tell you I love you every single day, I promise you Lucky” he stopped breathing at all. “Lucky! Please don’t do this,”

By the time we got to the hospital, he hadn’t moved, breathed or spoke. He was no better than a corpse awaiting its burial. I waited for somebody, anybody to tell me what was happening. Nurses kept walking in out of his

room but no one could tell what I wanted to hear; that Lucky was going to be okay. I have dry blood all over my hands and some stains on my dress. I don't want to move from where I am in case, he wakes up and needs me.

"Please let him be okay," I said a prayer to whatever force or power that is out there that's bigger than me and my whole existence. Mandisa...Mtho. Lucky can't die. He has way too much to live for. If someone has to die, then I offer myself but it cannot be Lucky. I refuse.

"Rainbow," I heard an all too familiar voice calling my name. I lifted up my head and saw Menzi. "What happened?" he is holding himself back from crying. As for me, at this moment, I think I'm at my weakest. I couldn't hold myself back from crying. I got up and approached him.

“They shot him...” I cleaned my eyes. “Twice and...I was holding his hand to make sure he knew he was not alone. The doctor’s still busy.” I took on a high pitch, “And this is his blood, there was just blood...he stopped breathing and no one wants to tell me anything. But I told him that I loved him,” I mumbled and stuttered my way through everything that I can remember.

“Rainbow,” he called my name.

“Menzi, I’m so sorry. I said a short prayer that he doesn’t die...he cannot die, if he does please kill me,” he drew me into his chest and held me.

“This wasn’t your fault Rainbow,” he said. “Now the boy is going to be fine,”

“But he stopped breathing,” I wailed and sobbed in his chest.

“Listen to me,” he cupped my face in his hands and looked at me, “You think if he was dead the doctors would still be in there with him?” he paused and waited for my response. I shook my head. “That’s Lucky we’re talking about. He doesn’t die...it’s not in his nature,” I nodded and tried to get my mind to align with what he was telling me. I forced myself to believe that dying was not in Lucky’s nature.

Menzi and I sat together in silence and waited for some good news from the doctors.

“Menzi!” shouted a voice from down the hall. It’s Mandisa. “Where is my husband?” her voice broke. She marched up to us demanding answers. “What happened to my Lucky?” Menzi

and I got up. "What did you do?" she looked at me.

"Mandi, we haven't heard anything. The doctors are still busy..." answered Menzi.

"What did you do to my husband Rainbow? This is all your fault," her eyes bore into mine. I have no energy to defend my honor right now.

"It is not! Mandisa, I understand you are frightened but pointing fingers will not make this situation any better," Menzi defended me. "My baby brother is there and only God knows what's happening behind this door and the last thing he needs is his wife blaming people, pointing fingers at the very people he loves dearly," he looked at me and then back at her, "You two...don't. Mandisa, just don't. I suggest

you sit down and gather yourself.” Well Menzi has spoken. And indeed, Mandisa located a seat far away from me and waited with us. she kept cleaning her eyes and all I wanted to do was to talk to her and comfort her, especially knowing that she isn’t working with Mhlongo. She’s real and tangible. I was quick to judge her and that’s not very nice.

The door to Lucky’s room opened. We all jumped to our feet.

“Is he fine?” I hastened to the doctor.

“Are you his wife?” he questioned.

“Is he going to be fine?” I got stern.

“I need a family member or his wife ma’am,”

“I’m his wife sir,” Mandisa came forward. I stepped back.

“I’m his big brother” declared Menzi.

“Well, sir...ma’am”

“Is he fine?” Mandisa asked.

“He is hmmm”

“Doctor!” a nurse peeking out his door screamed. I could hear beeping accompanied by inconceivable cacophony escaping out the door.

“What’s happening?” I followed the doctor. I tried to force my way through the door but the nurse restricted me. But from where I was standing, I could see Lucky seizing.

“He’s flatlined...” announced one of the nurses inside. The noise disappeared once the door shut completely.

“Menzi, my husband” said Mandisa frozen with shock.

“Mandisa,” I approached her with my arms open. I’m basically tickling the dragon’s tail here, but I want her to know that I’m here for her and I care about Lucky too. He got me to fucking say I love him like fuck. She took a quick step back.

“Stay away from me.” I wonder what she heard. She must have heard something about me and I suspect Zah updated her and then this tragic accident just added salt to the wound. “Menzi you must be hungry” she says. “I’ll go and find something to eat and check Mtho,” she walked away.

“She’ll come around,” said Menzi and I nodded.

“Where were you?” I asked.

“Mhlongo’s house. I was watching his house since the wedding night. He never came back home so he must have another hiding place,”

“Where is he now?”

“MIA he just disappeared like he was never there.”

“But we’ll find him, right?”

“You bet! I’ve already made some calls,”

“I want to help,” he nodded.

“Of course. You need too...”

“Wherever he is, he better pray Guy doesn’t die because I will kill him slowly and painfully. I swear that...” I could feel my anger travelling through my body. My hands were burning along with my heart as though set ablaze. Mhlongo is done for...

“I believe you,”

HAPPY MONDAY. HAVE BEAUTIFUL DAY♡

INSERT 35

UNRAVEL

Verb

1. To separate the threads; disentangle
2. To clear from complication or difficulty; to unfold; to solve.

I hope I'm dead, then things will be easier. I

won't have to be a part of Mhlongo's game. Then I'd be a dead body, a dead girl. I'd be a crime scene. My death would probably link things together and help solve the crime. But more importantly, I wouldn't be Rainbow anymore. I wouldn't be a twin separated at birth, I wouldn't have a messed-up childhood, I wouldn't be a domestic violence survivor and I wouldn't be a killer. I'd just be a dead body, unbothered and cold. Also; I wouldn't be the girl that lost Guy. I wonder if my parents would cry for me? Well, maybe daddy would but as for mama, I bet a dollar to a doughnut, she won't even shed a tear. Guy would cry, a little and Monde would be broken. Seeing that she just found me.

Fuck! Monde, I was supposed to sleep over at her place after I come back from the wedding. We had planned to go and find Mbongeni and

Suzanna. We found an address and telephone numbers but they didn't want to talk, they said we were lying, their babies died and that we just wanted money. Apparently, they're loaded. Is it a shame that I thought it was bummer to find out they were financially overflowing? I just wanted normal parents with an average flow of income and an ordinary house with 1 car. From what I read on the internet, Mbongeni, our father is a lawyer. An attorney to be precise. He owns a practice. And the mother, Suzanna owns a beauty spa offering a variety of beauty therapies.

Why the fuck am I thinking about all this at this very dire time? I could be dead for all I know. I peeled my eyes open, there's a candle in front of me. I'm laying on the floor; practically thrown and left for dead. There's no carpet or rug, just dust and dirt. The windows are broken, roof is

still intact but not for long. I sat up straight and my head started pounding. I winced under my breath. The blood on my knee had already dried out. I started hearing a cheerful chatter coming from outside. These people are here, they're not passing by.

"Hello!" I called. "Help me! I'm in here" the louder I called, the more my head ached. The door opened and 4 men in balaclavas walked in.

"Good, you're up" one of them said. "Call the boss,"

"Who's the boss?" I asked. "Is it Mhlongo? Where is he?"

"Shut up bitch!" commanded one of them.

“Hey! You don’t have to insult her....” said one of them taking off his balaclava.

“It looks like you have a soft spot for her,” they all took off their balaclavas giggling.

“I’m just saying, she’s going to die anyway so just leave her be,”

“Alright. We’ll be outside, watch her,” the other 3 left us. He sat in the corner and place his gun right before him. We stared at each other for a while until he decided to look away.

“I’m hungry,” I mentioned.

“I have a sweet,” he pulled out an eclairs’ and threw it at me.

“Is it another day?” I questioned.

“It’s tomorrow. Time’s 7 pm,” he answered. I nodded. “I like your hair,”

“You suck at this thing, keeping someone hostage. You are not supposed to be nice...”

“Well, please send me the guide to that,”

“I will,” he looked at me in the eyes, I looked away.

“But you’ll be dead. The boss is going to kill you,” he says.

“Lucky is going to find me. I know...” he lifted up his eyebrows as he nodded. “I’m Rainbow, what’s your name?”

“Gabhadiya,” I laughed.

“Like your real name dude. Not some name intended to instill fear in people,” I rolled my eyes.

“Did it instill fear in you?” he inquired. I shook my head as my lips folded together.

“You’re not a bad person. You don’t like hurting people. You don’t strike me as the type with such a proclivity,” he has muscles in all the right places. His physique casts a shadow of a war-

lord, a brave knight and a protector. His hair is cut into a fade, he has a small diamond earring on his right ear and a scar on the top of his upper lip. His eyes are clean white, hands are big enough to swallow mine and I'm certain a slap from him would knock me right out.

"Either way, my name is Gabhadiya." I nodded.

"Nice to meet you. I'm Rainbow,"

"You told me your name already. And I know you, I've been hearing your name a lot these days. I'm glad to have met you right before you died!" I grinned.

I'm confident that Lucky and Menzi will find me. I know Sthandwasam will be frantic the minute

he can't get a hold of me and he'll be smart enough to get in touch with Lucky. The three of them together are smart enough to rescue me, so I will stay confident and positive. One of the guys peeped through the window.

"He says he won't be coming tonight so we're camping here boy!" he said. "We going to get some food and drinks,"

"Can I have a burger please," I jumped in on a conversation I wasn't a part of. "And some chips and a milkshake,"

"Get her all of that," Ghabadiya ordered.

"You paying for it though," said the guy looking through the window.

“Okay, whatever. I’ll sort you out,”

After some time sitting in silence with this Ghabadiya character, I spoke again.

“I need to pee,” I announced.

“Okay,” he stood and took his gun, “Get up,” he ordered. I obeyed, though it took a little longer than it should have. I limped outside as he followed behind me with a gun.

“Do you have a torch?” I looked back at him.

“It’s dark,”

He took out his phone and lit the way.

“You should be fine here.” he turned around. “I’ll

look away.” I peed and then stayed in that position a while after I had finished peeing. “Don’t tell me you are doing your business,”

“Well Ghabhadiya, if I felt the urge to, I would. But I need to get dry down there, I don’t have a tissue because I'm being held against my will.”

“Here,” he handed me a handkerchief while trying to not look.

“Thank you,” I cleaned myself and then threw it away.

“You owe me a hanky,”

“I’m a dead woman walking,” he followed me.

When I was in Mhlongo's taxi laying low; I was scared. I was panicking. The first thing I thought about was Lucky and then I remembered when we did the diamond job, he said if I wanted to pull out; I should say COOKIES. So, so long as that word hadn't left my mouth, I was still safe and good. I know Menzi will contact Guy and tell him what I said and Guy will know what to do. Provided that he is still alive wherever he is. We still don't know what Mandisa's play is in all this. For all we know, she might have him tied up somewhere and torturing him or she might have delivered him straight to Mhlongo.

Gabhadiya's phone rang.

"HELLLO," he answered. "SHE'S HERE," he came

closer and knelt before me. “He wants to talk to you,”

“WHERE’S LUCKY?” I asked. “I SWEAR MHLONGO, IF YOU HURT HIM, I WILL KILL YOU MYSELF,”

“RAINBOW, RELAX. YOUR BOY IS FINE. I WAS JUST CHECKING ON YOU.”

“TELL ME EVERYTHING. MAKE IT ALL MAKE SENSE. YOU’LL KILL ME ANYWAY SO YOU MAY AS WELL UNRAVEL MY MIND” I demanded.

“FAIR ENOUGH. WELL...I’M THEMBA VILAKAZI. SMILO WAS MY BIG BROTHER AND ALSO NHLANHLA VILAKAZI’S FATHER. NHLANHLA, MY NEPHEW KILLED MY LITTLE BROTHER. HE

KILLED HIS FATHER,”

“SO THAT MAN IS LUCKY’S FATHER,” I said.

“BUT, WHY KILL SAMMY, SHE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS”

“HIS KIDS WERE HIS ONLY BLOOD RELATIVES, I WANTED HIM TO FEEL THE PAIN I FELT. MY BROTHER WAS ASHES, LIKE A PIECE OF WOOD SET ABLAZE. MY MEN SAW AN OPPORTUNITY AND TOOK IT,”

“MEANING THEY WERE WATCHING, CAMPING SOMEWHERE,”

“CORRECT,”

“BUT YOU COULD HAVE DONE THIS WHEN THEY WERE GOING TO SCHOOL OR COMING BACK FROM SCHOOL,”

“WHEN YOU CAME AROUND WITH YOUR MESSED UP ABUSIVE HUSBAND, I KNEW YOU’D BE THEIR FIRST SUSPECT. THAT TAKES THEIR ATTENTION AWAY FROM FINDING OUT THE REAL TRUTH. LUCKY WENT AS FAR AS TAKING ON THE CHARACTER OF MARK JUST TO PIN THIS NDUMISO DOG DOWN AND HAVE HIM BEHIND BARS. THAT’S HOW MUCH HE BELIEVED HE DID IT.”

“SO ALL THIS TO AVENGE A MAN THAT WAS JUST AS BAD AS NDUMISO?”

“AFTER I’M CONVINCED THAT HE HAS SUFFERED ENOUGH. I’M GOING TO KILL HIM.

WITH HIM OUT OF THE PICTURE, I WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THEIR TAXIS HERE IN DURBAN AND THAT WOULD OPEN UP NUMEROUS ROUTS TO DISTRIBUTE DRUGS,”

“I’VE GOT TO HAND IT TO YOU, YOUR PLAN IS PRETTY SOLID.”

“NOT SOLID ENOUGH FOR YOU. YOU ARE A VERY SMART GIRL RAINBOW. YOUR EYES ARE ALWAYS LOOKING. YOU’RE ALWAYS CALCULATING AND ANALYZING, THAT’S A VERY GOOD TRAIT.” He chuckled, “YOU’D HAVE REALLY BEEN A GOOD ADDITION TO THE TEAM”

“HERE’S WHAT DOESN’T ADD UP THOUGH OLD MAN,” I remembered a minor detail. “MANDISA? THERE’S A DAY YOU MET UP WITH HER; A

VIDEO OF THE TWO OF YOU WAS TAKEN.
WHAT WERE YOU ARGUING ABOUT?"

"I WAS TRYING TO POISON HER AGAINST YOU
SO YOU COULD DISAPPEAR FOREVER. I TOLD
HER THAT LUCKY WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU SO
SHE SHOULD TRY AND GET YOU AWAY FROM
HERMAN. SHE GOT MAD AND SAID SHE MET
YOU AND THAT YOU WERE A NICE GIRL. SHE'S
A DAUGHTER OF A FRIEND. THEY MET
THROUGH ME...IN FACT SHE CALLS ME
UNCLE"

"SO, SHE HAS NO IDEA WHAT'S HAPPENING?"

"NOT A CLUE IN THE WORLD." I sighed lowly in
relief. At least I know Lucky is safe with her. she
isn't rogue.

“ONE LAST THING, WHY HELP ME?”

“TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM LUCKY. THE FARTHER AWAY YOU WERE FROM HIM THE EASIER IT WAS TO GET TO HIM. YOU JUST ALWAYS HAD YOUR GUARD UP. YOU WERE GOING TO PUNCH HOLES THROUGH MY PLAN. I WANTED TO RECRUIT YOU TO COME AND WORK FOR ME. I WAS GOING TO COME TO YOU AFTER LUCKY CHASED YOU OUT, BUT YOU BEAT ME TO IT MAKING MY JOB EVEN EASIER. YOU PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY PLAN,”

“WELL DONE THEMBA, YOU DID IT,” he chuckled.

“REST MY LITTLE RAINBOW, I WILL SEE YOU

TOMORROW,” the phone beeped.

He is right. I played right into his plan. I played along unintentionally. Fuck he’s good. His whole plan just worked out perfectly for him. I wonder how long had he been planning this? How long had he known the Dlaminis? Basically, he had two plans, avenge his brother and also sell drugs. Bloody hell he is motherfucking good! He was going to do exactly what Ndumiso did to me, sell his drugs using the Dlamini taxis and routes so if anything ever backfired, it would go straight for Paul Dlamini and his family.

“He’s good,” I said to Gabhadiya.

“Indeed!” he agreed with me. “You care about this Lucky individual?”

“A lot. He saved me...”

PLEASE SHARE♡

INSERT 37

TANGIBLE

Adjective

1. Touchable; able to be touched or felt; perceptible by sense of touch palpable

2. Possible to treated as fact; real or concrete.

I don't think Lucky and I belong together. As in; I don't think we were meant to be lovers but I

know we were meant to be in each other's lives. We were meant to know each other, support each other and love each other completely platonically. I would never take him away from her; she needs her and he needs her even more. I now understand what he meant when he said that she was tangible to him. I think he is tangible to her too. I am not tangible to Guy in a manner that Mandisa is, and he is tangible to me in a manner that we both might have misunderstood.

What happened to me? Why am I in a hospital bed? and what happened with Lucky?

"Lucky?" I moaned. I looked around and saw nothing but clean hospital walls, hospital equipment and charts. There's a knee brace hugging my injured knee. I have no idea what

happened or how I ended up being hospitalized so I will just wait and see what happens next. I am an impatient being at times so I hope I will not retreat and crawl out of this room to go and get answers.

The door opened. Finally.

“You?” I tried to sit up but my head had other plans.

“Stay down Rainbow,” he ordered.

“What are you doing here?” I asked. I rubbed my forehead trying to ease the headache.

“I came to check up on you. Are you okay?” he asked.

“Yeah, how did I get here?” my memory has a lot of blank spaces and blurred lines

“What do you remember?” he sat on the visitor’s seat and rested his arms on the bed.

“I...I was with Menzi and Mandisa. We were waiting for the doctor and then Lucky had a seizure,”

“I found you with Menzi. You stood to come to me and then...” he paused.

“And then what? What happened?”

“You also started seizing. Your nose was

bleeding...you don't remember any of this?" I shook my head. I don't remember any of the things he was telling me. "Rest, it's okay."

"What about the guys? What happened to them?"

"Two dead, one in custody. We got them?"

"What are you?" I mean he is obviously not a criminal. He was an informer there, like undercover.

"I'm a human man. What about you?" he gave a lopsided grin.

"Come on, I'm serious"

“I work for Grootboom, like you.”

“Oh! Fuck me!” I closed my eyes. why is everyone around me just connected? And why does everything always involve criminals and police?

“I’d love to do that but maybe we could go on a couple of dates then we can talk about...”

“Not literally you gummy bear!”

“Gummy bear!” he smiled, “Look at us, we’re already on pet names basis. At this rate I will have to take you to meet my family next week.”

I don't know what this Gabhadiya character is trying to do? Whatever it is he should stop this very moment. It won't work. I don't have the time nor energy to entertain some useless crush and be going on dates.

"Where's Lucky?" I quickly deviated from what he was initiating.

"I have no idea. I've been here with you since..." he gazed at me. "But I reckon he will be fine."

I forced a grin.

"Hey thank you for helping me back there..."

"It was my obligation. I'm a cop..."

“Technically a criminal but hey...” he got up.

“I want to ask you something, it might a bit uncomfortable but...I have to.” I nodded. “Did Musa, you know. Did he hurt you?”

“Oh!” I forgot about that ordeal. “No, you came just in time and I could never thank you enough for that.

He nodded, “Well, I will let you be. Your sister is somewhere looking for coffee and flowers to decorate your room. She’s something alright,”

“My sister Monde? You know her?” hearing her name made me realize how happy I am to have someone running up and down looking to make

me comfortable. Someone cares about me and that makes me happy. Then – as though she knew we were talking about her – she barged in with a bouquet of flowers and other unnecessary things.

“Speak of the devil” said Gabhadiya.’

“Hello Rainbow,” she stood by the door trying to hold herself back from dying. “Thank you for being alive,”

“It’s a pleasure,” she put her load off and embraced me. “How do you guys know each other again?”

“We work together,” said Monde.

“Let me leave you to it ladies.” He headed for the door.

“Hey dude!” I called. He gave me his attention.
“What’s your name, your real name?”

He smiled, “Nkonzo Dube,”

“I’ll see you around,” he saluted then exited.

Monde took my hands into hers, “Seems like you guys have something going on,” she teased.

“Oh no, never. I can’t afford that.”

“Your heart is with Lucky?” she handed me a cup of coffee

“No!” I disputed, “My heart is with me. Lucky’s heart belongs to Mandisa.” I took a sip,
“Speaking of Lucky, is he awake? He should be awake now,”

“Rainbow, Lucky is...” her mood dampened.
“He’s is not awake,”

“What does that mean?” I felt my tongue become instantly dry. “He’s not dead”

“He is not. But he is a coma. The doctors don’t know when he might wake up. It might be now or next week...next month. Or even never”

“Don’t say that. You’ll jinx it” my heart felt heavy. I placed my cup of coffee on the table next to

me. “We just have to be positive,” she gave a smile that couldn’t convince or encourage even herself if she saw it.

Not so long after; I was taken to Lucky’s room. The machines were beeping indicating that he was still alive. But he was as good as dead. I took his hand and held it in mine.

DAY 1

“We are an enigma you and I, Guy” I uttered. He didn’t respond. “You need to wake up so we could look for Mhlongo together and kill him. He killed Sammy and hurt you and also kidnapped me. So, I’m giving you until tomorrow to wake up or I am never talking to you again.” I declared. “Hey, remember when we were fighting at Ndumiso’s place? I didn’t mean to

say you have an ugly face...you don't. If anything, you actually have a nice face. I love it..." my voice cracked. "Please say something,"

DAY 2

"Good morning Lucky. I came early because I have a journey to take with my twin sister, Monde. It's exciting. We are going to ambush our birth parents. We found them and...I wish you were here to talk to me. You have made me weak because you made me say 3 words just in the perfect order to cause woe and sickness at the pit of my stomach. I think Mandisa doesn't really like me, I suspect Zah might have told her a few unsettling things about me,"

Later that day, Monde, her girlfriend and myself took a trip to Johannesburg. It was long and

tiring considering the state at which my body and mind was in. I reckon I was a bore to the both of them because I just kept to myself. I didn't speak much, only spoke when spoken to and when I really needed to. I think Monde filled Ayanda in on my last couple of days. she was very kind to me and she took care of me the best she could. Monde is so overprotective of me; she cares about me and I care about her too. She gives me random hugs and smiles at me for no reason. I think that's cute and sometimes when she looks at me, I get so startled and think that I'm looking at myself. But I think it also serves as a reminder that not all is lost. We booked ourselves into a hotel for the night. Ayanda took the floor and Monde and I took the bed. I insisted on getting my own room but they refused to let me out of their sight while I'm sad. But I'm not sad, I'm just tired. A lot has happened in the past month; actually - in the past years but who's counting? And to be

frank I think I'm acting quite rationally. A phone rang after we had just switched off the lights.

"HELLO," it's Monde's. "WHAT? NOW?" she cried. She softly squeezed my shoulder and I payed her attention. "it's G" she says.

"Who the hell is G? Grootboom?" she shook her head,

"Nkonzo," she handed me the phone. I sat up straight.

"HELLO,"

"HEY, ITS GABHADIYA,"

“I KNOW. WHAT IS IT? DID YOU FIND MHLONGO?”

“NO. I JUST WANTED TO CHECK UP ON YOU...”
He cleared his throat. “MONDE TOLD ME YOU WERE A BIT SAD,” I gave Monde a nasty look. She covered her face with both hands.

“I SEE, WELL MONDE WAS WRONG. I’M COMPLETELY FINE. JUST TIRED. BUT THANK YOU,”

“OKAY, WELL. GOODLUCK WITH EVERYTHING AND I HOPE I SEE YOU AGAIN SOON,”

“GOODNIGHT NKONZO,” I gave Monde her phone and bored into her eyes.

“He wouldn’t let me be, he was constantly asking about you so I figured I should tell him the truth,” she shrugged.

“Monde. Monde. Monde.” Sang her lover on the floor.

“He’s very sweet though,” I admitted. “And good looking.” Monde beamed from ear to ear. “But, I can’t really. I’d just be dragging him along...”

“Yeah! If you know you won’t be in it for the long haul then don’t even try. I would advice you be with you for now Rain,” says Ayanda on the floor. She has even given me a pet name. “Way I see it, you’ll be okay. You have people that care about you genuinely now so long as you allow us to care for you,”

“Lucky was the first person to ever care about me genuinely. I never doubted his compassion towards me. I trusted Mhlongo, he said he cared about me but all along I was just a pawn in his game,”

“Ayanda and I would never do that to you,”
Monde took my hand. “I’m sorry for everything”
I squeezed her hand to acknowledge what she was saying.

The drive to our biological parents’ house was bitter sweet. Bitter for me and sweet for Monde. She’s was so excited and happy. I on the other hand, was anxious. I was scared. I wanted to turn back many times but I couldn’t bring myself to say it out loud and I didn’t want to hurt Monde’s feelings. Had I even mentioned it,

she would have insisted we turn back. I feel like she's trying really hard to please me and I am trying really hard to avoid situations where she'd have to compromise her happiness for mine.

"We're here!" announced Monde sighing sharply. We got out of the car; all analyzed this beautiful fortress before us. Their home is so beautiful. Monde called on the intercom.

"Hello," my guts twisted at the sound of that voice. It sounds very feminine; it could be our mother.

"Yes, we are here for Mr and Mrs Sibiya,"

"And who might you be?"

“I’m Monde, I’m here with my sister. We are their kids,” there was no response. “Hello” she called.

“I think she’s gone Monde,” said Ayanda. The gate buzzed; we were all puzzled. I rushed up and pushed it open. Monde smiled in relief. I feel like throwing up. I really don’t want to do this. I mean, we could just have each other and our fake parents. We don’t need the real one’s we’re grown now and we can take care of ourselves.

Too late, Monde has enthusiastically knocked and a lady in a black and white cleaner’s uniform opened wearing a cold and uninviting expression on her face.

“Follow me,” she ordered. We obeyed. This house is amazing, gosh. “Wait here” she said and left us.

We waited in the lounge in silence. Scared and excited to finally meet the people that made us. They finally walked in.

“Now, I don’t know what it is that you want from me and my husband but pretending to be our dead kids is far too unkind even for small time criminals looking to make a quick change,” we all jumped to our feet as they walked in. They look mad. “What did you do? Google us?”

“No,” Monde took charge. “It’s not like that. We are really your kids. The nurse sold us to two separate couples but somehow, we found each other and found you. we never died. We were

stolen from you,”

Silence invade the room.

“But, I buried...we buried two little babies,” her husband spoke.

“It wasn’t us. We were born on the 4th of February,”

“Oh Dear!” uttered the lady almost falling into her husband’s chest.

Looking at our mother, I could see myself and Monde in her, she can deny it all she wants but she is my mother and I can feel it in my bones.

“I look like you,” I finally said under my breath looking at her.

“Madam! Sir!” the house keeper joined us.

“These girls are the spitting image of your wife sir, you’d be making a huge mistake if you turn them away.”

“Honey!” she looked at her husband as tears escaped her eyes. “Look at the way she bites into her lips, like your sister,” she says analyzing me.

“I’m a twin myself...” said Mbongeni.

“Please sit,” she said cleaning her eyes.

“Constance, make tea and coffee. Make everything.”

“Can I give you a hug?” I asked. I felt I was drawn to my her than I was to him.

“Yes, please. Come both of you,” we all shared a group hug and cried in each other’s arms for a few seconds. Monde and Mbongeni released but she and I stayed and embraced each other a little while longer.

“I’m so happy I found you,” I sobbed.

“Thank you for finding us,” it seems everyone present got a little emotional, including Ayanda and the helper. It was a beautiful thing to experience and witness. There’s was no way one wouldn’t shed a tear or two.

“What are your names?” asked Mbongeni.

“I’m Nomonde and she is Rainbow,”

“Beautiful names. Look at you two as beautiful as your mother,” he said making us blush. She held his wife’s hand. “We’re parents love,”

“I’m sorry, where are my manners,” said Monde, “this is my girlfriend, Ayanda. We’ve been together for 3 years now...”

“Oh that’s wonderful. I can tell that you two care deeply about each other,” said Suzanna still cleaning her eyes. I was still staring her; I mean it’s my real mother. She’s here with me. I feel like a child. I could hear Monde mumbling on and telling them about how we found each other. I was overwhelmed by emotions that I

just couldn't hold it in.

"Are you okay?" Monde rushed before me.

"I'm fine," I sniffed. "Can I use your bathroom please"

"Right through that door," she pointed and I charged towards the door. I can't stop crying. Monde walked in right after I had shut the door. "I'm sorry. I can't stop crying. I'm so happy..." she hugged me. "and scared."

"What are you scared of? This is all real" she says.

"What if they hate us, or what if I do something

stupid to make her hate me like my mom? Perhaps I'm the issue here, not the people around me. What if he never understands me?" I cried.

"Listen to me, if they don't like us then that's fine because they made 2 of the same person; so we'll just love each other and Ayanda will love us together. But Rainbow, look at them – they are so happy we are here. They recognized us. I know you've had a great deal of hurt and disappointment to deal with...but trust this and trust me, everything is real. Stop holding your breath, pinching yourself and squeezing your wrist. It's tangible, I'm tangible" I listened to her and oh how wise and right she sounded.

"I'm sure you're the oldest," we laughed as we hugged each other. "I love you Monde,"

“I love you too Rainbow. Now let’s go back to our parents, I’m sure they have a lot to tell us,”

“Please sleep over, Constance was just fixing supper” Suzanna begged just as we emerged from the bathroom. “Oh please, I just want more time,” Monde and I looked at each other.

“I don’t mind,” we said simultaneously.

“Yes!” she rejoiced. “Constance!” she rushed out, “Constance my babies are sleeping over...” she disappeared down the passage. She called us her babies. My heart is smiling right now. I don’t want this to end. I don’t want it to be over and please don’t let it be a dream.

HAPPY READING♡

INSERT 38

AWAKE

Adjective

1. Not asleep; conscious

2. SYNONYMS: Conscious, Lucid

I haven't stopped pinching myself since we left the Sibiya's. They didn't want us to go but we are adults, we have lives and jobs. Colonel called and told me that I needed to come back. Said my life was at risk with Mhlongo on the loose. I slept over at Monde's last night and

went to work with her. I needed to see Sibeko or Grootboom about Ndumiso. He's a thought always lurking at the back of my head and I need to sort him out.

"Don't worry yourself about that. We will contact you once we are ready," said the Colonel.

"The main reason why I came on board was to help bring him into custody," I contested,

"No, it was so you don't get arrested," he contradicts.

"Yeah well but also..."

"Rainbow. Leave that case to us to sort out,

when we need you, we know where to find you,” he says. “On other hand, you did a good job with the Mhlongi saga even though you should have notified the authorities the minute you stumbled upon anything suspicious,”

“I couldn’t trust anyone with the information I had. I don’t trust anyone,”

“You have to trust me, I’m your boss. You are a woman of the law now so everything you do must be accounted for. You can’t have lurking shadows,”

“Yes sir,” I humbled myself. He left me alone in the boardroom. I took a moment to look at the view of this room. It does provide a great scope for the imagination. I heard a camera click so I looked over by the door. “Did you just take a

picture of me?" I asked him

"The light was hitting you just perfectly," he came up to me, "look," the picture does look nice to be honest.

"It's beautiful, you have an eye for this,"

"I do have an eye for something alright." He smirked. "Face me," I obeyed. With his index finger, he kept adjusting my head to his desired angle.

"What are you doing Nkonzo?"

"Don't move please," he requested. "Don't move your head or body, but I want your eyes to look

out the window.” I obliged in this moment of dilly dally. He started taking pictures from different angles. Then he stood before me again, “Go on a date with me” I forgot all about his instructions and threw my eyes at him losing the position he had fixed me into. He clicked his camera looking at me through the lenses. “Got it,” he said.

“Oh, so you weren’t really asking me that? You just wanted an angle” I shifted my weight to one side.

“Oh no! that was a genuine question...” he gazed at me sending me to the depths of self-consciousness. I don’t like being looked at.

“I don’t do dates,” I answered.

“Why not?”

“I don’t know. I’ve never been on one so why the heck should I anymore? Besides, dates are for nice and pretty ladies who know and are sure,” I sighed then looked at my shoes. This stupid knee brace needs to come off as soon as possible it’s messing with my entire vibe.

“Know what? And are sure of what?” he is proving to be very inquisitive this one.

“Who know things to talk about on dates and how to carry themselves and are sure of their future and every other stupid detail that really doesn’t matter. People like me don’t go on dates...we just wing it,”

“Well then, let’s wing it, you and I. Tonight. We can go wherever the night takes us,”

“I can’t I’m sorry...in fact, I need to go to the hospital to check on Lucky,”

“Lucky hey” he grinned awkwardly.

“Yeah, he is probably up and he might need me so...”

“He might need you and not his wife?” he questioned, “I see” That hit home. It made my chest burn. Am I overstepping here? No, I don’t think I am. Lucky was there nursing me back to life when Ndumiso broke me, now it’s my turn. I walked out ever so awkwardly with the brace

around my knee. I had to request for an uber because my car is still back at Lucky's; I should probably ask Menzi to send down one of his boys with it, or ask Sthandwasam to fetch it for.

Sthandwasam has beseeched me many a times to get a fancy car. He suggested a BMW or Bentley and I always said I would just to get him to stray from the topic. I am not going to get a new car. I love my maroon Citi Golf. When I get behind the wheel of that car, a persona of a brave and strong hearted young woman comes over me and I always embrace it because I love it. I did always want to find out who this car belonged to and what happened to its owner. But that's an adventure for another day.

DAY 5

“Hello, you lazy bum!” I announced my presence in Lucky’s room. Every time my voice dies down in my head without hearing a response from him, I get sharp pains in my chest. “We get it, you got shot, you were in a coma for a few days. Stop being a pussy and get up Lucky just get up,” the entire time I held his hand in mine. “What? You want me to say I love you again? Well, I love you...there. I do...I really do Lucky and I’m sorry I didn’t tell you before all of this happened. Just please don’t die. Wake up for me...I’m here. it’s me Miss and I love you, I said it.” I got startled by the machines beeping more than they were. I jumped to my feet. “Lucky. What are you doing? Nurse!” I shouted. “Oh my God, Nurse” he’s seizing again. A nurse pushed the door open,

“Ma’am please step outside,” she said loudly.

“No, he needs me” I protested. Another nurse walked in and escorted me to the door.

“We will notify you once we have something to tell you,” she said.

“But, he needs me, I need to be with him” she shut the door in my face.

“What’s happening?” I turned around and found Mandisa with fear all over her voice and demeanor.

“He’s seizing again?” I told her.

“What were you doing here?” she asked.

“Visiting him of course,” I answered. She threw a hot slap across my face. My head cocked to the side and stayed there for a few good seconds. My hand was burning and itching to slap her and probably do more.

“Lucky is my husband,” her tone increased when she pronounced the word ‘my’. “From this moment on, you will no longer visit my husband,” she emphasized on ‘my’ again. “

“You can’t keep me from visiting him Mandisa,”

“Don’t utter my name. Everywhere you go you start trouble, trouble follows you Rainbow and I,” she caught her breath, “I don’t want you anywhere near my family.” she said, “And I can keep you from seeing him; I am his wife. I call the shots”

“Do you even know what happened?” she seems to be as clueless as they make them.

“You got mixed with the wrong people then they kidnapped you. Lucky, being so kind and generous obviously had to play the hero and save you...” that is not what happened at all. I was right, she has no idea what actually happened and it’s not my place to enlighten her. “My Lucky is just an innocent taxi driver in all this, trying to make a living but you just won’t let him...”

“He’s awake,” our heads swiftly turned to the nurse.

“Can I see him?” we asked in unison.

“Does the word Miss mean anything to any of you?” asked the nurse.

“Yes!” I took a large step towards her. “He calls me Miss. He needs me, can I see him?”

“Actually nurse, I’m his wife. I will go and see him,” disputed Mandisa.

I stayed outside his room and waited for Mandisa to leave; she came out with a wet face. I wonder what happened?

“He wants to see you,” she said and marched away. I didn’t waste another second. I walked in. He lifted up his hand and waved at me. He’s awake, he’s really awake. Thank heavens.

“There she is” he said breathing difficultly. I went up to him and sat down. Suddenly, I don’t know what to say to him. I got up, kissed his cheek and then sat back down. “How do yell at an unconscious man? You called me a pussy” he smiled. My mouth opened.

“You heard that?”

“I heard everything,” he says. “I love you Lucky, please wake up and marry me. I swear I love you,” he took on a high pitch.

“That must be Mandisa because I don’t sound like that at all...” I folded my arms in my chest and looked away.

“Are you sure? I could have sworn it was you,”
his brows drew together.

“I don’t say such bullsh*t,”

“Sure...” he leered.

“Don’t tell anyone,” I bit my lower lip.

“What?”

“That I love you” I tear trickled down my cheek.

“I don’t want it to ruin my street cred,” I quickly
cleaned my eyes.

“Yeah! Reputation...I feel you,” he says staring at
me.

“But I do love you...and I’m sorry that it took you nearly dying for me to come to that realization,”

“I love you too Miss, a lot,” I leaned back.

“Pussy,” I teased. He closed his eyes.

“I’m unconscious again, I think I’ve seen enough of you,” he said and we both laughed. He opened his hand, I placed mine in his, he brought it closer to his face and kissed it. “My Miss,”

“My Guy”

“Let me close my eyes now. I’m tired,”

“Okay, I’ll watch you,”

“Thank you, Miss,”

Eventually Lucky fell asleep. I did call on the nurse to come and check if everything was okay. I was worried he might die in his sleep. But even fast asleep, he kept squeezing my hand when I’d call his name. I’m still here holding his hand, I guess standing guard. Mandisa walked in.

“Can I talk to you please,” she said. I thought she had left already. She looked infuriated when she walked out of her. She didn’t even wait for my response, she exited.

“Hey Guy, let me talk to your wife, I’ll be back. If

she doesn't banish me," I really don't want to talk to Mandisa. Frankly, I don't want to be insulted, blamed and yelled at again. Everything just seems to be my fault when in actual fact, I was helping. Sure, people got hurt – including myself – but this is not like playing barbie dolls. There are real criminals and police involved. Bloodshed was expected, but it was very unfortunate that Lucky was one of those hurt. But it is what it is...this is the life both Lucky and I chose so...

I came out and found her waiting outside the room.

"Sit" she demanded.

Oh bloody hell! She is about to give it to me again.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 39

MISSION

Noun

1. A set of tasks that fulfills a purpose or duty; an assignment set by an employer.

2. An ambition or purpose that is assumed by a person or group.

Lucky once said I was selfish and I thought he didn't mean it; he was just heartbroken. Now that I think about it, I am. I want Lucky to be

mine and mine alone. I want him to be my friend and my lover. I have come to the realization that I like the way he makes me feel. He makes me feel important and he looks at me like I'm a human being, like I'm the best thing his eyes ever rested upon. I have feelings for Lucky, I love him. I think this all explains why I always want to kiss him whenever I look at him.

But I'm afraid selfishness and pride have cost me him. He's married now and his wife is not very fond of me. Suffice to say, she hates me.

"What are you to Lucky?" she asked. I think I regret sitting down with her.

"I don't know," I'm being honest, "Only he can answer that". I don't know what Lucky regards me as. I don't know what position I hold in his life.

“Okay. What is he to you?” she’s not even looking at me.

“Mandisa, I’d love to sit here with you and get to know each other but Guy is...”

“Lucky, his name is Lucky,” she corrected me.

“Lucky just woke up from a coma and I’d rather not spend this time answering questions,”

“He’s asleep now. I’m sure a few minutes won’t kill him,”

“Fine. Look...Lucky loves you. I saw him on your wedding day, the way he looked at you,”

“He said your name that day and I’ve also seen the way he looks at you, Rainbow, no woman would be comfortable with that.”

“I’m sorry Mandisa. I know Lucky loves you and he wants to be with you and me being around is definitely unsettling. He has helped me through a lot and I just have to be there for him,”

“He told me what happened. He told me that you found Sammy’s killer, it was uncle Mhlongo,” I nodded. “I’m sorry I blamed you for what happened to him. That’s why I was crying earlier, I just couldn’t face you and also because it was my father’s friend whom I held in high esteem.”

“It’s okay but I want to know what happened? You and I were cool and then you just switched up on me. Did Zah say something to you,”

She nodded, “She told me that you were the reason Samke was killed and that you had slept with Lucky before. I fought with him about it and then I forgave him.” she stood. “I love him too you know and I can’t give him to you, I can’t let him go unless he decides that by himself. I won’t hold him back from coming to you,” she said. “Please don’t come here again. Don’t try to contact him, if he calls don’t pick up. Better yet, lose his number. I will go and be with my husband now,” again, she emphasized on ‘my’

“Can I at least say goodbye?” she shook her head.

“I think it’s best you don’t. Go and figure your life out Rainbow,” she walked into his room. I couldn’t feel the ground beneath me. I want to cry but my eyes are dry. I want to scream but I’m too tired and I don’t want to allow myself to get to that point. I might not be able to get myself back. I decided to sit down and gather myself. My phone rang, my heart nearly stopped when I read the caller ID

“IS DAD FINE?” I asked.

“OF COURSE, HE IS, YOU SILLY CHILD,” she said.

“ARE YOU DYING?” she never calls me. She never even sends a simple text to check if I’m alive.

“RAINBOW, DO I LOOK LIKE THE DYING TYPE TO YOU?”

“WELL, WHAT’S HAPPENING? IS EVERYTHING OKAY?”

“SEND ME YOUR ADDRESS, I WANT TO COME AND SEE YOU,” she demanded.

“OKAY...I WILL FORWARD IT TO YOU,” she ended the call without saying goodbye. Jah my mom neh, she’s cold. I requested an uber for myself and headed home.

I got home and tidied up a little but it’s no use, Cruella will find something anyway. Waiting for her made me very anxious, I don’t know what it is she wants to say to me. I eventually went to

fetch her downstairs. She was acting like she was in the ghetto, holding on to her LV handbag and walking like she might be shot at. Gosh my mom. I opened the door and invited her in.

“Dear me child, you’ve been living in this box? How do you even breathe in here?” she studied her surroundings.

“Mama, behave yourself please. I’m happy here,” I led her into the lounge. She put her things down and walked into the bedroom.

“Mom!” I called.

“Wait until I tell your daddy you’ve been staying in a shoe box,” she shouted from the room. If she only knew what I’ve been dealing with,

maybe she wouldn't be this annoying. Who am I kidding? My mom would criticize you in your coffin. She came and sat. "At least your sofas are nice. Very chic..." she rubbed on them.

"Oh my word! Are you going tell me why you came here? What do you want?" I grunted.

"Very well then," she sighed readying herself to speak. "Child what happened to your leg?"

"It's a long story. Now speak mama, my word!" I persisted.

"Your father and I are getting a divorce," she said.

“Oh. I think it’s for the best. Considering everything,” I said lowly.

“It was his call,”

“I don’t blame him.”

“I just came here to tell you that I’m sorry,” she says, “I might be the major cause of your traumas and I see that now. I am sorry,” I don’t know what to say to her now. I’m tongue tied. “Your father’s family was very strict on me. When I had the first miscarriage; they said things about me that would upset any woman. Child, I have traumas of my own and I see now that I’ve caused you a lot of sorrow growing up. I’m sorry I stole you from your mother and for neglecting you. You are a bright and beautiful girl Rainbow and I am so proud of you,” she

took my hand. This is too intimate for me; I don't know what to do or how to feel. "I know you and I can never have that mother-daughter relationship, especially since you found your real parents now but I want you to know that I'm here. We don't have to be strangers,"

"It's okay. I mean you fucked me up pretty deep but, there's nothing I can do now...." She reached for her bag then pulled out a little velvet box with a black ribbon on top.

"This is for you," she said. I took it and opened. It's a diamond necklace and earrings.

"These are beautiful," I admired, "Thank you,"

"Now child, these cost a fortune. I don't know

how you are going to keep them in this shoebox of yours. Maybe I will ask your father to get you a safe or a better yet, a nice, big and proper place around home,” her eyes grew wide and bright. “Since you are by yourself; you should get a gun. I can organize lessons for you...” she gasped excitedly. “We can do it together,”

“I know how to use a gun and I have one,”

“What are you talking about?” her hand came to her chest.

“I work for the police, I know how to shoot a gun,”

“Child, stop with all that nonsense.”

“Mama, I was kidnaped for 3 days, that’s how I injured my knee. I’m involved in pretty badass shit now.” I smirked.

Mama stayed around for a few more hours. I told her all about my new job and Lucky. I told her everything. She listened and asked questions like a real devoted mother. It made me feel important to her. She was so curious about my new life and the people I met along the way that she said she’d like to come back to my shoebox flat and chat some more. “You’re an odd one Rainbow,” she said to me at some point in our conversation. And I believed her, I am an odd one.

With things starting to make sense in my life, I am feeling lighter both in the heart and mind. As for Mandisa, I don’t know what I will do about

her. I don't know whether to listen or totally ignore her orders? But I'm certain Guy doesn't know about this and she won't tell him.

2 WEEK LATER

It's been peaceful and calm not like my usual days. I've been by myself mostly and the other times with my sister and her lover or wherever the colonel decides to send me for work. 2 days ago, I was in Johannesburg undercover as a sex worker. We found the pimp and arrested him. I felt so good after saving those girls, some didn't want to be saved but some needed saving desperately, some were reported missing years ago so being able to find them and return them to their families felt really good. And the salary has been so good, I'm enjoying this life in my little shoebox flat.

But I've been called in today and I'm excited for the next job. It's always scary but the adrenaline gives me such thrill. I swung the door open and found the colonel and a bunch of other detectives; including Monde and Sibeko. Lucky is here as well, what the fuck is happening?

"Sorry I'm late," I apologized.

"You haven't missed much sis, please sit," said Monde who was standing in front. Lucky didn't even look at me once. He kept his eyes forward. Nkonzo smiled at me and I smiled back. "So," she came over and gave me a file. "if we could all open to page 2. That's our guy, suspected to have girls locked in his basement cutting and packing cocaine for him. My source tells me he drugs the girls so he can control them, he

starves them and sometimes engages in sexual relations with them. the youngest is 14. Turn to page 3," we all did, "Those are the girls he is using and keeping against their will. We have to get him and not his men because we all know they won't turn on him."

"So that's drug possession, drug distribution, kidnapping, sexual assault and sexual misconduct with minors," says Sibeko. Monde nodded agreeing with him.

"He might have unlicensed weapons; you know how they are. I want every illegal thing this man has done to be revealed so his case won't even spend a day in court. I want him behind bars ASAP" she said. "Which brings me to our undergrounds officers. Lucky and Rainbow you are team1 Mr and Mrs Mthethwa, just moved in

next door and you are a friendly and loveable couple,” I nodded.

“Yes ma’am,” said Lucky.

“Gabhadiya you are with Sibeko on stakeout duty, Team2. Stay outside, keep your eyes open. Each team will have communication with the other and you will record every sudden movement. You will call in every suspicious movement, you hear me?”

“Yes ma’am,” we all said,

“Mthethwas, make yourselves visible to him. Bake him a cake, invite him over for dinner, whatever it takes to get him to trust you and invite you over. We need you inside.” she

passed me a little box, “Wear those earrings, we will be able to hear everything you are hearing and the necklaces will give us visuals, it has a camera so be very careful. It took everything for colonel to release those,”

“You break you pay,” said the colonel.

“Lucky,” she called, he also received a little box of his own. “The watch is waterproof so you may shower with it. it gives us both sound and visual,” he nodded studying it.

“They are all fingerprint operated, you will need to go upstairs and ask Steve to activate your fingerprints. Tap once to on and twice to off. Rainbow, the necklace and earrings are operated separately and the earring on the right operates both earring, got it?”

"I got it," I affirmed.

"Okay team," the colonel stood. "I trust you all, please be very careful and watch out for one another. Now, go home, pack a bag, rest because tomorrow it all starts. I lifted up my hand, "Yes Rainbow,"

"How long are we going to be there?"

"You'll leave when you have him. In the meantime, Monde will be getting you information on him. Are we all clear?"

"Clear colonel," Monde said packing up her papers. The room started clearing out but Lucky remained seated. He kept his eyes on me and I

just knew I also had to stay back. Nkonzo came up to me before he could leave.

“Hey” he said.

“Hey Nkonzo,”

“I’m happy to be working with you again. I was just wondering if you’d like to gab a coffee before our mission starts,”

“Can you give me a minute please, I’ll find you,”

He smiled, “Yeah! Of course,” he stepped out. It was just him and I now.

“Why are you here? you literally got out of a

coma just 2 week ago,”

“I’m fine Miss, where have you been?” he got up, walked around the table and came to me.

“I’ve been around...”

“That’s funny because I’ve been around too but I haven’t been seeing you. I’ve been calling and texting. Miss, did I do or say something?”

“Lucky, listen, I need to go but can we just be professional please. We don’t want to mess with this mission,”

“You need to go to your little boyfriend?” he took a step closer.

“Now you’re trippin’ and I am going,” just as I was about to turn away, he grabbed my arm.
“Lucky! Let me go, you are married. I couldn’t be around you anymore.”

“Even when I needed you Miss? You said you’d watch me sleep - when I woke up you were gone and you never came back to me,”

“Okay, I’m sorry. I’m sorry...” I cupped his face in my hands. I hurt him, that was very cruel. But I had no choice, his wife went all military on me.
“I...she...”

“Lucky” he took a quick step back at the sound of her voice. It’s her, It’s Mandisa. She caught me with my hands all over her husband.

“Can we leave?” I could tell she was mad.

“Hey Mandisa,” I greeted.

“Now Lucky,” she demanded. Lucky looked at me then walked up to his wife.

“Okay, let’s go...”

F**k! Mandisa probably wants to kill me now. If Lucky knows what’s best for him and his marriage, then he shouldn’t tell her the details of this mission. That’s if he even tells her the details of his work because the last time I checked; sis was not in the loop.



INSERT 40

CHAMELEON

(Plural: Chameleons)

1. A small to mid-size reptile of the family Chamaeleonidae, and one of the best-known lizard families able to change colour and project its long tongue.

2. A person with inconstant behavior; one able to quickly adjust to new circumstances

Everyday I feel myself falling back into my old ways. I am always fighting the urge to grab a

bunch of pills and take them down with wine. Instead I take coffee or just gym the urge away.

Starting this mission took everything in me. I have to pretend to be Lucky's wife and I'm in love with him. it's going to be very hard but...I signed up for this life so bottoms up folks. He's in the other room getting himself situated. We both agreed that he takes the master bedroom; I didn't want anything big. I just have an issue with big spaces. I grew up in them and they made me feel more alone. There's a knock on the door.

"Yes," he came in.

"I was thinking of cooking something. You hungry?" he asked.

“I’m always hungry,” I grinned in attempt to convince him that everything was completely normal. “I’ll take a walk outside. I want to scout our surroundings and get familiar quick!”

“Yeah sure, take some pictures if you can,”

I changed into my jogging attire and headed out. More than anything I want to be away from him. The energy is just too awkward and heavy. Perhaps maybe I’m doing him a favour for stepping out as well. I walked out the gate and headed down the road. I spotted our house immediately, let me go and knock. I know it’s crazy but I’m Rainbow.

I knocked and waited for the door to be opened.

A lady with a very long weave and nails opened.

“May I help you?” she asked stepping outside and closing the door a little.

“Hey, I’m...” fuck what’s my name. Monde never told us our names. She just said we are Mr and Mrs Mthetwa. “I’m Sindi Mthethwa. Your new neighbor” I smiled extending my arm forward to shake hers. “My husband and I just moved in next door,”

“Oh! I did see movement yesterday and today. Well, it’s nice to meet you, I’m Pinky” she gently moved her hair out of her face.

“I know a Pinky,” I giggled.

“You just need to know a third one and then you’ll have luck babe. You know what they say; third time’s the charm right,” Oh I’m Lucky alright.

“Well anyway; I thought I should come and say hi and please do not hesitate to come on over for drinks. You can meet my husband then...”

“Speaking of husbands. Lunga baby!” she shouted and in just a heartbeat. A tall light skinned fellow appeared shirtless with tattoos all over his arm. The one on his chest reads; GOD BLESS. “This our new neighbor, Sindi. She’s married too...”

“Nice to meet you,” he extended his arm forward, I held it and shook.

“You guys should come over some time for drinks. I’m sure you and Bongani will get along,”

“Yeah, we will one of these days, right sweetie?”
he looked down at his short wife. She’s very short, even shorter than me.

“All right then, let me get back to jogging,”

I headed on down the street, made a turn down their house and continued straight down. I spotted their bathroom and bedroom windows. I also spotted a back door that seems to have been shut for ages now. I took pictures and immediately sent to Lucky.

I walked in heaving and sweating but

immediately got excited because I gathered some intel and also because whatever Lucky was making in the kitchen smelled amazing.

“Good job with the pictures,” he said.

“Monde didn’t tell us he was married, her name is Pinky and he is Lunga,” I grabbed a glass and poured myself a glass of water from the fridge.

“Hold on, did you talk to them?” he asked.

“Yeah. I knocked and they opened, it’ll be easy to get through to them,”

“What the actual fuck Rainbow,” says Lucky sounding rather displeased.

“What? It’s the first day on this mission and we already have something,” I argued.

“What if something had happened to you?”

“Well then it would have happened,”

“This is not how we do things. We have to report this information to your sister and Grootboom and they didn’t give the go-ahead to gather it, this was really stupid Rainbow,”

“I just saw a moment and went for it, carpe diem!” I defended myself.

“There is no you anymore, it’s all about the team.

You can't do anything without running it by me or anyone in the team. Got it?"

"Lucky, okay...I got it," I went down the passage into my room. I quickly showered and then joined him in the kitchen.

"You smell nice," he said.

"Thank you. Your name is Bongani by the way and I'm Sindi," I thought I should throw that little piece of information in whilst things are still light. He looked at me cocking his head to the side. "I'm sorry I had to come up with a name quickly. Monde didn't give us names and our dad's name is Bongani," I pouted.

"Rainbow," he sighed. "Here let's get you fed,"

he made mac and cheese with mushrooms and bacon.

“How’s your wound?” I asked trying to make conversation.

“It’s like it was never there. It’s not in my nature to die,” that’s what Menzi said.

“Hey, I hope I didn’t get you in trouble with the vrou yesterday,” I glanced at him, he was staring at me.

“What happened Rainbow?” he dropped his fork in the bowl and watched me eat. “Why’d you leave me like that?”

“You want the truth?” I also dropped my fork and then pushed the bowl aside to give him my undivided attention. “Your wife happened,” I swallowed what remained of the food in my mouth. “She told me she knew you loved me and then said to never contact you again. I wanted to say goodbye Lucky but she didn’t allow and she is your wife, so...” I shrugged.

“Why didn’t you tell Menzi or come and tell me anyway? Since when do you do what you are told?” that last question raises a lot of questions.

“She was hurting because of me. I know I’d hate it if another woman was all over my husband...she hates me Lucky. But deep down I knew you and I would see each other again,”

“You knew about this mission?” he questioned.

“No, I just mean that, you’re Guy and I’m Miss. We’re like a coin and a magnet”

He smirked, “I thought I was the only one feeling that way,”

“Don’t do that Lucky.” I got up and took my bowl to the couch.

“Do what?” he followed me.

“Don’t smile like that at me, that’s practically cheating on your wife,” I took the remote and switched the tv on.

“For smiling at you?” he questioned.

“Lucky, please go...go to your room and call your wife. But stay away from me? I got stern.

“What the hell is wrong with you?”

“You are what is wrong with me you moron,” I switched the tv off.

“I was a pussy now I’m a moron, classic,” he said lowly, “Well then what did I do?”

“Don’t you get it, my word Lucky you are so annoying. We have very deep and strong feelings for each other that anything we do together or say to each other might lead to you

cheting on Mandisa and I truly don't want to hurt her. The sexual tension between us is heavy," I took a long breath. "Everytime I look at you, I just want to kiss you and hold you and just stay in your arms forever, but we can't do that. You and I are just a romantic tragedy." I can't believe I just said all of that.

"You know that it's always been you, right?"

"But you chose her," I said.

"Because you wouldn't choose me!" he shouted.

"You broke my fucking heart and I hate you for it. You told me you loved me when I was bleeding out, nah Miss," his breathing quivered.

"Lucky," I stood and got closer to him. "I'm

sorry," I whispered. I stood on my toes and wrapped my arms around his neck.

"You broke my heart," he cried.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I'm sorry Lucky. I'm really sorry...I didn't mean to make you cry," instead of holding me, I felt him pull away and push me away. I stepped back to assess him.

"I'm married." He turned around and went down the hall. He entered his room and shut the door. I can't cry! I will not cry. Never! I breathed in and out repeatedly until the urge to cry disappeared in my chest.

I heard a car door shut; it must be our neighbors. I peeked out the window and it was definitely

them.

“Lucky,” I called. “We got movement. Take out the trash,” Lucky came out running. “Is your device on?”

“Yes ma’am,” he picked up a fake trash from our ‘fake trash’ stash and dashed outside. I ran into Lucky’s room where we had the computer and all our equipment set up. I quickly connected Lucky’s watch. Now I can see what he’s seeing and can hear him. I connected with the outside team as well.

“Team2 come in” I said,

“We are in,” that’s Sibeko. “Lucky, there’s a very tiny button on your watch, just press that once

for me” he said. In a matter of seconds, my view was zoomed.

“That’s much better,” said Nkonzo.

“I think he’s bringing in new girls,” says Lucky.

“We have proof, let’s call it in,” ordered Nkonzo.

“No! we can’t. They are just young girls walking into a house. We need evidence beyond reasonable doubt.”

“Yes ma’am,”

“Lucky, I need you to be very still, I want to try and scan at least one of the faces,”

I'm watching carefully at what is before my eyes. These girls look so young and scared but we can't go in now. I know Colonel will say exactly what I said; that it's just girls walking into a house, no criminal activity there, even though you can clearly tell they are shit scared. Wait wait wait...

"Lucky, that man that just walked in," I said.

"which one, the black suit?" he asked.

"What's up, you recognize him?" asked Sibeko,
"It's dark so we might not see clearly,"

"That's Ndumiso Gumede," I uttered sick to my stomach.

“What? Ndumiso Gumede as in your husband?” asked Lucky.

“It’s him. I’d recognize his shadow anywhere. Come back Lucky, this just got bigger than we thought,”

“Are you sure it’s him?” he questioned.

“Yes!” I firmly said. My chest is burning up right now I can’t even think straight. Ndumiso is like a fucking Chameleon. He keeps adjusting to every single situation and environment. This motherf***er threw me under the bus and then started a new illegal venture. Bloody hell. I will take him down. I swear he will die behind bars; I was too f***ng soft and nice to him because I’m an actual human being, but that did me no good. This time I won’t be.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

P.S: the bonus will be posted later today♡

INSERT 41

STOP

Verb

1. To cease moving
2. To come to an end

My mama used to say, “Tumelo, in this world you need to be as wise as a serpent and as gentle as dove,” I never understood what she meant by that until years later when I was grown and realized that from her advice – I only followed the latter. I’ve always been very gentle and so I never bothered to be wise. I was married to Ndumiso, I mastered his every movement. I got to understand the twitching of his eyebrow and the very squinting of his eyes. I understood his breathing, tone, volume, disposition and body language. His outfits became a language only I could understand and interpret. He wore navy suits when he has important business people to impress, and black when he has illegal meetings and delinquents to scare.

I should have seen him coming. I should have known that he was going to come; that’s if he

even left in the first place. I booked him a ticket to Mexico and took him to the airport. I watched him get inside the plane and then left. I left before he took off. he must have gotten off

“How can I be so stupid?!” I banged on the table.

“Rainbow, come on. You can’t have seen that coming. And we are not sure if it’s him,”

“I am telling you Guy, that is Ndumiso. I know, I know him. And I should have seen this coming. I should have known that he was busy maneuvering his way back to the top...this time he is not just abusing me Lucky, he is abusing innocent young girls. Fuck!”

“We will get him,” he assured.

“We have to. This isn’t right...something isn’t right” I paced up and down. Lucky was sitting on the kitchen stool listening to me rant. “It’s all too smooth.”

“How do you mean?” he asked.

“I don’t know Lucky but something is just not sitting right...and I need to find it. I need to find him. Maybe I should go over there now”

“Negative” he disputed.

“Maybe we will catch them red handed. We can deliver two instead of one,”

“Not going to happen. It’s a rookie move and you know it,” he got up, took my hand and looked into my eyes. “Look at me,”

“Guy, this is not the time to...”

“Look into my eyes Miss,” he persisted, I obliged. “Who are you looking at?”

“Guy” I answered.

“And I’m looking at Rainbow” he took my hand and rested it on his face and smiled. I waited for him continue with this analogy, but he just gazed into my eyes like a little puppy love struck.

“Okay, so what?” I couldn’t help but smile too.

“Oh! Nothing, I just wanted you to calm down.”
he said. I shut my eyes and giggled under my
breath. Only Lucky can get me like this.

“Fine, you win. I’m calm”

“Would you like some ice cream mademoiselle?
Your sister stocked it for us,”

“She knows I love ice cream. When I go to her
place, I finish whatever little they have; poor
things just by it for me now,” I sighed. He didn’t
say anything, he just kept my eyes in place.

“Can I remove my hand now?”

“Sure,” he whispered. In my attempt to head to the fridge he grabbed my arm and pulled me to his chest and kissed me. I pulled away instantly and slapped him. I didn’t mean to do that.

“Lucky” he kissed me again. Oh my word it feels so good. His lips all over mine make me weak. It makes every part of me tremble and sends very satisfying chills down my spine. “Stop,” I stopped and looked away. His lips rested on my cheek. He held me tight against his chest that I just wanted to cry. He started kissing my neck softly and gently. I exhaled tremulously. “This isn’t right,” I stuttered.

“It’s just sex,” he whispered in my ear.

“No,” I shook my head taking a step back. “It’s not anymore,” I cleaned my eyes. I could not

keep my tears at bay. “You’re married,” I marched into my room and gathered myself. I will not ruin this mission because of love. This is my job, my life and more importantly, Ndumiso is involved so I need to sober up.

Some time later, he came to tell me to sleep, that he’d take first watch. He called me an hour or so later when he spotted a man in a black suit coming out of the house. and it was him indeed, it was Ndumiso. Eventually I ended up falling asleep. Thank God. I woke up at 5 and relieved him. He said there hasn’t been movement since Ndumiso left with two other men.

“Team1 come in, over” Sibeko’s voice sounded over the walkie-talkie.

“This is Team1,”

“You have company coming at you, be ready, over,” I looked out the window and saw Pinky in gym wear sauntering towards my door.

“Roger that, team1 over and out,” I hid the walkie-talkie then ran to the kitchen and boiled water. The doorbell rang. “Act normal,” I said to myself. I open and there she was sweating and breathing heavily. “Hey, Pinky. Good morning,” I cheerfully said.

“Good morning,” she said. “I just finished my jog and I thought I should come by and say hello,”

I stepped aside, “Please come in” she glided in, “Please sit, can I offer you some water, juice,

tea?”

“Water will do just fine please,” she sat on the stool and watched me walk around this kitchen that is supposedly mine. Thankfully, I had water yesterday when I came back from my jog so I know where to open and where to not. “Thank you,” she immediately drank. “So, where is your husband?” she asked.

“He is asleep, he slept very late last night watching soccer, men” I rolled my eyes.

“Tell me about it, my log is still asleep too,” we laughed hysterically like any two girls would when gossiping.

“Oh, I think he’s up,” I said, “I hear flushing”

“I hope we didn’t wake him up,”

“Honey,” I called.

“We definitely woke him up. We girls just can’t seem to keep it together when we laugh,” Lucky appeared wearing boxers only.

“Good morning,” he greeted.

“Jesu,” she clapped once startling Lucky. “Sindi Mo’ghel. You didn’t tell me your husband was a snack; a dark chocolate snack even. Do you want to switch,” Lucky came over and kissed my forehead.

“Hey babe,” he said.

“Hey, baby, this is Pinky our next-door neighbor. Remember I told you about her and her husband,”

“Oh yes! It’s a pleasure to meet you ma’am,” she lifted her hand up as though in deep worship.

“He called me ma’am. Marry me...”

“I already have my hands full here,” his arm rested right on my waist. We laughed.

“Would you like some tea love? While I make breakfast?” I looked up at him. his lips curved up at the corner.

“Let me take a shower first,” I nodded. He leaned in and planted a soft kiss on my lips and it was so obvious that it was for his own benefit. But I had to play along. “You’re a lovely wife,” he kissed me again.

“And you are a lovely husband,” I said. He walked away.

“Nice to meet you neighbor,” he sang.

“Nice to meet you too chocolate husband,” her eyes found mine, except hers were wide open and excited. “You guys are soulmates,”

“I’d kill myself if we weren’t” I started taking food items to get breakfast ready for my ‘husband’.

“You know what? As a ‘welcome to the neighborhood’ gift, why don’t you and Mbongeni come over for supper, let me cook for you.”

“Oh are you sure,” I have to be modest first.

“Please, I’d love for our lovers to meet, it seems like you and I are hitting it off well,”

“Then we will definitely be there, you can count on that,”

“It’s a date,” she blushed.

I walked her out then marched into Lucky’s room,

“Jesus Christ Miss,” he quickly grabbed a towel and hid his penis.

“It’s nothing I haven’t seen,” I planted my feet right before his.

“Yeah but, I don’t want you to see in lanky and hanging. I like it when you see it hard,”

“Guy!” I squeezed my eyes shut ridding my head of the picture of his hard penis. “I saw what you did there, kissing me and stuff,”

“You’re my wife,” he shifted his weight to one side.

“Pretend wife,” I corrected.

“That’s what I was doing – pretending” he defended himself.

“I’m watching you, chocolate husband,”

“Okay fine, I’m sorry.” I kept his eyes in place.

“I forgive you, but first,” I pulled the towel away.

“What the fuck?!?!” he cried trying to take it with one hand while the other covered down there. I kept moving it from one hand to another making him work for it, “Rainbow, stop playing around. We are on a mission and we need to get serious,”

“take the towel then,” when he tried to grab it, I pulled it away and threw it on my other hand. Finally! I decided to have mercy on him. His other hand had stopped being a shield so his junk was just hanging and bouncing around. “Don’t mess with me,” I walked out feeling triumphant.

“You know you will pay for this right?”

“Whatever,” I shouted making my way back to the kitchen.

I got started with breakfast. I have my eggs boiling now I’m busy chopping mushrooms into smaller chunks.

“You are naughty Rainbow,” he said. “Do we

have beer?" he asked already by the fridge.

"Yeah, I'm sure I saw some,"

The next thing; I felt his hand rubbing my vagina back and forth over my underwear.

"What are you doing?" a trembling whisper came out of my mouth. I tried backing away but my efforts were to no avail.

"You know I can make your knees shake," he said into my ear then kissed my neck. "I can make you say my name ever so passionately,"

"Lucky," I moaned.

“My point exactly.” He kissed my neck. He kept rubbing and rubbing and kissing and kissing. I was losing control. “I can toss and turn you into any position and make you scream. If anything, I’m watching you Rainbow,” he grabbed my boob and squeezed, it was painful but I derived pleasure from the pain. He tucked his hand inside my panties and inserted his middle finger inside of me. “Should I stop?” he asked nibbling my earlobe gently. I squeezed onto the edge of the counter and let out a quivering cry. His finger didn’t move, he just inserted it. “Tell me what to do Miss, your wish is my command,” added, “Should I stop?”

“Don’t stop, continue,” I regretfully gave in. He pushed his finger in making me bite onto my lips harder than usual. He removed his finger, pulled my panties down, bent me over and then inserted his penis. I gasped as my squeezed on

the counter got tighter.

Dear Lord, what are we doing? What am I doing?
What is he doing?

#bonusinsert

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 42

CAVALRY

Noun

1. (in the past) soldiers who fought on
horseback

2. Used to refer to a source of help or rescue in an emergency, especially as a last resort.

The mind is both a kind and evil thing. It's ability to let you think happy thoughts and let you imagine things that aren't as though they were, and to haunt you as though it isn't a part of you, as though it is an entity capable to completely exist outside of you is impeccable. We live in our heads more than we do in the real world. In our heads we have everything we can imagine. We can be wealthy, we can be royals, we can be heroes and everything we want to be. Heck we can be loved by those we love, we can exist in a perfect world where the heart can really speak so when people say, "listen to your heart" it makes total sense because that is just how it is. And when you do listen to your heart; there's no casualties because you are doing what's best for you, you are not being selfish.

I've imagined how it would be like when Lucky comes knocking at my door breathing heavily because he had been running and then when I open for him, he'd speak amid huffing and puffing. He'd tell me that he left Mandisa for me, and that he loved me so much if he spent another minute without me, he'd die of heartache. Then I'd cry and respond by saying I've been waiting for him to tell me that and then, just like in the movies, we'd kiss, he'd carry me in his arms like a groom would his bride then we'd make love the whole night.

Passionate love. That fantasy gives me a place to visit when I close my eyes. It creates a safe space for me to not be haunted by my past.

But, like I had mentioned before; the mind is both kind and evil. When the sun comes up, it would haunt me with my past and mock me

with my traumas. Would display my failed marriage with Ndumiso and make me question my worth and why Lucky would leave a perfect person such as Mandisa and come to a shack of despair, woe and great? Then it would dangle a picture of sad Mandisa crying because Lucky left her for me making me ashamed of even imagining Lucky leaving her for me.

That's a very powerful power to have, especially for something that cannot be seen, felt, touched or heard. It almost does not exist but yet its existence is both life-saving and threatening.

Guy and I fell asleep on the couch, I'm not sure for how long but it's been a little while. I can feel him breathing against my neck, he's still asleep. I carefully got up without disturbing him. Had a glass of water then bathed. After that I went to wake him up so he could freshen up, we still have that supper with our neighbors. We asked

Monde to get us an expensive bottle of wine to gift them with. They look like the beer type of people, but it's wine, it'll come in handy. And Monde delivered.

"You got your watch?" I asked while he was locking our door.

"Yes ma'am," he says. "You look good."

"Thank you, Guy," we made our way to our neighbors' holding hands like any married couple would. He rang the bell and our guy opened, they immediately gelled.

"the wife's in the kitchen, Sindi," said Lunga pointing me in the direction of the kitchen. I left them to be boys and joined her. I found her dishing up with an apron on.

“Hey girl,” I said.

“Hey baby,” she opened her arms and gave me a swift hug then rushed back to her pots and plates. “Thank you for coming, I went all out for you guys,”

“I can see, it smells amazing. Look at you being a good wife and everything,” a loud laughter came from the lounge. We looked at each other and smiled.

“I guess the two logs like each other,” she says.

“Sounds so...” while trying to keep our conversation going, I’m also looking around the kitchen for anything suspicious. And so far,

there's a door which I assume is the one I saw when I was jogging, the one that seemed to have been locked for ages. "Your house is very big..." I wanted to start a conversation that would lead me to talking about that door.

"It is, we have family and friends come over every now and again," she says still concentrating on dishing.

"The bedrooms are obviously upstairs, how many?" I took the salad and helped her dish.

"Thanks doll...hmm we have 4 bedrooms, including the master suit,"

"We have 3. Each room has a bathroom,"

“Yeah same here too, then we have another bathroom at the end of the passage,”

“I thought that was the downstairs bathroom,” I said pointing at the door.

“Oh no,”

“What’s that then?”

“That’s just...hmmm, storage for Lunga’s things and mine...just things we don’t use anymore,” Bingo. That’s our door. I need to get through there.

“Let me put these on the table, I’ll be back just now,” she zoomed out. I switched on my

devices.

“Team2, can you hear me?” I called.

“This is Team2,” Nkonzo responded. “We are with you,”

“I am giving you a visual of a door, she seemed very hostile talking about it. I think that’s the same door I saw yesterday from outside,”

“Give us a minute, we’ll try and get the schematics of the house,”

“Is Lucky on,” I asked.

“Negative. Please find a way to get him on,”

says Sibeko.

“How?” I asked, “I can’t particularly ask him to switch on his spying device so the cops can listen in on us and possibly come in to arrest the people that invited us over,” I heard Nkonzo laughing.

“You have a funny way of using words Rainbow,” he said amidst cackling.

“Now now, you are married to him, just touch him...I don’t know,”

I sighed, “Okay, I’ll get him in,”

“Are you okay?” she asked

“Yeah, just admiring your beautiful home. I love the cupboards,”

“Okay,” her eyes darted between myself and the door. She’s very insecure about that door. I can just see it. “Please grab the spoons and let’s go and dig in,”

“alright got you,”

We finally sat around the dinner table and ate.

“So, Lunga, what do you do?” asked Lucky.

“I’m a pharmacist,” he says ever boldly. A pharmacist...wow. That’s a little far-fetched.

“That’s wonderful,” I exclaimed. “Mbongeni owns taxis,” I boasted.

“I hear that it’s very dangerous but also brings in a lot of money,” mentioned Pinky.

“That’s true, its very dangerous but the money is good so,” Lucky stopped to swallow, “There’s no stopping me,” he looked at me, “I mean being able to provide for my lovely wife the life she deserves makes me sleep better. She deserves the world and I would do absolutely anything and I mean anything Lunga to make sure she isn’t suffering,” I see what he’s trying to do.

“And we all have to make a living one way or the

other. Even if it means dodging a few bullets and hiding from the Blue bloods every now and again," I backed him up.

"Blue blood?" Lunga came in, "You mean you have them at your tail too?" the fact that he said 'too' means he has had some involvement with police in the past and I love how Lucky is trying to get Lunga to trust him.

"I'm a taxi owner, I'm bound to have the police at my tail," he says. "What about you guys?" he inquired. "Ever get mixed in that kind of mess?" they looked at each other. Pinky seems to be panicking.

"Not really, just small issues. I'm sure not as serious as yours," says Lunga. Under the table, I reached for Lucky's arm. I could see him

looking at me from the corner of my eye. He then cleared his throat.

“What’s the time babe?” My eyes bore into his. He looked at his watch then back at me,

“It’s 22:20 love,” he slipped his hands under the table. In a few seconds I heard Sibeko’s voice in my ear.

“WE GOT HIM, GOOD JOB”

“So, Pinky, you have to give me a house tour,” I smiled at her.

“Definitely!” she got up, reached her hand out for me to hold. “We will be back just now,”

“Don’t take too long now. It’s time to leave,” said my husband. I mean my pretend husband.

We walked through every door and I pretended to be listening to her blabber on about the design of each room. Seems she decorated the house herself. Lastly, she took me to the master suit.

“So, this is where the magic happens,” I teased.

“I guess,” she rolled her eyes. “Can you keep a secret?” I nodded approaching her. “Sometimes he gets very aggressive with me,”

“What?!?” I cried, “Does he hit you?”

“Shhhh” she rushed to close the door. “No, he’s just a man. He doesn’t hit me...let’s go,” I heard a loud thud coming from beneath us.

“What was that?” we looked at each other.

She took my hand and dragged me out, “It’s nothing,” she pulled me downstairs where we found our husbands.

“Did you guys hear that sound?” I wanted his reaction. “It sounded like it was coming from underneath your house,”

“I told you it was nothing,” she forced a smile. “Thank you for coming. Let me walk you out,”

After we said our rushed goodbyes, Lucky and I walked home.

“Team2, anything?” I asked.

“There is a basement and that door you saw leads there” said Nkonzo.

“Lucky. I think Pinky is held against her will too,”

“Yeah I noticed that,” he agreed with me. “I think Lunga is hitting her too,”

“She blurted out that he gets aggressive at time but I think she got scared before she could get into detail,”

“Listen, we scanned her face, the system is still searching for her. Let’s hope she was reported missing,”

“I need to go back...” I announced. Lucky stopped opening the door and looked at me.

“Never going to happen,” he decided. He finally opened and then locked once we were in,

“Go back and say what though?” asked Sibeko.

“Sibeko, no...they’ll be onto us. Its enough for today,” argued Lucky.

“I will go to the door and try to open from

outside while you guys cover me,” I explained.
“Listen, Pinky might be in danger. For all we know Lunga might be hitting her right now because of the sound we heard,”

“Miss, we can’t just...”

“Go,” Sibeko ordered.

“Not going to happen,” he protested,

“Lucky, right now I am your superior. If I say she’s going then she’s going,” Lucky stared at me. I have to go there. I have to at least try. I’ve been a victim of abuse before, so I’m well aware of what he might be doing to her right now.

It took at least an hour for Lucky to teach me how to open a padlock using just two bobby pins. I had my gun with me and made sure that my devices were on and connected. I did exactly what Lucky told me and it opened. I pulled down the door handle, careful not to make a noise, I pulled the door open and found a bunch of girls terrified to death each in a sleeping bag.

“Shhhh, police” I whispered. “Are you guys seeing this?” I asked.

“goddammit!” Lucky’s voice sounded. “Look at this,”

“Call in the cavalry,” I ordered.

“Please help us,” one of the girls cried.

“Don’t worry, help is coming. I won’t leave you here. Where are the drugs?” they looked at each other I’m guessing scared to answer. “If you guys need help you will have to speak up. Where are the drugs?” one’s eyes travelled and rested on the curtain hung up at the end of this room. I marched up to it and pulled it to the side. “Where the fuck is Monde?” I found the drugs. I found everything, it’s all in here.

“Hang tight Miss, I’m coming,” the door swung shut.

“Lucky, please tell me that was you,” my breathing got heavy.

“Oh no!” they started crying.

“I’m still in the house, what happened?”

“The door just closed,”

“Hmmm...Team1, we might have a problem.”

Said Nkonzo, “Your friendly neighbors have visitors, they don’t look like nice visitors,”

“Fuck! Nkonzo, look at the schematics again and find me a way out, A.S.A.P”

“I did and there’s 2. One just shut and the other will need you to go up the stairs and that is out,”
I ran to the door and tried to open, it didn’t open.
Fuck! I could hear footsteps thudding from upstairs.

“We’re fucked. Where’s back-up?” I’m really panicking now.

“They’re 5 minutes away” Sibeko answered.

“Can you tell them to make it 5 seconds,”

“There’s someone standing outside the door Rainbow. I can’t see them clearly but it’s a male about your height Nkonzo.”

“What could be happening?” asked Sibeko

The door on the top of the stairs opened, I quickly hid under a table that had gas cylinders lined up in front of it.

“Who has been here?” that’s Lunga. The girls didn’t respond. “bi***s I don’t have time. Who was here?” the girls still didn’t answer.

“Okay, let’s play a game, I ask a question, you answer and if you don’t, you die” That’s Ndumiso’s voice. “Did someone come in here?”

“Yes,” one of them gave in.

“Who?” he asked. The girls stayed silent. A gun went off, the girls screamed on the top of their lungs. I think he killed one the girls or maybe just hurt them.

“Stay put Miss,” Guy said to me.

“I need to make myself,” I whispered. I felt like there was a bag of cement in my chest.

“Don’t you fu****g dare!” Lucky reprimanded.

“It was a lady...she...”

“It was me” I came out with my hands up.

“Damn you Rainbow, how can you bloody do that?” Lucky shouted. He was going to kill these girls. I couldn’t let that happen.

“Sindi?!?” Lunga called

“Who in world is Sindi?” Ndumiso came up to me, “This just got very interesting.”

“You know her?” Lunga inquired.

“Know her? that’s an understatement, I fucked her...she’s my wife,”

“Was” I corrected him. He slapped me.

“Her name is Rainbow and I should be asking you what she’s doing here?” he turned his attention to Lunga. One of the girls was shot in the head, her body was lifeless in a pink sleeping bag.

“She’s my new neighbor” he looked at me and smirked. “You’re with the fu****g police, aren’t you? All that talk about the Blue bloods was just...okay” things started making sense to him.

“She can’t, I know her, she’s took weak for that.”
I smiled at Ndumiso. He marched up to me and punched me. I fell and stayed down. I wanted to cry so bad but I couldn’t. Ndumiso is getting arrested tonight and he will not give him the satisfaction of seeing me cry.

“Miss, don’t get up. stay down!” Guy ordered.
“Monde is here with back-up”

“You are doing great sis,” Monde’s voice came through.

“LUNGA HADEBE, YOUR HOUSE IS
SURROUNDED. I HAVE MEN READY TO SHOOT
AT YOU AND YOUR MEN IF YOU REFUSE TO
COOPERATE. YOU HAVE TWO MINUTES TO

COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP” said Monde over a megaphone.

“Boom” I whispered.

“Boom” Guy said.

“You b**ch!” I trust Ndumiso to lose his temper.

“The cavalry’s here!” I said still down. He got closer and kicked me in the stomach.

“You s**t! b***h! W***e!” he continued to kick me while insulting me. I switched off the devices so my sister and Lucky could not hear what he was doing to me. Lucky was already losing his head threatening to come in.

“Give it up Ndumiso,” I said trying to stand on my knees. It seems Lunga ran upstairs.

“You know I always resurface. I will come back and you will regret ever crossing me you son-of-a-b***h,” the door broke open, the police came in flooding in with guns ready to shoot at the bastard.

“Hands up, put the gun down,” there’s about 10 officers pointing their gun at him, he can either walk out of here alive or handcuffed.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

#happymonday

#happyreading

INSERT 43

SELF-DEFENSE

Noun

1. The means of defending oneself from physical attack.
2. The right to protect oneself against violence by using reasonable force, can be used as justification in several charges including murder, assault and battery,

There's always a way. Nowadays, you have ways around everything, it's easy to rig the system, games, almost everything if you are

smart enough. You can get away with murder, that is how much we have loopholes in almost everything.

I watched them handcuffing Ndumiso and escorting him outside. The girls were covered in blankets and also escorted outside.

“You okay ma’am,” asked one of the police officers.

“Yes,” I smiled. “I’m okay. He hits like a girl, don’t worry...”

He chuckled, “Please come with me,” he escorted me outside. “Your lover had to be held down, he was ready to come and get you himself,”

“He’s not my lover,” I corrected.

“Rainbow” Lucky and Monde shouted simultaneously running up to me.

“Did someone tell them I was dead?” I asked the officer escorting me.

“I guess they just love you,”

“I guess so,” I chuckled. I like the way I’m feeling. Watching them run up to me; it means they really do love me and they don’t want to lose me. I matter, I’m important.

The three of us collided and hugged.

“What happened?” asked Monde, “Did your devices break,”

“She switched them off,” Lucky answered. “Why Rainbow? You don’t ever shut your team out, we thought you were fucking dead”

“I’m not. I’m here...”

“Still, you don’t shut your team members out. You never do that, especially if one of them is your sister,”

“You guys sound like the same record. I’m sorry,” Guy pulled me into his chest and hugged me.

“You are trouble Miss, don’t do that to me. you did the same thing with the diamond job and it freaked me out,”

“Because you were annoying me,” I corrected him making myself comfortable in his chest.

“Either way, my heart can’t take it.” I looked up at him.

“What’s the safe word?” I asked.

“Cookies,” he kissed my forehead and sighed in relief.

“So long as you didn’t hear me say it, then I’m still playing,”

“Yes ma’am,”

“Soooo, why aren’t you guys dating again?”
Monde disturbed our little moment.

“Oh my god!” my heart started beating faster, I
looked at Guy then at my sister.

“What is it?” Lucky was immediately in panic
mode.

“Pinky,” I got really scared, “Where is Pinky?”

“Detective Jele,” an officer called.

“Yes,”

“We’ve discovered another body, female,” we both ran up to the cop.

“Where?” I asked.

“Follow me,” he led the way. We walked into their house and climbed the stairs, He led us into the master bedroom. My heart fell to my stomach as I laid eyes upon the body of Pinky, beaten to the pulp. “She was beaten alright, but it was strangulation that killed her,”

“I should have been here sooner; I should have known that he was...” I feel sick and hot. I want to vomit. The top of my head is burning, “I need air,”

“Lucky, get her out of here” said Monde. I was

getting lightheaded. My heart is heavy, I feel like I'm dying. I think I'm dying. Legend has it that the moment you die is the moment you finish your calling in life. Maybe I have fulfilled my calling and this is my time to exit.

I felt my feet touch the ground and the fresh breeze of the night was hitting against my face slowly drawing me back to reality.

"You okay?" Lucky was standing before me with his hand in my face. I nodded. "say something," he said.

"Something," I breathed out slowly, "Where's Lunga?" I asked.

"Back of one of vans," Ndumiso was on the ground, his hands cuffed with his head down,

an officer helped him.

“Hold on,” I watched the officer and Ndumiso walk to the van. But just before he could get in, “Ndumiso,” I called. He looked back at me. “I hope you die in prison,”

“I don’t die love; I will come back and kill you.” He chuckled.

“I have a friend behind bars, very dangerous man. He told me he knows a crew that takes care of men like you, men who beat women.” I smiled. “You’re weak,”

“Shut up!”

“Miss, let him go...”

“You are a weak and insecure man. You abuse woman because you know they are stronger than you. You silenced me, beat me, broke me and made sure I could not be anything but what you made me because you knew I was going to be greater than you ever were,”

“That’s not true,” his nostrils opened.

“When you get to jail, you’ll know what a real dick is not that Vienna you were tickling me with for years,” he screamed and charged towards me. “3...2...” I counted down while pulling my Glock out.

“Rainbow,” Lucky tried to pull me from the bull

charging at me but I know what I'm doing so I pushed him out of the way

“BOOM!” I shot twice at Ndumiso. He fell to the ground like a log fall from a tree.

“Rainbow, you killed a man,” says Lucky.

“It was self-defence. He was attacking me...”

“You did that purpose, didn't you?” Lucky uttered.

“What the hell happened here?” Monde came out running.

“He was charging for me, I got scared. He did hit me inside and for 3 years of our marriage so

I was scared of what he might do. I shot him in self-defence,” I explained. She looked at me not buying any of what I was saying but I could tell she was going to play along.

“Alright, though an investigation will be done but I’m certain your fellow men saw what happened,”

This is what I meant when I said there is always a way around everything. You just need to be desperate enough and smart enough and you’ll find it. You can rig and cheat your way of anything and get away with it. A few days ago, I came across a video talking about how shooting someone in the back suggests that you wanted them dead, its premediated murder. Shooting them in less threatening parts of the body might suggest that you just wanted to

scare them, get them to go away or whatever. And then, shooting them in the chest screams they were attacking you and that can constitute as self-defence. Reducing Ndumiso's masculinity was certainly going to aggravate him make him lash out. The beast awoke and charged for me, I had to defend myself.

I shoved the gun in Lucky's chest, turned away from them then vomited. I don't know why I feel so sick. I am literally sweating and shaking.

"It's probably shock," said Monde.

"Or something I ate at earlier..."

"It's late, I think you guys can camp here and leave tomorrow,"

"I need to go home...I'll leave," announced Lucky.

“I’ll camp, I don’t feel so good,”

By 2am, it was as though there wasn’t a swamp of men in blue bringing out criminals and dead bodies. Their house was obviously cordoned to ward off anyone wanting to go in. That house was now a crime scene, 3 people died today and one of them is not a loss.

Lucky is in his room packing, I’m in mine laying on the floor and staring at the ceiling. It feels surreal, I’m alive and Ndumiso isn’t. I killed him. I smiled a little. I can do anything and go anywhere without having to look over my shoulder. I don’t know this feeling - this feeling of freedom is something I’ve never felt before. I want to go swimming...or maybe climb a mountain. I should go mountain climbing. I

deserve it, I deserve a vacation. I've been working pretty damn hard and I need a break. Yeah! That's what I'm going to do.

I went to Lucky's room, all excited.

"Do you want to go mountain climbing?" I asked.

"Miss, it's 2 in the morning,"

"Not now silly. Maybe next week..."

"I can't, I'm sorry," he zipped his bag. "When are you going back?" he asked.

"When the sun comes up..." Guy is being very weird for someone who nearly died because I was in danger. "Is everything okay?" I asked.

"Did I do something wrong?"

“No, I’m just tired Miss,” his phone rang and he immediately picked it up. “Love,” he walked into the bathroom to speak to his wife. I got up to leave, I thought I should just stay out of his way. “Rainbow,” he called before I could shut the door.

“Yeah”

“Can we talk for a sec?”

“Sure,” I took small steps towards him. “What’s up”

“Can we talk about what happened last night?”
he says.

“I’m listening,” I know that Guy is about to hurt me. I can always see it coming from a mile away. He’s always darting his eyes around when he’s going to say or do something that is going to cause me great sadness.

“It can’t happen again,” he shook his head.

“hmmm, okay” I uttered. My heart is actually burning but the trick is never to give the person hurting you the satisfaction of seeing you cry. Guy knows how I feel about him and I understand that him and I cannot be together. But I didn’t start last night, he did but he’s phrasing it in such a way that it seems like I came on to him. I guess playing along makes you as guilty as starting it.

“I mean, it was amazing. Sex with you is always amazing but...”

“You’re married,” I finished off his sentence.

“Yep!”

“Okay, cool...get home safe,” I smiled and went to my room. It’s whatever really...I wasn’t expecting him to move in with me. Even though it’s no longer just sex, it was just sex.

I woke up this morning, at 7am, went for a jog around the house then prepared myself to leave. Nkonzo offered to drop me off at my flat and I accepted his offer. I still don’t have my car. I took my little bag and waited for him downstairs.

Not so long after he came in with flowers in hand.

“These are for you,” he handed them to be. Sunflowers and red roses, it’s a beautiful combination.

“Thank you, what are these for?”

“Nothing, just thought I should get you something nice.” He smiled.

“I love them, thanks...shall we get going,” out of nowhere Nkonzo attempted to kiss me, I stepped away from him dodging that kiss. “What are you doing?” wide eyes, I asked.

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have done that. I really like you Rainbow and...”

“Stop!” I ordered. “Stop liking me. You are a very charming and good-looking guy but I don’t like you like that. And I don’t want to string you along...I’m just in a very awkward yet amazing point in my life and so I just want to figure that out.”

“I understand,” he grinned. “Thank you, for being honest.” He opened his arms for a hug which I entertained, “Friends and colleagues?”

“Friends and colleagues,”

He carried my bag to his car and we were off. I

tried to be as normal as possible with Nkonzo after that cringe worthy stunt he pulled. He asked me about Lucky and I was honest about everything and it was kind of nice having a genuine conversation with him. Our flowing conversation was disturbed by an incoming call from Monde.

“WHERE ARE YOU?” she asked.

“WITH NKONZO, HE’S TAKING ME HOME,”

“HE’S NOT DEAD?”

“WHO IS NOT DEAD?” I asked.

“NDUMISO...HE IS NOT DEAD”

“HE IS. WE ALL SAW, I SHOT HIM,”

“COLONEL JUST CALLED ME; SAYS HE JUST RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE HOSPITAL. HE IS UNCONSCIOUS BUT VERY MUCH ALIVE,”

In an instant, that feeling I felt of freedom evaporated. Anger took over my heart and my whole body. Is Ndumiso a cat? Like does he literally have 9 lives?

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 44

PREGO

Adjective

1. Pregnant

2. A pregnant person

It's been a week and a few days since our mission and I haven't gathered the strength to go and visit Ndumiso. If I see him, I will want to end him and the issue is that he has a guard outside his room 24/7, he's a wanted criminal so the government is playing it safe with him. Lucky and I haven't spoken since the last day of our mission, I've been trying to call him but I can't get him. I stopped about 2 days ago when I saw that he was online on WhatsApp. That only meant he was ignoring me. I figured this was the long-awaited time. The time where we drift apart and never speak again. It's sad

course him and I might bump into each other at work or even go undercover together. But I'm a big girl, I can handle myself and I have no loyalties to anyone so I can sleep with whoever I want, whenever I want; but not now though or in the next few months. I'm pregnant.

I don't know how to feel or what to do. I haven't told anyone yet – not even my sister. As for Lucky...I don't know. I wasn't calling him to tell him about the pregnancy, to be honest – I don't know why I was calling him. And I don't know how I feel about having a baby inside of me, it's weird, I feel like I'm going to hurt it. Him...her. Most of the time I don't have appetite and so I force myself to eat so the baby won't die or come out skinny or with some sort of disorder. I drink a lot of water, that lady at the clinic told me to. It's all just too much, it's giving me anxiety but eventually I have to get used to it,

you know being a single mom and stuff. I don't know if I'm going to tell Lucky about the baby, it'll ruin his marriage.

OH MY WORD! He's calling me. Lucky is calling me. I don't know if I should pick up. No, I won't...I won't pick up. He has been ignoring me for two weeks and now he wants to talk. It stopped ringing.

"F**k" I mouthed. I feel guilty. Should I call him back? I should call him back...it's probably about work or an emergency.

He's calling again, "What should I do baby?" I rubbed my belly. "F**k it," I tapped on the green circle on my phone screen. "HELLO" I tried to be calm but my palms are sweating and my heart is about to jump out of my throat.

“MISS, I’M OUTSIDE,” he says.

“AND SO?” this entitled son-of-butterfly, he blows me off and then comes back thinking that I still have room for him in my life on some, ‘I’m outside’. To hell with him, he should go back to wherever he was when he wasn’t picking up my calls.

“PLEASE COME AND GET ME, I’M SORRY. PLEASE MISS,” he sounds very sad and tired.

“LUCKY, IT’S TEN IN THE NIGHT, GO HOME TO YOUR WIFE,”

“PLEASE,” he begged.

“FINE. I’M COMING,” there I go again choosing him over myself. I always let Lucky in and he always ends up leaving. He is going to go back to his wife and I’ll be left in this flat alone and pregnant. I went downstairs and found him sitting on the stairs outside. I opened. “Lucky,” I called. He got up and staggered.

“hello Miss,” he doesn’t look himself. He staggered nearly falling on me. He’s been drinking, suffice to say he smells like a tavern right now.

“Lucky, hold on to me,” I threw his arm over my shoulders, held him by the waist, and helped him into the elevator.

“I’m holding on to you,” he burped. Oh sweet heavens, that smells so bad.

“Your breath stinks, when last did you brush your teeth?” he laughed.

“My breath stinks,” he put his hand over his mouth, kissed it and then put it over my mouth. “That’s how we’ll be kissing from now on, I don’t want to kill you with my breath, because I love you.”

“Guy,” I called.

“Yes, ma’am” he responded.

“I need you to stop talking, you’ll wake up my

neighbors,” the elevator opened and I staggered out with a heavy drunken man at the verge of losing his dignity.

“Shhhh, no talking,” he whispered. “I’m sorry neighbors” he yelled.

“Lucky!” I tried walking faster.

“Let me carry you to the house. I’ll put you on my back and carry you inside. I promise I will get there! Scouts honour,” if anyone needs carrying here its him.

“We’re here, just hold on. Let me open,”

After opening I took him to the bedroom then came back to close and lock the door.

“Miss, your house smells amazing and you smell like the sun,” he mumbled from the room. “I’m so happy to be here,” I’m wondering what happened? Lucky never gets like this. Yes, he drinks but not to a point where he doesn’t even know his own name. “Miss, what do I smell like? Do I smell like the sun too?”

“No!” I shouted from the kitchen, “You smell like a township tavern,”

He cackled and said, “I feel like a township tavern,”

I stood against the fridge and contemplated my options. Mandisa blocked me, so I know I won’t get her and Menzi is 2 or more hours away and I

can't bother him with things as trivial as Lucky drinking himself into a stupor. I guess my only option is to let him sleep and then chase him out in the morning. I joined him in the room and started undressing him. I started by taking off his shoes and then his pants.

"Let's get it on..." he sang to which I rolled my eyes. "I'm sorry, let's not get it on," he burped again. "Woops! No burping,"

"what have you been drinking?" my eyebrows drew together creasing my forehead.

"What have I not been drinking is the question" he started laughing. He lifted up his hands then cupped my face. "You look so beautiful, I love you"

“Okay Lucky, just...” I tried to free my face from his hands, he didn’t budge.

“Wait wait...look at me. You look like the sun. So beautiful,”

“Thank you Lucky,”

“I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I broke up with Mandisa,”

“Get into bed please...” I pulled him to his feet so I could get him inside but instead he hugged me.

“Hold me please,” I held him for a second.

“Okay now let me help you,” he stepped aside and almost fell, luckily, I was able to grab him before hitting his face against the window. I pulled the blanket to one side and helped him in.

“Rainbow,” he grabbed my arm. “You are not listening to me, I said I broke up with Mandisa. I’m here, we can be together,”

“You know that is not how it works. Just sleep Lucky please,”

“But I love you and I am here. I didn’t care about her as much as I did you...I love you. Please tell me you love me,”

“Tell you what? Tomorrow morning after having

a cup of coffee, tell me exactly what you're telling me now,"

"Deal,"

"Kiss me goodnight, please. On the forehead," I did as he had requested. "You look like the sun," he smiled and shut his eyes.

I can't do this back and forth with Lucky. I think him and I need to talk when he has sobered up and decide that we shouldn't be available for one another, we can't be each other's safety landings, especially when he has one. It's emotionally draining. He probably had a fight with Mandisa and needed to cool off so he went to have a beer or two...or 50. He knows that whenever he knocks, I will open for him no matter how much he has hurt me. Ignoring me

was very cruel, it was mean. He should have just told me to keep my distance and not call him anymore. Him and I really need to define our relationship and decide what we are to one another.

I took the couch. I think the first step to establishing boundaries is not sharing beds. I want him to wake up alone and confused as to what happened.

I opened my eyes to behold a new day but instead I found Lucky on the table staring at me.

“What are you doing here?” I asked, “This is creepy, you know that right?”

“You look like the sun.” he spoke. “I want to spend the rest of my life with you because I

love you. You smell really nice, you smell like flowers, like your flat and I love that. It makes me feel good inside. You make me feel safe, you make my heart feel safe Miss. Be mine. I remember last night you said I should tell you all of this in the morning once I've had my coffee. Well I did and I still feel the exact same way,"

"You broke up with Mandisa?" I asked. He nodded.

"It wasn't working out Miss, it's you that I want. When I got home after the mission, I told her everything that happened." He cleared his throat.

"What made you decide to do that?" I asked.

“She cut herself,”

“You decided to tell her about us because she cut herself?” it doesn’t make sense.

“I didn’t jump or worry, in fact I didn’t even ask her what happened. Then I remembered how I felt when you were inside that house with Ndumiso, the thought of you getting hurt made me want to die and I realized that she deserves someone who will care that she cut herself.”

“You’re a horrible husband” I laughed at him. I laughed so hard that my eyes started tearing.

“Really?” he leaned forward and rested his arms on his knees. “I’m putting myself out there

being all romantic,” I couldn’t stop laughing at him. I’m really trying to respond accordingly but I can’t help it. “I’m pouring my heart out and you’re laughing at me,”

“I’m sorry...it’s just that,” I paused to gather myself and actually take him seriously. “I’ve fantasized about this moment since you got married but it was more romantic. You showed up outside my door, I didn’t have to carry you inside,” his lips folded together in shame, “And you’re sweating and breathing heavily because you were running, I don’t know why because you have a taxi and so you eventually pick me up like I’m your bride then we have sex all night long. Passionate sex.”

“You planned this out in your head,” he gave me a puzzled look.

“Well not planned, just fantasized.” I tried to make the situation less embarrassing but I think I just made it worse.

“I see,” he came in closer, “Would you like to skip to the part where we have sex all night long?” he brushed his lips against mine.

“Why did it take you this long to come to me if you ended it with her when we finished the mission? That was almost two weeks ago,” I rested my hand on his chest and looked him in the eye.

“I went home to my mom and dad. I was just confused and parents are said to have some kind of wisdom,”

“What did they say?”

“My mom said she loved me and you and that she supports me. And my dad insulted the size of my head and pointed out that Mandisa made horrible tea. Said it wasn’t like yours,”

“What is it with your dad and tea?”

“I don’t know really,” he giggled shaking his head. “Well then, what do you say Miss? Would you be the Bonnie to my Clyde?”

“You do realize that they die eventually and it's not so long after they start their life on the run?”
I cocked my head to the side.

“We are all going to die baby,” he smirked.

“Fair point,” I planted a kiss on his lips and stood.

“So, are we dating now?” he asked.

“Guy, we’ve been dating since I crashed into your stupid taxi,”

“Yesssss!” I heard him from the bathroom. “I love you” he shouted.

“Don’t push it,” I said.

“Yes ma’am, sorry,” I’m looking at myself in the mirror, I’m blushing like a 12-year-old with a crush.

“I love you too Lucky,”

I’m still Prego...

TO BE CONTINUED...

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 45

SECURED

Adjective

1. Free from attack or danger; protected.

2. Free from anxiety or doubt; unafraid

3. Firm and not likely to fail; stable.

It's weird knowing that there's a whole human growing inside of me. I worry a lot about their well-being and about the things I eat. What if I eat something they are allergic to and they get sick? What if I laugh too loud and ruin their hearing or I walk too fast that they keep hitting against the wall of stomach? What if I just do something wrong? After all, I am Rainbow and I can get very clumsy at times.

I heard a cluster of noise coming from the

kitchen. I nearly panicked but then I remembered that I have a boyfriend and his name is Lucky.

“I’VE GOT SUNSHINE, ON A CLOUDY DAY
WHEN ITS COLD OUTSIDE
I’VE GOT THE MONTH OF MAY
I GUESS YOU’D SAY
WHAT CAN MAKE ME FEEL THIS WAY
MY GIRL”

And he is singing his lungs out. I’m certain he is preparing breakfast. We had sex last night, it was amazing. We actually had sex the whole night, I’m surprised we were able to wake up this early today, after all, it was our first time having sex as something. We belonged to each other, we were not stealing a moment or having

'just sex' we were making love and I loved every bit of it. I went to the kitchen and found him dancing to the song he was singing ever so jolly.

"You're here," I disturbed him. I must admit, I was scared and worried. I had told myself that it's okay if he wakes up this morning and decides that he wants Mandisa back. I told myself that I'd have to be okay with it because I'm Rainbow and I've survived worse things than a man rejecting me. he came up to me.

"Where else would I be?" he pulled me into his chest and hugged me.

"I...well...I don't know...maybe you decided that you didn't want to be with me anymore."

“Not a chance,” he pulled me out and kissed me. “Go and brush your teeth,” he said planting numerous kisses all over my face. “I’ll be here when you come back,”

When I got to the bathroom and started brushing my teeth; it occurred to me that Lucky has been here for at least 2 days now, and I did catch a whiff of toothpaste in his breath, how when he doesn’t have a toothbrush within these walls? I rinsed my mouth and finished.

“Lucky,” I called standing by the door.

“Please call me something sweet, like my Lucky or baby or babe...I love it when you say babe, it sounds nice coming from your mouth,”

“Babe,” I smiled, “Have you been using my

toothbrush?”

“Okay, about that...I just thought that since we are starting a new relationship, we should...” I listened carefully as he tried to make the worst seem better. “Yes ma’am, I have...I’m making breakfast,” Lucky is such a good person. I really don’t want to hurt him at all; if anything, I want to protect him, take care of him and just be there for him. This pregnancy is like a burden I’m carrying around me and whenever I look into Lucky’s eyes, I just feel guilt suffocating me and paralyzing my very soul. The timing is so fucked up...I should have told him before I agreed to be his girlfriend, I should have – it would have been better...I think.

After setting out food in the lounge, he called me. I came in and saw what he had prepared

and I felt sick to the pits of my belly. I am standing by the entrance fighting the urge to vomit. Suddenly I felt really hot and dizzy.

“Miss,” he came and held my hand. “What’s happening?” he asked. I want to close my eyes and just rest, I feel really tired.

“Can you take me to bed please,” I uttered. He carried me to the room and carefully laid me down.

“Baby, you are scaring me? Please talk to me...” he laid next to me and held me from behind.

“Give me a minute,” I whispered. We stayed in that position for about fifteen minutes. After that I turned to face him. I have to tell Lucky

what's happening before it's too late. "I have to tell you something," I inhaled tremulously.

"I'm listening," he kissed my forehead, "Don't scare me Rainbow,"

"Lucky, I'm so sorry," I broke down.

"For what baby? Tell me..." he pulled me to his chest and held me tight. This is so fucked up; we just started our relationship last night and already I'm crying! Already there's an issue.

"I'm pregnant," I cried.

"Baby, what do you mean you're pregnant?" he pulled me out and looked at my wet face. "From

last night? I don't think that's how it works"

"No! from almost 3 months ago. I found out a few days ago," I sat up straight. "I'm so sorry, I know we just started a new relationship and I've already messed it up. If you want to leave, I will understand,"

"The baby is for another guy..." he murmured sitting up straight.

"What?" I looked at him. "No! It's yours...I have only slept with you Lucky, I swear" I sobbed.

"Well then what's the issue?" he took my hand, "Look at me Rainbow" he ordered. "If it's my baby then, why are you crying?"

“Because I don’t think you want a child right now, you just lost a daughter and now I’m pregnant. The timing is off...”

“Are you kidding me?” he chuckled. He rested his head on my lap and started kissing your stomach. “Hey little person” he started speaking. “I know this will sound weird but I’m your father,” I giggled.

“What are you doing?” I cleaned my face.

“Shhh mommy, this is a private conversation. Remember that huge, long and strong thing that kept poking at you the whole of last night,”

“Oh my word!” I cried throwing my hand over my eyes.

“That was me little person...mommy and I were just playing adult games which you can't play until you are 45 if you are a girl. But if you are a boy then we'll talk when you arrive,” he looked at me and smiled. “I will take care of you and mommy, I promise,” he caressed my cheek. I lowered my head and kissed his forehead. My lips lingered more than they should have, I'm just so happy. I'm really happy.

“Don't cry mommy,” he got up and laid down with me, “I promise I will take care of you,”

“I will take care of you too. I pinky promise,” we held each other and stayed in that position in silence for a few good minutes.

“Can I call my big brother and tell him please?”
he asked. “Please?”

“Okay...” I nodded. He is so excited. I’ve never seen him this excited before. Oh wait! I have actually. I still remember it like it was yesterday. It was when I was visiting his home with him for the first time; when Sam came to him running, his whole disposition just changed. He became light and bright. He was smiling ear to ear holding his baby girl in his arms and spinning her around. Maybe this baby will fill the gap that Sammy left. Maybe he will find some closure.

“BAFO,” he shouted. “FORGET ABOUT THAT. LISTEN, RAINBOW IS PREGNANT AND I’M THE FATHER,” he was holding my hand with his other hand. “SHE’S RIGHT HERE...WE ARE TOGETHER NOW. SHE’S MY GIRLFRIEND. I

MIGHT WIFE HER SOON” he winked at me and I responded by sticking my tongue out at him. “He wants to talk to you,” he put the phone on speaker.

“MENZI,”

“BLUE HAired WOMAN!” he called.

“IT’S PURPLE NOW,” I said.

“OH WOW! LISTEN, THANK YOU...WE ARE GRATEFUL, I’M SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE DLAMINIS, YOU DID WELL AND WE WILL BE HERE FOR YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY, YOU HEAR ME?”

“I HEAR YOU, THANK YOU MENZI” I blushed looking at Lucky. This feels nice.

“IN FACT, LET ME GO TO THE STORE RIGHT NOW AND BUY YOU A FEW THINGS. I’LL HAVE ONE OF THE DRIVERS DRIVE DOWN. I WILL GET VITAMINS FOR YOU AND BABY CLOTHES AND TOYS AND STROLLERS. LET ME GO NOW...” my eyes widened as I listened to him. How the hell do I stop this? It’s too early to be buying baby clothes or anything.

“MENZI, DON’T YOU THINK IT’S A LITTLE EARLY?” I bit my nail,

“NO, I’M TOO EXCITED. CAN I TELL THE FAMILY PLEASE LUCKY?” he begged.

“SURE MENZI, GO ON...” he grinned.

“I’M DROPPING EVERYTHING RIGHT NOW AND I’M GOING HOME. I’M SURE MAMA WILL WANT TO GO SHOPPING WITH ME,”

“OKAY, YOU LET ME KNOW HOW IT GOES THEN,” says Lucky.

“ALRIGHT. I’LL SEND YOU GUYS PICTURES OF EVERYTHING.” he said, “I’M GONNA BE A DAD AGAIN,” he added. I think he was talking to himself then. The call ended after.

“He’s going to be a dad,” Lucky echoed his big brother.

“Babe, can we go and meet my dad?” I requested.

“You want me to meet your dad?” he looked into my eyes.

“And my mom...I’m sure they are both at school right now. Oh and they are getting divorced,” he leaned in and kissed me passionately, when he stopped, my head got light and the butterflies in my tummy awoke.

“At this rate, we might have to get married next week,” he jumped out of bed. “Go and shower then we’ll go to my place then we’ll meet your parents.”

Lucky has been a huge part of my life and with the baby on the way, it seems like he going to

be a part of it for a very long time. I want to tell my parents about the little person inside of me and I also want to introduce them to the man responsible for it. This is a start of something new and I will not allow a single blemish on it.

“Good day sir, ma’am. I am Lucky and I got your daughter pregnant,” said Lucky. The whole drive to his place I was listening to him practicing how he was going to greet my parents. “No, that’s nasty,” he says to himself, “I’m very happy to meet you Mr and Mrs Jaxa. I’m sorry about your divorce and I’m pleased to meet you. Wait, I said that. I’m Lucky,”

“Babe,” I disturbed him.

“Yeah baby”

“You have a rainbow on your wrist,” I am literally just seeing it now. Why did I not notice it?

“Oh shit!” he analyzed it while his other hand controlled the steering wheel. “I was drunk and in love,” he justified.

“I want one...”

“Sure, we can get you a tattoo...”

“But I want a four-leaf clover though,”

“A clover?” his eyes darted between me and the road.

“Yeah, like a four-leaf clover for good luck,”

“A rainbow is also for good luck,”

“I know babe,” I took his hand and kissed it, “I know...I love you okay,” I said looking out the window.

“I love you my Miss,”

I’m breathing. I’m alive and I’m aware. I feel secured enough to be free and this is all I ever really wanted. Not fancy clothes, houses and cars...security and surety and I feel like I have that right now here with my Guy, with my Four-leaf clover. I don’t know what will happen tomorrow or in the next 5 months but I know what’s happening now so I chose to enjoy this

moment and be in it with the father of my unborn little person.

TO BE CONTINUED FOR REAL NOW

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 46

ANXIETY

Noun

(Plural: Anxieties)

1. An unpleasant state of mental uneasiness, nervousness, apprehension and obsession or concern about some uncertain event

2. An uneasy or distressing desire

I have been waiting and waiting for things to go wrong. I've been waiting...just waiting for something, anything to go wrong between Lucky and I and also with the baby. I feel like it's all too good to be true. I don't get things like this; like perfect and nice...I wasn't made for this life. I'm sorry for being a pessimist but, I've always had it hard. My environment has always been toxic and I've always been scared.

My nails have been chewed up because I've been using them as a form of coping mechanism. I chew on them whenever I feel overwhelmed like when Lucky and I go shopping for things; he'd ask me what I want and then I'd start panicking, so chewing on my

nails gave me something to concentrate my energy. I used to squeeze my wrist when I was with Ndumiso but that habit grew old. So, if I'm not chewing my nails then I am chewing on my lips...either way, I always come out alive.

The baby is doing okay. But I am not...doctor said I might be suffering from anxiety so I need to take it easy or I may put my baby in danger. Lucky has been such an amazing boyfriend and father. We decided to move in together and obviously his flat was the best option, it has more space for all the things he and his family keep buying for the baby. Also, my father and Lucky have become the best of friends. I can barely get a word in when they are together. As you may expect it, mama had a million questions for Lucky, most of which were about his financial standing and then pointed out that he was a sexy chocolate man. I made up my

mind that – if she tries anything funny with Lucky like she did Ndumiso – I’m killing her. PERIOD.

“Are you ready to speak to me now?” he looked at me in the rear-view mirror.

“No!” I dismissively answered.

“Baby, come on...” he stopped the car. “Talk to me. Tell me why you’re mad at me?”

“I don’t want too...” I sighed sharply then got out of the car. He did the same then came to me. I had decided to sit in the back because I didn’t want to be next to him. He made me mad and all I wanted to do was shoot a bullet in his head. But then again, how would ever explain that to

my unborn child. And also, that might have been my mommy brain thinking.

Now, let me tell you what happened. We stopped at krispy crème to get some donuts and he completely got my order wrong because he was busy flirting with the cashier, laughing and giggling at god knows what. I could see him even though I was in the car and then he had the nerve to tell me 'I overreacted'. I know what I saw, I'm not stupid.

"Rainbow, say something please..."

"I said I don't want to talk to you..." I stormed off.

"Now where the hell are you going? Stop being childish Rainbow, I don't have time for your petulance," he yelled catching up to me.

“Now I’m childish, got anything else for me?” I continued marching in the opposite direction.

“Cookies!” he shouted. This sneaky little snake. I came to a pause...I turned around and faced him.

“That’s not fair!” I said on the verge of crying. I don’t even know why I want to cry. “That word is for emergencies,”

“This is an emergency baby! Talk to me...” he cupped my face in his hands. “Look you’re crying. what’s step 1?” he asked. One day I had a breakdown and so we came up with a way to communicate effectively and broke it down into easy steps.

“Breathe” I answered.

“Step 2?”

“If necessary, hold on to one another,”

“Would you like to hold me?” he inquired and I nodded sobbing and sniffing. “Step 3; speak when you are ready,”

We hugged each other for a few seconds then I finally spoke. “I don’t like that you got my order wrong and you said I overreacted,”

“I understand my love. Maybe from where you were it looked like I was flirting. Yes, we did

exchange a laugh or two but I'm sure it was about something stupid. And I'm sorry for saying you overreacted," I hugged him.

"I might have overreacted, just a little..." I looked up at him. "I just don't feel like myself lately. I feel heavy and sick and anxious."

"Put your hand on my face," I smiled, I know this trick. But I played along anyway. "Who are you looking at right now?" he asked.

"I'm looking at Guy,"

"And I'm looking at Miss," he says rubbing the tip of his nose against mine. "I can feel you and you can feel me; so long as we have each then you best believe we are going to be alright,"

“I love you baby daddy” he took a step back and looked at me.

“You love me?” he asked and I nodded. “You’re such a pussy, how can you be in love? That shit is for weak people,”

“Oh whatever Lucky,” I clicked my tongue as we walked back to the car.

“Pussy!” he mocked.

“Language! There’s a baby here...”

“Sorry mommy,”

So Lucky and I are driving to his home. His family has been wanting us to come down but we had a few things we needed to deal with. Like the interrogation regarding the shooting of Ndumiso Gumede who is still in a coma by the way. Colonel made it very clear that he knew I provoked him but was willing to let it slide after seeing and hearing what he has done to me before.

To be honest, I don't know how I feel about this visit. Suddenly I matter now because I'm pregnant? What about that time when I was kicked out? None of them bothered to call and say 'hey we know you were not involved in our grandchild's death. We apologize,' but hey, you know what? We move.

The one person I am not looking forward to seeing is Zah. I am really not in the mood for her; mostly because she poisoned Mandisa

against me. she had no right to tell her about Lucky and I, it was not her place or her story to tell.

Lucky opened the door for me and helped me out. I keep telling him that I'm just pregnant not paralyzed but he insists on treating me like an egg. His family stood outside bundled up together waiting for their son's pregnant girlfriend.

"Makoti," his mom sang running up to me with open arms.

"Hey mama," how I wish she wouldn't call me that. A 'makoti' is too big a word. It gives me anxiety. Before I knew it, the entire family – with the exclusion of Zah – was around me and Lucky hugging and touching my tummy.

“I missed you aunty Rainbow,” said Mtho hugging him.

“Mtho, why do you suddenly get weak when Rainbow is around; such a cry baby. Be a man boy!” his uncle teased.

“Leave my boy be please,” I warned. Mtho went over to his father and hugged him. This was a certainly a sight one needed to capture with the eyes and keep it safe somewhere in the memory.

“Where’s Zanele?” asked Lucky.

“With her boyfriend, she should be on her way back now,” Eunice responded.

“Siyabonga ntokazi,” Mr Dlamini spoke. “Later we will talk. All of us...as a family,”

Oh! I’m family now? How nice. Its crazy how a pregnancy can change people’s hearts. I mean, they’re all just so soft and kind towards me.

“Boy, help me take these to my room” Lucky said to Mtho and he obeyed. “Baba, we’ll be in just now. Let me help her get comfortable.” He added.

“Alright,” sang his father.

Lucky took and my hand and led me to his room. I don’t need help with getting comfortable. I can do things; I can do everything. These people are going to make me regret ever getting pregnant.

“Aunty Rainbow, could you please buy me some
airtime?” Mtho requested.

“Mtho!” called Guy, “She just arrived!”

“Lucky, let the boy be!” I defended him.

“Fine!” he retreated, “It’s your money”

“How much?” I asked.

“R50 will do,”

“Babe, please give him R100”

“What?!?!” his eyes travelled between Mtho and myself. “I...you...” he stammered.

“Please babe,” I batted my eyes at him. He hesitantly pulled out his wallet and gave him R200.

“Thanks dad,” rejoiced Mtho.

“I want my change back,” he shouted at Mtho who was already out the door, “today boy!” he added.

“You know you not getting it back right?”

“I know,” he chuckled, “I know”

Later that evening; after having had supper we waited for Zah before starting with the meeting but she was no show so Mr Dlamini decided we should start so he could go to bed.

“I am happy to see all my children safe and under one roof,” Mr Dlamini started the meeting. “With the new Dlamini on the way, I thought it was wise to sit and hatch some things out. I want to create a safe and healthy environment for him,” he cleared his throat. “Rainbow I...”

“What is she doing here?” Zah froze by the door. “What are you doing here?”

“Zanele, down,” her father ordered. “we are having a family meeting and you are late,”

“Why is she here if it’s a family meeting?” she questioned.

“It’s okay, I’ll leave...” I stood.

“Baby sit down.” said Lucky, so I sat back down observing the situation and also holding my horses. “Zah, baba is speaking so take your sit,”

“Baba,” she called. “What is she doing here?”

“Dade, can we just be civilized. She’s carrying your brother’s child, be kind.”

“How sure are you that it’s yours Lucky?” her eyes rested upon Lucky. “And why am I the last to find out about this?”

“Because!” Lucky banged on the table out of anger. “You refuse to see the good in her. She didn’t kill Sammy”

“I can’t believe you are all falling for this. Who is the father of that thing inside you?” she looked at me.

“Your brother Lucky and my child is not a thing,” I answered her.

“Why are you lying? I don’t want you here, you will do nothing but tear this family apart and have people killed like you did Sammy,”

“Excuse me,” I got up and headed for the door.

“Baby,” Lucky followed me. “Rainbow wait please,”

“You guys should talk without me, I don’t want to upset anybody and that is including the baby” I said marching towards his room. When I pulled the door handle down and pushed to open the door didn’t budge. “Open please,”

“Can we go back to the meeting please,” he begged.

“Lucky,”

“Rainbow,” he kept my eyes in place.

“Open,”

“meeting,”

I know how much Lucky wants him and I to be a family; especially with the baby coming. He has been working really hard to make me feel like I belong with him and his family. If it means that much to him, then I can play along.

His phone rang and he picked it up. “Its your sister,” he says, “HEY!” his head along with his shoulders fell then he started walking away.

“Is everything okay?” I followed him.

“HOW? HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?” he

turned and pulled me to his chest.

“What’s happening babe?” I whispered.

“YEAH OKAY!” he released me then took a few steps away from me. This time I remained in place and waited for him. “DID YOU CHECK THE FOOTAGES INSIDE AND OUT? SOMEONE MUST HAVE SEEN SOMETHING,”

Something is wrong. I can feel it...something really bad is coming and it won't be nice.

“THANKS MONDE, I’LL CALL YOU,” he came to me.

“What’s happening? Is she fine?” I inquired.

“She’s fine,” he says.

“But?” I bit my lip.

“I don’t want you to stress yourself about this okay?” he planted a soft and light kiss on my lips. I forced a smile and nodded. “he’s gone,”

“Who?”

“Ndumiso...he escaped from the hospital,”

“I thought he was in a coma,” I grabbed his arm and held on tight in attempt to abate the excruciating pain coming from my stomach.

“He was. But...are you okay?”

“It’ll pass just now...”

“should we go to the doctor?” he asked. I shook my head.

“All better.” I sighed.

“Let’s get you inside,” he took my hand and led me to the main house.

“How did he escape?” I asked.

“Your sister is still investigating.” Said Lucky,
“But can you forget about that...don’t let it get to you. please mommy,”

I have to give it to Ndumiso, he doesn't give up. Even when staring at death in the eyes he finds a way to escape. The odds were stacked against him but managed to turn the tables. My worry is that he might come after me and then Lucky and his family might get hurt in the process. And what might make him lose it is learning that I'm with child; he's always wanted children but I was never prepared to bear him some.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 47

TIMBUKTU

Proper noun

1. A city in central Mali

2. Any proverbially distant or remote place

The 'family' meeting didn't go as smoothly as one had anticipated. Even after Lucky had explained to his sister that I had no hand in Sammy's death but in catching her killer, she still believes I am bad news and says she prefers things the way they were before I came into the picture. She was bold enough to express how she wishes I would miscarry while she and I were in the kitchen. Well she found me there making a sandwich for Lucky who wasn't full from the meal his mom prepared earlier.

At an attempt to avoid palaver, I did not utter a word to her. I continued with what I was doing until she gave up and retreated to her room.

“Here baby” I gave him his sandwich and a glass of water.

“Thanks love,” he said concentrating on the documentary he was watching.

“I will be in bed okay,” I said.

“hold on, boy!” he called. Mtho appeared in boxers and a white vest and a phone in hand. “Walk her to the room please,” he ordered.

“Lucky, I am going outside these walls not to

Timbuktu.” I complained.

“It’s at night Rainbow,” again trying to avoid unnecessary arguments and debates, I retreated. Mtho walked me to the room and locked the door when leaving. I swear Lucky is going to drive me mad. He doesn’t give me breathing space and this baby growing inside of me is already invading my space as it is. Before changing into my night wear, I called my sister.

“SISTER,” she picked up.

“HEY SISTER, LUCKY TOLD ME ABOUT NDUMISO. DO YO HAVE ANY LEADS?” I asked.
“SHOULD I COME DOWN AND HELP WITH THE INVESTIGATION?”

“NO. THE FURTHER AWAY YOU ARE FROM THIS MATTER THE BETTER. HOW ARE THE IN-LAWS?” I sighed in frustrations.

“OKAY I GUESS, ITS JUST LUCKY’S LITTLE SISTER DOESN’T REALLY TRUST ME. SHE IS MAKING IT VERY HARD FOR ME TO MOVE FREELY IN THIS YARD AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF, LUCKY JUST WON’T LET ME BREATHE WITHOUT HOLDING MY HAND AND GUIDING ME THROUGH THE PROCESS,” Monde laughed at my agony as I lamented to her. “I’M GLAD YOU ARE DERIVING SOME PLEASURE FROM MY DILEMMA,”

“YOU ARE RAINBOW SIS, JUST TELL HER WHERE TO GET OFF AND AS FOR LUCKY...ITS NATURAL FOR A FATHER TO BE PROTECTIVE OF THE MOTHER OF HIS CHILD. YOU’RE LIKE A

TRUCK WITH COCAINE,”

“I KNOW YOU DID NOT COMPARE MY BABY TO COCAINE” I giggled amused by her analogy.

“HAVE YOU TOLD THE REAL PARENTS YET?” she asked.

“YES, I DID, THEY WANT TO MEET LUCKY PRETTY SOON HEY!”

“IT SEEMS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE GETTING SERIOUS,”

“I DON’T KNOW, WE SHALL SEE.”

“LISTEN SISTER, I HAVE TO GO. AYANDA HAS

BEEN UNDER THE WEATHER SO I'M PLAYING DOCTOR,"

"TELL HER TO GET BETTER FOR ME,"

"WILL DO AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIS SISTER, SHE'LL COME AROUND AND AS FOR HIM...THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO. I LOVE YOU,"

"GOODNIGHT MONDE, I LOVE YOU,"

I love talking to my sister. Our conversations are always cathartic and I must say, I'm very grateful I found her before I got pregnant. She's like a therapist specially programmed for my mommy brain.

I know Monde and Lucky told me to not worry about Ndumiso, but I'm smarter than that. I need to get my people on this matter and when I say people, I'm talking about Sthandwasam; his people are my people.

"MY DALI," he sings. How this guy manages to be lively at all times is the question of the century.

"HEY, HOW ARE YOU KEEPING?"

"I'M OKAY, HOW HAVE YOU BEEN? HOW IS THE BABY?"

"I'M FINE, THE BABY IS FINE. LISTEN, I NEED YOU TO BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR ME,"

“YES MA’AM. WHAT AM I ON THE LOOK OUT FOR?”

“NDUMISO, APPARENTLY HE ESCAPED. LUCKY AND MONDE ARE SAYNG I SHOULD NOT WORRY ABOUT HIM BUT YOU KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT,”

“I WILL START WITH THE CAMERAS AT THE HOSPITAL AND SEE WHAT I FIND,”

“THIS STAYS BETWEEN YOU AND I. AND STHANDWA; I GOT A BABY ON THE WAY I DON’T WANT HIM LURKING AROUND,”

“YES MA’AM. HOW ABOUT I SEND A GUY TO KEEP WATCH OF THE HOUSE WHILE YOU’RE THERE, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE,”

“I’D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH. SEND 2, I WANT THEIR CONTACTS AS SOON AS YOU HAVE THEM,”

“I’M ON IT. BE SAFE...”

“I WILL, THANK YOU STHANDWASAM,”

“ANYTIME”

Now I can rest knowing what’s happening. Lucky and Monde were going to keep out of the loop forgetting that Ndumiso is after me. But in this way, I don’t have to keep nagging them to update me about the case. They’ll be under the impression that I’m obeying their instruction to ‘not worry’; it’s a win win.

I changed into my nightdress and got into bed; not so long after Lucky came in.

“Hey lover,” he said. He came and bent over me. “May I have a kiss?” he requested. I pouted my lips to kiss him. He bent a little lower and patted his lips against mine. He then rose and started taking off his clothes.

“You okay?” I asked watching him change.

“I’m okay baby. More than okay. You are here, Mtho is here, our little person is here and the rest of my family is here. Literally all the thing that matter to me are in one yard at the very same time; not many people can have it like that. So, I’m content.”

“Okay babe, if you’re good I’m good” I sighed and faced the ceiling.

“And Zanele has stopped with her drama, finally!”

“She hasn’t!” I blurted out.

“What do you mean?” he switched off the light and used his phone to light the way to bed. “She said she’d let it go, she promised me”

“I know but she didn’t.” I turned and faced him. “She said she wishes that my baby would die in my womb so that I won’t have anything to tie you with and that the only reason you are with me is because of the baby,” now that I’m telling

Lucky – I'm actually realizing how much I'm hurt by it, by her words.

"When did she say that?"

"Just now when I was making you that sandwich,"

"That's it, let me go and give it to her," I grabbed his arm just before he could jump out of bed.

"let me just have a word with her,"

"Lucky; I don't want you..."

"No Miss, she needs to grow up. She..."

"Can you listen to me please," I shouldn't have

told him this. “Come here,” I ordered. “Kiss me,”

“Rainbow, you are the mother of my child but besides that; you are my girlfriend and I don’t want anyone thinking they can treat you however they please – especially not my family.” he vented.

“Kiss me Lucky,” he laid down on his side and kissed me. The heaviness in my heart started dissolving. My whole body relaxed and everything became calm. I actually exhaled. “I don’t want you to fight with your sister because of me,”

“But baby,”

“She thinks she’s looking out for her brother

and family,” I cut him short. “Let’s let things play out for now, maybe soon she’ll see that I’m legit,”

“Yes ma’am” he sighed.

“Let’s sleep,”

“May I put my hand under your dress. It’s warm in there,”

I giggled, “Knock yourself out” his cold hand travelled under my night dress and found rest on my breast.

“Whooo” he cried. “babe,” he got closer and kissed me passionately. “This pregnancy thing

suits you,” he praised. “Do you want to kiss and do what lovers do?”

“Yes please” I enthusiastically said. Without wasting a single second, his hand slid down and found its way inside my underwear. I bit on my lips and closed my eyes as his finger went in and out of me. He knelt in between my thighs and continued moving his finger inside of me. To be honest, I don’t enjoy sex as much as I used to now that I’m pregnant. As for Lucky, he seems to want more sex now more than ever. Before I knew it, he was inside of me thrusting back and forth, grunting and sweating over me.

“Where are you baby?” he asked. It was an odd question to ask during coitus. He stopped moving and breathed heavily while resting his forehead on mine. “Where are you?”

“What do you mean? Why did you stop?” he took his phone, switched on the torch and lit against the wall. The light bounced back to us.

“You are not here with me,”

“I’m here babe, just continue,” I lifted up my head and kissed him. “Continue,” I said amidst kissing him but instead he pulled out and laid down beside me.

“I know you and...”

“Yeah well maybe you don’t know me that well,” I interjected.

“There’s no need to get spicy about this, lose the attitude. As your boyfriend, I’m noticing something I do not like and I am putting it out there so we can work on it.” he sat up, “Now, what is going on?”

“Goodnight Lucky,” I turned around and faced the wall.

“Rainbow,” he yelled pulling the blanket away.

“What the fuck Lucky! I am trying to sleep” I attempted to pull the blanket but this fool threw it on the floor. “Really? Are you really choosing to do this now?” I got up to fetch the blanket. He got up as well and got to it first. He picked it up and threw it back on the bed. “This is stupid,”

“You will talk to me about what I brought up, you understand,” I scoffed and headed back to bed. He grabbed my arm and pulled me back in front of me.

“Get your hands off me,” I fought him trying to free myself from his grip – instead he grabbed the other arm as well.

“Don’t fucking make me mad!” his voice pierced through my ears leaving me both shocked and frozen. “I said lose the fucking attitude and talk to me. Don’t make me get like this with you.” he let go of me and went to switch on the light. I didn’t move. I waited there not for him but I think I was still shocked by what just happened. “Now, what did I say?”

“To lose the attitude and talk to you,” I

answered.

“That’s all I ask my love,” he pulled me into his chest and kissed the top of my head. “Don’t be scared. I’m not him, I won’t hurt you like that. I understand that your body is going through some changes and it’s a lot but please be nice to me and let me in. Okay?”

I nodded, “I’m sorry,” I whispered wrapping my arms around his waist.

“Me too,” he held me tighter. “I’m sorry too baby,”

“Can we talk about this tomorrow please,” I requested.

“That’s fine,”

“Thank you, I love you,”

“You’re the love of my life,” he lifted my head up and kissed me on the lips. “I love you so much Miss,” he rested his forehead on mine,

“Can I have the blanket now?” I teased.

“Yes, you may,”

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

#bonusinsert

INSERT 48

BABY DOLL

Noun

1. A child's doll designed to look like a baby

This morning I got a message from Sthandwasam alerting me that he had already situated men to watch over the house and myself in particular. They both texted me to notify me of their presence. Now I can breathe knowing that if anything out of the ordinary happens, I will know. Mr. Dlamini has called me into the living room, said he wanted to talk to me. Frankly – I'm over these talks and meetings. Let's just be and let bygones be bygones.

"This won't take long," he says. I nodded. "I

want you to join my team,” he really doesn’t want this to take long.

“I don’t understand, don’t we all work for the same team?” I asked.

“Well yes, but if you are working under a team founder, such as myself, you get paid more and you get certain privileges,”

“Such as?”

“Well, for one we will always have your back and I will never appoint you to a task that might put your life at risk. You are family now, the mother of my grandchild,”

“Do you not have my back now? I am asking because I would take a bullet for any member of this family believe it or not...”

“What I mean is, Grootboom will look at you as an employee, a pawn and to me, you’ll be family so...”

“So you will pick where I can and can’t go. You will have an eye on me, you will protect me.”

“Precise. You’ll be one of ours.” He agreed.

“With all due respect sir, the colonel would never send me where he does not think I can cope. He also protects me,”

“But he doesn’t protect you like your own family would.” Mr Dlamini’s offer seems rather, out of place. it seems as though he is trying to change my perception of the colonel. “And let’s face it, would you rather a cop is breathing down your neck - considering the file they have on you – or me, your child's mkhulu?”

“I don’t know sir, I’m quite comfortable under the colonel. But I will think about it and maybe talk to your son about it as well” he smiled.

“Very well then, that’s good enough for me.” he stood and I stood along with him. “Now, how’s my grandchild doing in there?”

“He’s growing alright...”

“Rainbow!” Lucky came in screaming my name followed my Menzi. “what the fuck?”

“Lucky!” Mr Dlamini shouted. “That is no way to speak to her,” he reprimanded.

“Ngiyaxolisa baba,” (I’m sorry dad) he composed himself, “Why did my men find men claiming to be your men watching the house,” F**k, we’ve been made.

“What?” softly exclaimed Paul looking at me.

“I can explain,” I uttered.

“Please do,” said Menzi.

“Just don’t hurt them, they are with me,”

“I asked for them to be brought in,” says Lucky.

“When you told me about Ndumiso, I panicked.”
I confessed.

“I clearly told you to leave that to me,” he reminded.

“Yeah Lucky not being in the loop drove me crazy. This is Ndumiso we are talking about and nobody knows him better than me so telling me to stay put is just crazy and risky,”

“You are pregnant!” Lucky shouted.

“Not paralyzed or incapacitated!” I interjected.

“Rainbow, when you are here – especially in the state you are in – you can drop your guard and lower your weapons,” says Menzi.

“So that if anything happens you can blame it on me and chase me out like a stray dog with rabbis?” my eyes bore into Lucky’s. “So that your sister can say she told you so that I was trouble?” I brushed my forehead trying to calm myself down. “No thanks, I work for the police and there is a reason that is. If I can do anything to protect myself and this family then I will because like I said sir, I have got your back same team or not.”

“Baba, Menzi. would you give us a moment?” they obeyed. Lucky took my hand and sat me

down.

“I’m sorry,” I apologized.

“I’m the one who should be sorry baby,” he kissed my hand. “I forget that you are not like the girls I’ve been with before. I have a gun and you have a gun. I want to protect you and you want to protect me,” I nodded agreeing with him. “I am very sorry. I just can’t help it, I don’t want you in the action while pregnant.”

“I am literally not in the action,” I contested smiling.

“I see that now,” he gave me a lopsided grin. “How about this? I keep you on the loop but you cannot be on the field and I will let your boys

work with mine with the provision that my boys are in charge?”

“Fair enough. But I will not take the backseat, this is Ndumiso I need front-row seats,”

“Fair enough but you can’t play with a gun. You’ll be like a silent partner”

“Deal”

“Want to seal that with a kiss?” he leaned in and I accepted but leaning in kissing him.

“Also, those men are Sthandwasam’s. I don’t have men, I have a man,” I boasted.

“It’s nice hearing that,” he kissed my forehead.
“Thank you, baby,”

“Oh lover, I was talking about Sthandwasam;
he’s my man.” I got up and headed for the door.

“F**k him! That little rat. That Guy is so tiny how
does he manage to make big moves?” he
questioned following me.

“Like I said, I have a man.”

“I should probably have a woman too,” he
suggested.

“I have a gun,” I warned.

“Yes ma’am, no woman. You are the only woman I need. My life partner...” he retreated.

Later that day I got extremely drowsy and decided to take a nap. I’m not one to nap during the day but I told myself that I will do anything this pregnancy leads me to do. The doctor said it’s good to listen to my body and not fight against it. She said sometimes it’s the baby communicating with me.

I see Sammy, it’s been a while since I’ve seen her, I must be dreaming. The same place where she was shot but there was no one else this time; just us. She looked clean, no blood and not in pain.

“Sammy” I called getting closer to her. She smiled at me.

“Miss Rainbow, daddy’s princess,” she blushed.

“Are you okay baby?” I asked. She nodded.

“Sammy, it should have been Miss Rainbow that got hurt that day...I’m so sorry,”

“I’m fine now, look” she twirled for me like Barbie would in one of her sparkling dresses with wings. I smiled at her.

“Baba is fine,” she says. “Baba Menzi and Mkhulu are not fine,” she added.

“What do you mean? Are they hurting?” then I suddenly saw her carrying a baby.

“The baby doll needs to be fixed; he is hurt!” she

started walking away. The doll she was carrying started crying like a new born baby. I touched my tummy and felt that it was flat, then an excruciating pain grew.

“Sammy, wait!” I yelled. “That’s not a doll, that’s the baby” she kept walking away, she paid no attention to me. “Samke,” I felt my body getting weaker by second. I put one foot in front of the other in attempt to get to her but I couldn’t move. “Sam, bring the baby back,”

“Go back Miss Rainbow, I’m going to get him fixed,” she said and then disappeared as though she was never there.

“Samkelisiwe!” screamed.

I opened my eyes and immediately realized that the pain I was feeling in the dream was real. I squeezed my eyes shut willing it to stop like it did last night when I was with Lucky. I sat up straight, that's when I saw the blood stain on my grey tights.

“Oh my word!” I got sick to the pit of my stomach. I spread my legs open and indeed the blood was coming from where my thighs meet. I looked under the pillow for my phone and then remembered that I had charged it by the desk. I tried to stand to go and get help, however I failed. I got dizzy and fell back on the bed.

In this very moment I am so scared that I will die with the amount of pain I'm feeling. I could feel all power, might and will leaving my body along with the blood by the second. I have to

get help right now. I decided to crawl to the door which seemed like I was crawling to Egypt. I turned the key anti-clockwise unlocking, pulled the door open and started I calling for help.

“Lucky!” I called. I wasn’t loud enough but I had to keep on calling. “Help!” I panted. “Please stay alive, please,” my voice quivered. “Lucky!” finally someone appeared. It’s Mtho, not who I had hoped but it’s someone.

“Aunty Rainbow,” shock, fear and terror transformed his face. He fell before me.

“Get your father!” I said with what felt like my very last breath.

“Baba!” Mtho ran, his feet were floating above

the ground. “Baba!”

I kept telling myself to keep my eyes open. If I lose control of my body then the baby is in danger. I have to be in control. I have to breathe. I have to keep my eyes open.

Lucky appeared running with Mtho and his mom behind him.

“Baby, what happened?” he asked kneeling before me.

“I was sleeping, I’m so...” I felt multiple deliberate taps on my cheek.

“Look at me!” Lucky commanded. I nodded.

“Keep your eyes on me, mama what should we do?”

“We need to get her to the doctor right now,” she said. “Mtho, go and start the taxi”

“Ma,” Lucky uttered with a trembling tone.

“Boy wam, its going to be okay,” she assured.
“Get her in the taxi,”

“Lucky,” I called as he carried me to the taxi.

“Yes baby, keep talking to me,”

“I’m sorry,”

“You apologize a lot Miss. Hey, say? do you think maybe I could borrow your Glock for a few rounds with my brother?” I could feel that the taxi was moving. I’m guessing Mtho is driving, last I checked, Menzi was out.

“Sure,”

“Thank you, tell me...what’s your favourite colour baby? You never told me that,” I could hear in his voice that he wanted to just breakdown but he maintained a strong façade.

“I’m cold Lucky,”

“We are almost there, just keep talking to me, Rainbow. Look at me...” I don’t want to die and I

don't want my baby to die. But if I am to die today, please dear heavens, don't let it be in this man's arms. Not like this. This moment takes me back to when I begged Sammy to keep her eyes open and just look at me. She ended up closing her eyes for good. And that is all I need right now; I need to rest my eyes just for a shot bit. I just need to relax, but I'm scared that I might not open my eyes again and Lucky will carry this image for the rest of his life.

"Lucky,"

"I'm here," he kissed my forehead.

"I'm going to be fine; the baby is going to be fine..." I assured. "But I just need to rest my eyes for shhh...short bit okay,"

“No!” he disputed. “Don’t you dare close your eyes Rainbow, don’t!”

“I’m just resting my eyes, I’m tired!”

“Rainbow!” he shouted. “Don’t F*****g dare! Don’t!” he protested. “Open your eye,” he peeled my left eyes open. I saw him but my vision was blurred and eventually I couldn’t be strong anymore. I let go...

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 49

SPIRITUAL

Adjective

1. Consisting of spirit; not material; incorporeal.
2. Of or relating to the intellectual and higher endowments of the mind; mental; intellectual.

So, there's good and evil, wrong and right, up and down, happy and sad, black and white, tall and short, fat and thin, and so with that, there is the seen and the unseen, that is the physical and the spiritual. I've never been much of a spiritual person. I never prayed or searched for any form of spiritual guidance from a higher power. I mean I do believe that there's a power bigger than you and I. I believe there is a God, I just never acknowledged him. I was never taught too. My parents always found solace in luxury and at the bottom of expensive wine

bottles. And so, it was automatically borne in me to deal with things as I see them and not give prayer a moment's thought.

I find myself at a crossroads. Between a rock and a hard place. I feel my own power has run its course and I cannot no longer depend on it to carry me from point A to B. I find myself deeply perplexed and weakened to the very core of my being.

My body is tired and painful. I feel empty and cold. I know I'm in the hospital, I remember everything that happened that led to this very point. Why is she here? Zanele...she's pacing up and down and I'm torn between calling her and closing my eyes.

"Zanele," a raspy and dry tone escaped my

throat.

“Oh thank goodness!” she hastened up to me. “How are you feeling?” she asked. Why does she care about me? Again – why is she here? I looked around the room; it was just her and I. I’d expected that I would see Lucky holding my hand and waiting for me to wake up. “Stay put, I’ll get a doctor,” she exited.

The last thing I remember is Lucky telling me to continue talking to him. He wanted to use my gun for something, and I allowed him. Zanele came back with a nurse and a doctor.

“Zah, I told Lucky I’d be up soon. Please tell him I’m awake.” I said.

“Ma’am, I’m doctor Hlophe. I’m the one the was treating you...” he says. Zah took my hand.

“The baby is gone, isn’t it?” I said what was obviously hard for him to utter. He nodded.

“I’m so sorry,” Zah expressed. I don’t understand what’s happening here; where is Lucky and why is she suddenly nice to me. This is what she wanted.

Menzi barged in with a screwed-up face.

“Hey,” he greeted.

“Where’s Lucky?” I asked. “I really need him right now and I’m sure he needs me too,” my voice cracked.

“I will give you some space,” said the doctor and exited with the nurse behind him.

“Mom, dad and Mtho are outside, they’ll be in just now,” he says.

“And Lucky?” why the hell do they keep deviating from his name?

“Rainbow,” his face contoured, “Perhaps maybe you should rest,” he suggested.

“Menzi, I’m resting. But please get me Lucky,” their parents walked in with Mtho.

“How are you feeling?” asked Eunice.

“Where’s Lucky?” I asked her, she looked at Paul. “Has something happened to him? Is he okay?” I can’t lose my baby and the father of my baby all in one day. I won’t survive it.

“Lucky is gone,” Paul says.

“Gone?” I questioned. A lot of scenarios are playing in my head right now and it’s driving me insane. I need to know exactly what happened.

“We don’t know where he went. The doctor told us that the baby didn’t make it and then he said he was going to get some air; which only seemed normal,” Menzi explained. “But after a while, he didn’t come back. We looked for him, he was nowhere to be found. It appears that he took the taxi and just left. And his phone is off,”

“We looked at the CCTV footages and saw him drive out of the hospital aunty Rainbow,” added Mtho.

“Where could he have gone?” I asked what they themselves cannot answer.

“We don’t know.” Answered Mr Dlamini. I looked at Mtho and my eyes started tearing. I hope Lucky did not run off. Perhaps it all got too much for him and he decided to leave. But...no he would never do that to me. He would never just pick up and leave. Not my Lucky.

“He’ll be back” I professed. Zah squeezed my hand and even though that is supposed to make me feel better – it made me feel alone

and scared. I should have woken up to Lucky and not to his little sister who has made her loathing for me pretty clear.

“He has never done anything like this before,” pointed out Eunice.

“Can I be left alone please, for a minute,” I requested.

In a few seconds the room was empty. I was left alone with thoughts loud enough to break my brain into two and rhythmic beeps from the machines. Where could he have gone? Why would he leave me like this? “Come back to me Lucky,” I muttered. He should be here now; we should be comforting one another. We’ve both lost a child. I don’t know what to do; perhaps it’s the drugs they’ve given me that are making me

numb at the moment. My heart is breaking yes, but I should be crying much more than I am right now. I should be losing my mind.

Maybe later, it'll all kick in.

Like I had mentioned earlier; we have the seen and the unseen. The physical and the spiritual and the two control one another. Just before I woke to the red horror between my thighs I was in a dream. I was dreaming about Sammy. She had taken my baby thinking it was a doll and said it needed fixing. I couldn't get to her, she disappeared with my baby and then I woke up from that dream to be hospitalized and eventually lost my baby.

I want to pray but I don't know who to pray to. I don't know how to pray and will that God even

listen? Does he even like me, better yet know me. Can he see the great physical and emotional pain I am in right now? Why can't he help me without having been asked? Can't he be generous and do a favour for a girl who just lost a child, a lover and on the verge of losing herself?

"God, please bring Lucky back to me" I quickly slapped my hand over my mouth to try and stop myself from crying. "Please let him be okay in the heart and mind and body," I want to be with Lucky so bad. I need him to be here. I want to hold him and tell him that we will be fine, that we will get through this. I need my Guy.

Three days later, I was discharged from the hospital. I returned to Lucky's room at his home and he wasn't there still. Menzi says he hasn't

stopped looking for him and that he will find him. Here I am in his room watching the door, waiting for him to walk in and tell me something I can hold on to. I picked up my phone and called him.

“THIS IS LUCKY, I’M SORRY I CAN’T TAKE YOUR CALL RIGHT NOW. LEAVE YOUR NAME AND I WILL GET BACK TO YOU ASAP,” I hadn’t heard his voice since that afternoon. I hadn’t attempted to call him and I don’t know why? I guess when Menzi said his phone was off I automatically took his word for him. I called again just to listen to his voice.

“THIS IS LUCKY, I’M SORRY I CAN’T TAKE YOUR CALL RIGHT NOW. LEAVE YOU NAME AND I WILL GET BACK TO YOU ASAP” so I decided to leave a voice message.

“BABE,” tears streamed down my face. “I LOVE YOU. PLEASE COME BACK TO ME. I’M SORRY ABOUT THE BABY” I sobbed. “I’M IN YOUR ROOM AND EVERYTHING SMELLS LIKE YOU. AT LEAST JUST TELL ME THAT YOU ARE OKAY, PLEASE GUY,” I begged. “YOUR WHOLE,” I gasped losing control of my breathing and choking on my own words, “YOUR WHOLE FAMILY IS LOOKING FOR YOU AND YOUR SON IS SCARED. COME HOME MY LOVE OKAY...I WILL LEAVE A VOICE MESSAGE EVERYDAY UNTIL YOU COME BACK, YOU HEAR ME? I LOVE YOU SO MUCH AND I’M NOT MAD AT YOU. I JUST MISS YOU AND I NEED YOU,” Zah walked in with a tray of food and something to drink. “COME HOME,”

“Who is that?” she asked. I quickly cleaned my face. No amount of cleaning and wiping can

fool anyone. My eyes are puffy and red, I swear if I cried any more, they might pop out of my face.

“I was leaving a voice message for Lucky, so he knows I’m thinking of him,” I answered.

“Ma made you porridge, she said please eat” she sat at the bottom of the bed facing me.
“Rainbow, I’m so sorry. No one deserves this...”

I chuckled sarcastically. “It’s okay Zanele, no one is here; it’s just you and I,” her eyes rested on mine. “You don’t have to pretend to care or to be sad. You wanted this,”

“I didn’t mean it,”

“Well it happened” I grabbed my wrist and squeezed; it seems we’re back to that old habit. “The baby is gone and your brother is gone, go and celebrate.”

“I’m so sorry,” she took on a high-pitched tone.

“Get out!” I closed my eyes. I don’t want to see her. I never want to see her.

“I’m sorry Rainbow,” she broke down in tears, “I am really truly and deeply sorry,”

“My baby is still dead and your brother is still gone so save it and get out,” my voice transformed to a brittle and aggressive tone. She jumped and darted to the door.

I never want to see her face again. She is the reason this is all happening to me and therefore, she should be pleased with herself. I don't have my baby and I don't have my Lucky. I need to leave soon. I can't be here...I can't be here with her. One of us will die and I don't die. I got up and started packing; Monde has told me to come and stay with her for a few days, both my parents have attempted to come and fetch me – yes – including Vuyiswa. She really wants me close to her and no one understands what I'm going through like her. What I mean is, I'm not stuck here...I don't have to be here.

I called Lucky again;

“HEY GUY, IT'S ME” I composed myself. “I'M PACKING NOW. I THINK IT'S BEST FOR ME TO LEAVE. I WILL TELL YOU WHERE I'LL BE GOING ONCE I DECIDE, JUST IN CASE YOU WANT ME. I LOVE YOU LUCKY AND PLEASE JUST COME

BACK”

The door opened and Mtho emerged.

“Aunty Rainbow,” he called.

“Hey boy,” I cleaned my face and assumed a semblance that won’t discourage him or even for a slight second make him think he has lost me too. I know he is not my son but I’ve grown very fond of this boy as though he were my own. We’re kindred spirits him and I.

“Don’t do that please,” he came and sat on the exact same spot that her aunty was just sitting in.

“What?” I sniffed.

“Don’t stop crying or try to be strong. Don’t clean your face,”

“I’m sorry,” I apologized.

“What happened with you and aunty Zah?” he asked, “I saw her crying”

“It’s grown up things, don’t worry yourself about it my love,” I sighed preparing myself to tell him that I’m leaving. “Boy, I have to go,”

“Now?” sadness took over his face.

“Maybe tomorrow. Or the next day...but I need to go and be with my family,”

“You’re hurting, aren’t you?”

I nodded and cleaned a tear that somehow escaped from my eye. “I need to go and fix myself at home, with family. Maybe my sister or my parents, I don’t know,”

“I will call you every day and check on you,” he assured.

“Once I’m strong enough to not cry every few seconds then I will come back to you. I don’t want you to feel like I’m leaving you too,”

“I understand just pick up when I call...please,”

“I promise,” I smiled, “Maybe you can come see me during the weekend”

“I’ll talk to Baba Menzi and organize transport for you,”

“Thank you, boy,” Mtho has really matured it’s scary. He is becoming more and more like his father every day. He even looks like him.

If I stay here, I will feel out of place and miss Lucky even more. And I will just be broken in front of Mtho, which won’t be fair on him. He can’t see me like this. I need to be somewhere where there is no memory of Lucky at all. I don’t think I have ever cried this much. Even with Ndumiso, it was never this bad. At times I don’t even know whether I’m crying for the baby or for Lucky or even both at the same time.

Lucky's room had some baby items that the family bought and I'm just not ready to deal with that. There were some talks about a cleansing that needs to be made for me, I am not about that also. I just don't want anything I don't want to talk about anything or do anything. I want to be left alone forever; I want to hold my breath until I die. I want every memory I have of the last week to just disappear and I want my baby back and Lucky back. That's all I want.

"I just have a favour to ask of you,"

"Name it,"

"When everything has calmed and Baba is back, please talk to him for me; I want to come and

stay with you guys.”

“I will talk to him,” I assured. He has faith that his father will be back. I hope his faith is strong enough for the both of us, at this point I really don’t know if I’m strong enough to take a mere breath in the next minute.

GOOD MORNING♡

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 50

DIAGNOSTICS

Noun

1. The process of determining the state of or

capability of a component to perform its function

I've shifted from missing and worrying about Lucky, to missing and being angry at him. It has been 2 whole weeks since I had a miscarriage and he hasn't resurfaced. I have concluded that he was in shock, perhaps also traumatized by that day and figured he should disappear for a little while - though that is nowhere within the scale of acceptable. I had told myself that - should he resurface soon - I would forgive him. But he hasn't and I have lost patience. Now I'm utterly mad at him. He's not dead. I can feel it in my bones, Lucky is alive somewhere probably drinking himself into oblivion.

One of the diagnostics I came up with for his

disappearance was that maybe he was mad at me for being incapable of carrying his child to full-term. He couldn't bear to look at me knowing that my body wasn't strong enough to bring his child into this world. I think I might have let him down; including his family. His entire family – including mine – was so excited about the baby. And as scared and anxious as I was, I was excited to be a mommy too. I had started picking out baby names, I wrote them down in my phone memo. My utmost favourite was Athandwa, Lucky said he loved it because it suited both genders but didn't like it very much because it reminded him of Sthandwasam and thereafter said I had a crush on him. So, I was kind of knee deep into this whole parenting thing. Lucky made me want to be a mom, he made me want to be a better person for him and the baby. I ate healthier, spoke kinder things about myself, to myself, to him and to the baby. Heck I even sang, I sang

for our baby. Initially he did it alone and then recruited me. It was nice to be a family with him.

I spent a week with my dad, my mom came every day to check on me. She eventually moved out to a place of her own but they decided to keep things at school running as per usual. Then I went to Joburg to spend another week with my biological parents who have been nothing short of perfect. Last night I arrived at Monde's to stay with them for a little while. I thought I should distribute the workload evenly.

"Good morning," Ayanda came in with a cup of coffee in hand. I was standing by the window staring into the abyss.

"Hey," I approached her and took the cup.

"Thank you," I hugged the cup with both hands

returning to my position by the window.

“You got any sleep?” she asked. I nodded, clearly lying.

“I’m fine, I’m getting better!” I assured. “I mean, nothing is wrong...I just...what I mean is,” her eyebrows drew together. “I didn’t sleep. I can’t sleep...”

Monde walked in all ready for work. “Hey sister,”

“Hey, anything on Lucky?” I asked knowing the answer already. She shook her head. “That’s okay, don’t worry about it,” I sipped on my coffee. “off to work?” I asked the obvious. I didn’t want to dwell on anything that would make them feel sorry for me for even a slight

second.

“Yes. There’s food in the fridge, knock yourself out,” said Monde.

“And I got you ice-cream, there’s a whole lot. Have it – all of it,” boasted Ayanda.

I smiled and nodded simultaneously. “I will see you guys later,” I folded my lips together.

“Later Rain,” Ayanda blew a kiss. I smiled.

“Have you ever had a miscarriage, Monde?” her eyes found Ayanda but mine were fixed on her.

“I have never been pregnant,” she lowly said.

“I see. You know my mom has had a miscarriage before, I know of two; one was supposed to be me. Your mom had a miscarriage too...technically we lived other people’s lives our whole lives. Probably still are. My mom is not even my biological mom but somehow I got the ‘family curse’,” I softly chuckled. “I pray you don’t have a miscarriage Monde, it empties you up and lives you with a corpse like feeling,” they looked at one another and I could tell they were regretting ever opening their doors up for me. “Don’t let me keep you waiting,” I turned my attention back to the window.

I don’t know which to mourn? Lucky or my baby that I never even got to hear laugh or cry. The only person who really understands this pain ditched me.

“LUCKY” I made my daily call to him. “THIS IS RAINBOW BUT OBVIOUSLY YOU KNOW THAT. I THINK FROM MY TONE YOU CAN ALREADY TELL THAT I’M NOT CRYING AND I AM MAD AT YOU. THIS HAS GONE ON FOR WAY TOO LONG WHERE ARE YOU?” I paused. “IF YOU ARE MAD AT ME FOR LOSING THE BABY THEN I’M SORRY. YOU DON’T HAVE TO COME BACK TO ME OR FOR ME, JUST FOR YOUR SON LUCKY. YOU ARE ALL THAT BOY HAS...HOW DO YOU THINK HE FEELS. JUST PICK UP THE DAMN...” I held my breath willing myself to calm the f**k down! I’m so tired of crying. It’s tiring and causes unbearable headaches. “COME HOME. I’M AT MONDE’S NOW” I ended the call.

The day went on very slowly. That’s how my days are now, long and my nights even longer. I watched tv, dozed off for a minute or two. Ate whatever I could get my hands on and dozed off

some more. My phone rang scaring me to the ends of this earth. I was just falling asleep again.

“HELLO,” I picked up.

“HEY, I KNOW YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE TAKING SOME TIME OFF BUT THE COLONEL HAS ASKED ME TO BESEECH YOU TO COME IN,” she said.

“BESEECH?”

“THAT’S THE WORD HE USED...IT’S URGENT,”

“OKAY MONDE, I’LL BE THERE.”

I put on blue jeans, Lucky’s sweater that I stole

from his room back at home and sneakers. I requested a cab and I was out. In no more than 30 minutes I had arrived.

Monde led me to the colonel's office where we found the colonel himself, Sibeko and Nkonzo.

"Good day," I greeted.

"Hey Rainbow, how are you holding up?" asked the colonel.

"I...I'm fine thank you." I responded. "Is this about Lucky? Have you found him? Is he fine?"

"As you can see Rainbow, this meeting is very odd because It's very delicate and if handled

anyhow could lead to the underground coming to an end," he says,

"What has happened?" I asked.

"I know that you were supposed to take some time off but we need you..."

"To do what? Anything, tell me. I need to distract my mind anyway..." Monde gave me a file as usual. I opened it and started flipping through until I got to the pictures. "What is this?"

"Now, we are not certain but we think that is Bongumenzi Dlamini," Monde updated me. Now that I've been given a name to identity this possible suspect, it does look like Menzi.

“What is he doing?” I looked at her.

“We don’t know,” she sighed.

“But get this, the most promising tip of Ndumiso’s whereabouts is in that hotel that this Menzi looking male is seen walking in and out of” added Sibeko. “Obviously the hotel cannot give us information on their guests but they have no one under Ndumiso Gumede or Bongumenzi Dlamini. We even went as far as checking Lucky Dlamini...”

“Whatever is going on here has nothing to do with Lucky,” I defended the man who ran out on me. “Lucky is...he’s just not a part of it,” I realized I was letting my emotions get in the

way of being a good cop so I drew myself back.
“what about the cctv footages at the hotel on
the day of Ndumiso’s disappearance?”

“Nothing. We have posted men outside the
hotel and there has been no sign of a Ndumiso
going in or out,” said Nkonzo.

“What do you want me to do then?” I asked.

“Go back,” said the colonel.

“To the Dlamini’s?”

He nodded, “Ask to join his team, make him
trust you, let us in...”

“He already asked me to join them,” I told

“Perfect! Just tell him you’ve thought about it and you want to be in his team. You are the only one that can get us closer to anything,” colonel spoke, “As a matter of fact, call him now,”

“Now?” I cried questioning.

“Yes, put him on speaker. Ask if the spot you were offered is still available,” the colonel instructed ever so enthusiastically and I obeyed the instructions. I took out my phone and called Paul Dlamini.

“YOU NEVER CALL ME; IN FACT, YOU HAVE NEVER CALLED ME. HAVE YOU FOUND MY SON?” he didn’t bother getting into the usual

perfunctory salutations.

“THIS IS NOT A SOCIAL CALL SIR, IT’S WORK,” I said cutting to the chase as well.

“ARE YOU CALLING TO TELL ME YOU HAVE FINALLY DECIDED TO JOIN MY TEAM? I looked at the colonel feeling rather worried. Monde nodded and signaled me to continue talking. “ARE YOU WITH SOMEONE THERE?”

“NO SIR, I’M SORRY. I GOT DISATRACTED A BIT,” I cleared my throat and fixed my tone. “AND AS A MATTER OF FACT, SIR, I WAS CALLING TO ASK IF THE SPOT IS STILL AVAILABLE?”

“WHAT MADE YOU COME TO THIS

CONCLUSION?” I’m not really good at thinking on the spot.

Monde formed a heart shape with her hands, “Lucky” she mouthed.

“LUCKY SIR, I LOVE HIM AND WHEN WE FIND HIM, I WANT HIM TO COME BACK TO A UNITED FAMILY. AND BESIDES, YOU AND YOURS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME.” Monde gave me two thumbs up.

“THERE IS ALWAYS ROOM FOR YOU HERE,” I could tell from his tone that he was smiling.

“Dig, more info” mouthed Nkonzo and the colonel agreed with him by nodding and giving me a thumbs up.

“IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED FROM ME NOW SIR? LIKE A FIRST OFFICIAL ASSIGNMENT?” I asked.

“JUST COME AND SEE ME, WE’LL TALK. SOME MATTERS ARE TOO DELICATE TO BE DISCUSSED OVER THE PHONE,”

“WHEN?”

“AS SOON AS YOU CAN,”

“OKAY, I WILL MAKE A PLAN TO COME DOWN SOON,”

“VERY WELL THEN! I SHALL SEE YOU WHEN

YOU GET HERE,”

“YES SIR.”

“AND RAINBOW, IT’S BABA NOW,”

“YEBO, BABA”

I am investigating my boyfriend’s family. I am going to them under false pretense, this is not only risky but might burn the bridge built between myself and the Dlaminis. Lucky needs to come back from wherever he is and sort out whatever is happening because I am not about to have his family arrested for whatever funny business they are up to. Please let it be a false alarm, please.

“This is risky,” I announced.

“very,” Grootboom agreed.

“Then let’s not do it, this is Lucky’s family. They regard me as family sir and now to go behind their backs and investigate them, that’s cruel and I can only imagine what they will do to me once they figure out what I’m up to,”

“Then you better make sure they don’t,”
commanded Grootboom. “And that is an order,”

“Sir!” I protested.

“Rainbow!” he shut me up. “Forget about what they are to you, stand on neutral ground. If they

are dirty - we are locking them up. If they are not this case will disappear. You are smart Rainbow and I know you feel it too, there's is more to these people and if word gets out that an underground team has gone rogue; my career will be on the line and the two of you behind bars to serve your sentence," that should be myself and Nkonzo.

"But do you think Dlamini is in on it?" I asked. The colonel got up, rested his hands on the desk and leaned forward while his eyes kept mine in place.

"Something tells me he is the mastermind behind all of this. Excuse me," he took his wallet and car keys and found his way to the door.

"I think so too," Monde spoke. "Menzi is not like

Lucky,” she added.

“How?” asked Nkonzo.

“Its like you and I Rain,” she says. “Menzi is me...he follows rules, he is a leader but he is led. And Lucky on the other hand, he’s like you. He acts on impulse, breaks every single rule just to get things done. If Dlamini is straight then so is Menzi, if he is rogue then so is he. He is his father’s son...obedient and loyal to the core,”

“Are you saying he’s being forced?” asked Sibeko.

“Not forced, but more like ordered”

“That makes sense.” I agreed with Monde,
“Menzi doesn’t colour outside of the lines.”

“I guess you better get home to baba,” said
Nkonzo patting me on the back.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 51

RULES

Noun

(Plural form of RULE)

1. Regulations, laws, guidelines

2. Normal conditions or state of affairs.

2 days later, I drove down to the Dlamini's and was welcomed warmly – which was par for the course. Eunice made a big deal out of my arrival and cooked a very homely meal. The cloud of confusion and sadness Lucky's sudden disappearance invited over this house is still there but everybody is trying to keep sane. What good would it do to lose sanity?

Zanele is threading on thin ice around me, she hasn't said much to me since I arrived, and for both of our sakes, it's better she keeps it that way. When I said I wanted nothing to do with her I meant it. when I said I never want to see her again I meant it but I'm here because of a

pushing force.

We had supper and finished without Mthobisi which was alarming. No one seemed worried or concerned about his whereabouts.

“Does he always come home late? I thought we were passed that?” I voiced out my concerns.

“Boys will be boys,” Menzi nonchalantly commented with his eyes fixed on the tv screen.

The time is just 20 minutes shy of ten o'clock; it's at night. Mthobisi is only 16, he shouldn't be allowed to roam around so freely. And by the look of thing, they allow him to do as he pleases.

“Menzi, you should talk to him, he can’t be out this late.” I said. “What about school? He has to do his home works and study. Where does he get the time and when does he sleep?”

“I will talk to him, I promise.”

A few moments later; Mtho walked in still in his school uniform.

“San’bona” he greeted.

“Sure boy,” his uncle responded.

“Hey, boy,” I got up to hug him. “Come here. Where have you been?”

“School, soccer...we had soccer at school,” he stuttered.

“But word says you come in at this time every day,” I confronted.

“Let him change and get started with his work Rain, you’ll talk to him tomorrow,” his uncle saved him.

“Go and change, I will warm your food for you,”

I sat in the dining room with him and caught up while he ate his supper. Thereafter I stayed up with him while he did his school work. He seemed very confused. It was as though he was seeing his work for the first time. I had to help him by googling some answers and Mtho is a

very smart boy, it is unlike him to be completely clueless. He gets 7s and 6s.

Eventually we finished and it was time to sleep for us. the rest of the house was already out. He walked me to his father's room, like his father would order if he were around and too lazy to leave the couch and walk me himself.

"Maybe you should go to my room and let me crash out here," he suggested looking around the room as though he had never been inside these walls. "or better yet, let me take the floor,"

"You sound like your father," I teased. "I'm okay. You'll lock the door and I have you on speed dial if anything happens," I don't have him on speed dial. That was a lie to get him to relax.

“Are you sure?”

I nodded. “Come here,” he came and sat next to me on the bed. “Are you okay? Does it become too much here without Lucky?” I inquired. “Is that why you are coming home late every day?” he neither nodded nor shook his head. “Mtho, can I ask you something?” he nodded this time. “have you noticed anything weird happening?”

“Like what?” his forehead creased.

“Anything, anything that just stood out to you...”

“Aunty Rainbow, I have to tell you something,” his voice lowered. His eyes darted to the door then back at me.

“What is it boy?” fear transformed his face.

“Mkhulu and Baba Menzi...”

The door flew open, “You have school tomorrow and let’s aunty Rainbow rest,” Menzi was at the door.

“Yebo baba,” (Yes dad) he got up. “Goodnight Aunty Rainbow,”

“Goodnight boy,” I responded.

“Night Rain,” Menzi sang. They locked the door outside.

I wonder what is it that Mtho wanted to tell me? And why is it that all of a sudden Menzi is just stuck on Mtho like gum under a shoe? I think Colonel Grootboom was right, there is definitely more happening here...something is definitely out of place and it seems they might have dragged Mtho into it or Mtho saw what he wasn't supposed to see.

Before I slept; I made a phone call to Lucky.

“HEY BABE...HMMM I’M IN YOUR ROOM RIGHT NOW AND EVERYTHING SMELLS LIKE YOU. MTHO MISSES YOU SO MUCH AND SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT, THAT BOY NEEDS YOU AND I NEED YOU. IF PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, I THINK I MIGHT HAVE TO TAKE HIM WITH ME WHEN I’M GOING BACK BECAUSE HE IS JUST NOT COPING WELL HERE. THE BOY JUST LOST 2 SIBLINGS AND HIS FATHER, IT CAN’T BE EASY. AND MY FEAR IS THAT WE

MIGHT LOSE HIM TO THE STREETS. SO
BETETR SAFE THAT SORRY...ANYWAY, THAT'S
THE UPDATE FOR TODAY. GOODNIGHT AND I
LOVE YOU,"

I woke up very early today so I could help Mtho prepare for school. I helped iron his uniform and made his lunch, which afforded him an extra 30 minutes of sleep and he needs it shame. I made myself a cup of coffee while I waited for him to come for breakfast. I fixed him a smoothie with the Future-life powder mix.

"Aunty Rainbow, what is this?" he asked pulling out a chair.

"That's called a smoothie also known as your breakfast," I answered.

“Yeah, I know what it is but, I don’t eat breakfast during the week. I need to get to school early,”

“For what Mtho?” I questioned.

“I just have things I need to do,” he got up.

“Thanks for everything, he picked up his lunch and charged for the door,”

I ran after him with the smoothie in hand. “At least take it with you,” he groaned running back to me. He got the smoothie and ran out the yard.

Is every learner as busy as Mtho is at that school? I’d really like to find out what actually happens once he enters the premises of his school. Does he suddenly become an educator?

Or better yet; the principal himself.

Zah walked in still in her night wear much like myself.

“Good morning,” she greeted.

“Morning,” I slurped my coffee.

“He really like you, he talks about you all the time,” she says. I got up with my coffee readying myself to exit. “Please don’t go...”

“I’m not up for small talks Zanele, I’m really not. I’d like to enjoy my morning,”

“Fine, I won’t talk to you. I’m sorry. I’ll just get

started with breakfast,”

Dlamini appeared all bathed and ready for the day.

“walk with me,” he ordered and I obeyed. I obviously took my cup with me. He stood at the center of his very enormous yard and looked at the far end and so I took to doing the same. The view does provide a great scope for the imagination.

“Have you heard anything about Ndumiso?” he asked.

“No sir, I’m not even a part of that investigation,”

“Okay. I guess all there is to say is welcome to the team. Your first task is to run the taxi rank back in Durban,” I gazed up at him.

“Am I undercover? What’s happening at the rank?” I questioned.

“No, Sgora is just messing up. I’m losing money. Remember Mhlongo turned on us, Lucky disappeared and Menzi is here,”

“But running the taxi rank isn’t an official task. That’s personal...I’m here to work for you team, the underground team. Not work for you personally,”

“Rule number 1, don’t question me and rule number 2, follow rule number 1. Simple

enough?" he turned around heading back inside. He wants me to run a rank? A place I formerly called a taxi station? That should be an indication of how much knowledge I have about the industry. I don't know the first thing and now he wants me run it. He must be absurd.

I stood there for a little while watching the sun coming into its full form. Then I remembered the day Lucky showed up outside my flat drunk as a fiddler talking about the sun and how I looked and smelled like it. I felt the corner of my mouth curve up as my mind remembered Lucky's face, smile and sound of his voice. But sadly. That warm fuzzy feeling was immediately replaced by feelings of anger and sadness as I remembered that day when I woke up feeling empty, tired and in pain only to find Zanele pacing up and down the hospital room I was in. He bailed leaving myself and his son behind to

deal with such a loss. I had never been pregnant before and to make things worse I had a miscarriage.

I always imagine how it would be when he shows up one of these days. Would I run to him and throw myself at him? Would he show up at night? Morning or noon? Would he be sorry or sad and would he still want to be with me because I don't know if I'd still want to be with him? I don't know if I still want to wake up next to him and call him my boyfriend after everything. He might pick up and run at the sign of trouble. I can't have that doubt lingering at the back of my head. I don't want to sigh in relief when I wake up and find him still there, it's just not healthy.

“Can we talk,”

“Jesus! Zanele...” she crept up from behind startling me. Was I that deep in thought that I couldn’t hear her footsteps? I really need to snap out of it, I can’t be absent minded here.

“I’m sorry,” she apologized.

“What is it this time?”

“You and I used to be very close,” she reminded.
“I know I messed things up...I’m just really sorry,”

“Why are you sorry Zanele? What are sorry for?”
I questioned looking at the far end of the yard.

“For everything that happened...the baby, my brother,”

“Say? If I was still pregnant and your brother was still around, would you still be sorry?” something dawned on me so my eyes shot up at her swiftly. She gave me a puzzled expression. “Where is he?”

“My brother, I don’t know...you think I have something to do with his disappearance? I don’t...” she defended herself.

“I’m certain you must have something to do with something, anything in this household, what is it?” Her eyes studied mine. She then looked back at the house and back at me. “what is it?” I became impatient.

“something is different with my brother and baba,” she said almost whispering.

“What do you mean?”

“They’ve been secretive. With their police work, I used to help. He said he was training me to join his team. But something has changed. I’m no longer allowed in meetings. They are always whispering outside and Menzi is always on the phone passing on messages for a Lenny,”

“Lenny? Are you sure?” I pulled her closer.

“Yes!” she firmly answered. “He’s always saying; Lenny says, Lenny wants, Lenny blah blah. Who the hell is Lenny?”

“Okay, why are you telling me this? how do I know you’re not setting me up?”

“Because they are dragging my nephew into whatever they are up to and I just know it’s not good. That’s why you’re here isn’t? Your boss sent you to snoop?”

“How are they using Mtho?”

“You saw how Menzi is always around him and speaking for...”

“Zanele” we both jumped and looked back to find Menzi standing by the entrance of the main house. “Breakfast,”

“Okay!” she shouted. “Coming,” she looked at me with eyes filled with regret and fear.

“It’s okay, I got you,” I assured her. We walked back to the house together.

“Have you too kissed and made up?” he asked.

“It seems we have,” Zanele walked right in. I followed her. “Let me help her with breakfast,” he gave me a quick smile.

Why would Menzi be sending out orders for Lenny when Lenny is in jail? I was arrested with Lenny when I was still pretending to be Ndumiso. He didn’t get immunity. I took my phone and texted Monde:

MENZI PASSING ON MESSAGES FOR A LENNY

LENNY IS IN PRISON she texted back

THOUGHT AS MUCH. CAN HE OPERATE FROM INSIDE?

I WILL VISIT HIM TODAY. BUT LAST I CHECKED HE WAS IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR THE PAST WEEK.

UPDATE ME. DLAMINI WANTS ME TO RUN THE RANK BACK THERE

SOMETHING MUST BE HAPPENING THERE. ON IT...

And then there's Mthobisi. Poor boy, they

probably have him doing things he doesn't want to do. I will fetch him from school today and maybe take him out for ice-cream and see what I can get from him. He was trying to tell me something last night but Menzi came and got him.

Please let this be a false alarm. Or at least let there be a plausible explanation.

HAVE A GOOD DAY♡

INSERT 52

MOTHER

Noun

1. A human female who parents a child, gives

birth to a baby, donates a fertilized egg, donates a body cell which had resulted in a clone

2. One's mother

I've been cracking my brain since morning, trying to understand what could be happening in this household. I thought about snooping inside Dlamini's office but that was obviously out of the question; it's always locked and the keys are always with him. I don't know how to open that kind of lock with a bobby pin like Lucky taught me back when we were undercover as a married couple. My best option now is Mtho.

I'm on my way to fetch him from school. The plan is to take him out and get him talking. Not a solid plan I know, but it's the only plan I have

now. I waited in the car outside the school and watched the learners pouring out of the gate like bees. I spotted him and got out of the car to wave at him. He was approached by two very grown men who were also in a car outside the gate, which I assumed were also waiting to pick up. I went back inside the car to avoid him spotting me. I want to see exactly what happens. One of the guys threw his arm around his shoulders and almost pushed him towards their car. I did what anyone would have done; I followed the car. It seems they are headed into town.

What could Mtho be doing with these guys? They don't seem like people he would associate with. The car finally stopped by a dodgy alley. They sat in the car for a few minutes, until finally, Mtho jumped out with his school bag over one shoulder. He went down the alley and the car drove off. What the fuck do I do now?

My phone chimed, it's a message from Sthandwasam and it reads;

GOT A PING ON LUCKY. He sent that along with a picture of him in a black cotton tracksuit and black tekkies. And a location, it says he's somewhere in Soweto. Who the fuck does he know there? What do I do now? What would Lucky do?

"Impulse," I remembered Monde's analogy about how Menzi is orderly and Lucky is reckless and acts on impulse. Since she compared me to him, I guess I won't be deviating too far from myself. I got out of the car and marched down the alley. At the far end; I see Mtho talking to a sick looking and shady male individual. Did he just...is that? Bloody hell,

Mtho is selling drugs. I took out my Glock, cocked it.

“Mtho!” I shouted approaching him with haste. The shady guy bailed, Mtho jumped dropping money and the bag of whatever drug he is dealing. “What the fuck are you doing?” I questioned.

“What are you doing here?” he panicked picking up his things and shoving them into the pocket of his grey pants.

“Wrong answer! I said what are you doing here?”

“You shouldn’t be here, they are watching. Just go....” I shoved my hand into his pockets. He

fought me by pulling my hand out.

“Who is watching Mtho?” I questioned. “Is this soccer?” I shouted.

“Leave! Get outta here....”

“Boy, you better fix your tone!” I reprimanded him.

“You are not my mother and you will never be. You will leave like they all did...so please, leave me alone. Go...” I froze for a minute. Then the cop side of me reminded me that I couldn’t afford to freeze or act on emotions. I pointed my gun at him, his eyes grew wide as shock transformed his face.

“Move,”

“What the fuck?”

“Move Mtho, I’m placing you under arrest.” I said.

“What?” he cried, “You’re not even a real cop”

“You want me to call the police because they can be here in a few seconds and before they even take you to the police station they will rough you up for breaking the law and fucking wasting their time,” he opened his mouth in attempt to speak, but no sound came out. “Now would you rather this fake cop takes you or reals cops?”

“Fine” he gave in. “But we’re in trouble, just know” he started walking and I walked behind him with my gun still pointing at him.

“Get in,” I ordered. Just before I could even fasten my seatbelt, Zanele called.

“HELLO,” I picked up.

“RAINBOW,” She was whispering and her voice was wobbly and airy. “DON’T COME BACK,”

“WHAT?”

“THEY KNOW MTHO IS WITH YOU, I JUST OVERHEARD THEM TALKING. ORDERS TO SHOOT HAVE BEEN GIVEN OUT,”

“Zanele wenzani,” (Zanele, what are you doing?)
I heard Menzi in the background.

“RUN” the call disconnected.

“That was Zanele, she says we should run,”

“They know...Oh fuck! I’m dead. Mkhulu is going to kill me. Go...go...go...” Without wasting a single second, I drove like I was mad.

“You need to tell me what is happening right now!” I quickly glanced at him then back at the road. His phone rang.

“Its baba Menzi,” he said breathing heavily.

“Don’t pick up!” I ordered.

“If I don’t then they’ll hurt me...”

“Mtho, whether you pick up or not does not matter. They will kill you...your mkhulu will...”

“He would never! He might be mad for a while but he would never kill his grandchild,”

He doesn’t know that they are not blood relatives. Fuck!

“Mtho, was that cocaine?”

“Shit! They are right behind us...those guys”

“Where’s your phone?” I asked. He waved it in the air. “Throw it in the next car with an open window.”

“What?!?!” he cried, “This is an iPhone and my whole li...”

“I will get you a bloody new phone Mtho, just toss it into a car. Preferably in the backseat”

As angry and furious at the idea of throwing out his iPhone, he obeyed.

“It’s gone. My pictures, my music, my games...” he complained, “My girlfriend”

I looked at him almost squinting my eyes. “I am trying to keep you alive....and you have a girlfriend?”

“I’m 16,” he said as if being 16 means one is automatically involved in a romantic relationship.

“Okay, Mtho. I think we lost them. I’m sure they are following that car now,”

“Where they’ll find my phone with all my pictures and music and my girlfriend,” he gave me an accusing look.

“This is not the time, tell me everything now” I ordered. I had to divide my attention between

driving and listening to Mtho

“I don’t know much but they asked me to sell drugs. Mkhulu said he was grooming me to start working with them. He said soon I won’t need school,”

“Was that cocaine?” he nodded. “How long has this been happening? Did Lucky know about it,”

He scoffed, “Baba would never even notice if anything was wrong with me. But I think it started shortly after the wedding.” That’s around about when I discovered Mhlongo.

“I’m so tired!” he leaned back on the seat. “My grades have dropped because I stand there until its dark outside and sometimes, I skip

school to cover for any loss. I don't get time to study and whenever I want to talk something happens and it takes up everybody's time and attention." He looked at me, "Do you think baba is in on it? do you think he allowed them to use me like this?"

"Never!" is shook my head. "Lucky would never do that to you, he loves you with his whole heart and I know that; he told me"

"Then why isn't he here?" he let out a firm tone, "Why am I being saved by a stranger and not him? why can't he be there for me like a father, like a man?"

"I don't know baby," I would never paint Lucky to be a bad father; we all know he isn't. But also, I would never fool Mtho into believing things that

aren't. I know Lucky loves him and I will go to the grave preaching that but why he isn't here with him – I don't know. And I can't lie for him just to make him seem like a good person.

After an hour or so of driving, I stopped at a gas station to feed this human boy I was with. I gave him some cash and told him to get some food and drinks while I filled up the car.

He came with donuts, chips, gum, water and a can of redBull for me. We were back on the road again. I called Monde to update her.

“WHAT’S UP?” she said.

“I HAVE AN UPDATE,” I notified.

“HOLD ON, I’M WITH THE TEAM LET ME PUT YOU ON SPEAKER,” I waited a second, “WE’RE GOOD”

“I’M WITH MTHO, LUCKY’S SON. I WILL COME THERE FOR A MOMENT THEN DRIVE TO JOBURG. THEY WERE USING HIM TO SELL DRUGS AT AN ALLEY IN TOWN, HE WAS PICKED UP FROM SCHOOL,”

“HOW OLD IS LUCKY’S BOY?” asked the colonel.

“16.”

“WHY ARE YOU GOING TO JOBURG?” asked Monde.

“FIRSTLY, THEY KNOW I HAVE HIM AND THEY KNOW I KNOW. THEIR MEN WERE CHASING US AROUND TOWN NOT SO LONG AGO...I NEED A SAFE PLACE TO HIDE HIM,” and also pay Lucky a visit. I don’t want to tell anyone about him yet, just until I have my eyes on him.

“ARE YOU TAKING HIM TO MOM AND DAD?” asked Monde.

“YES, THAT’S THE LAST PLACE THEY’LL SUSPECT,”

“But I want to stay with you,” Mtho whispered beside me.

“THIS MIGHT BE CRAZY BUT I HAVE A THEORY,”

“GO ON...” colonel spoke.

“DLAMINI WANTED ME TO RUN THE TAXIS IN DURBAN. MHLONGO WANTED TO DISTRIBUTE DRUGS WITH THE TAXIS. WHAT IF HE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY AND DECIDED TO GO FOR IT, AFTER ALL, THIS MAN IS A CRIMINAL AND HIS SON TOO”

“BUT THIS DOESN'T EXPLAIN THEIR CONNECTION WITH NDUMISO” said Nkonzo

“WE ARE STILL NOT CERTAIN THEY ARE IN CAHOOTS THOUGH,”

“IT'S A PLAUSIBLE THEORY RAINBOW, BUT...COME BACK. WE'LL BE DIGGING INTO

THE TAXI RANK AND CONCENTRATE MORE ON TRACING NDUMISO DOWN,”

“AND REMEMBER SIR, NDUMISO FRAMED ME FOR ALL HIS ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES. THEY COULD BE WORKING TOGETHER AND SENDING ME TO THE RANK PUTS ME IN THE FIRING LINE,”

“NOW THAT ADDITION MAKES YOUR THEORY MORE REASONABLE,”

“OK SISTER, WE’LL BE IN TOUCH. WE’LL LOOK INTO THE TAXI RANK,”

“I NEED A NEW ID CARD, CAN YOU MAKE ONE FOR ME, I’LL JUST PICK IT UP AND GO,”

“OKAY, COME TO THE BOARDROOM WHEN YOU GET HERE,”

“GOT IT,” I disconnected the call.

“Aunty Rain, I want to stay with you,” he emphasized.

“Not now boy, right now my biggest concern is your safety. Once this investigation is closed then you can come back. Don’t worry, my parents are nice people,” he nodded.

“Fuck” he muttered.

“I know it sucks, I’m sorry. It’ll be worth it,”

My plan is to leave Mtho with my bio parents, I know they will take care of him and he will be far away from me, meaning far away from danger and from there I'm paying Lucky a visit. I want to look him in the eye and tell him how much his son is suffering and I won't even tell him where he is until I'm certain him and I are playing for the same team. Mtho has been through way too much and I'd be damned if I let anyone hurt him again.

"I'm sorry" he apologized.

"For what?" I questioned.

"For saying you are not my mother,"

"You were right and I'm sorry if you feel like I'm

trying to replace her.”

“You’ve been more of a mother to me than she’s ever been in the past 16 years, so please try your hardest best to replace her. I mean, you made me breakfast and ironed my uniform. You f*****g helped me with my homework,”

“Language!” I objected.

“But you said that word like three times to me today,” he disputed.

“I’m an adult, I can say whatever I like...”

“Fine” he retreated.

“Okay, you can say fricking and fudge but not

fuck, I call dibs on it...”

He giggled, “Now I see why dad loves you, you’re cool”

The corner of my lips curved up, “So I’m in the cool team,”

“And you are out...” we giggled glancing at one another. “Thanks aunty Rainbow,” he plastered a smile on his lips. “You are always there for me and I appreciate that,”

“And I will always be there,” I assured him. He took my hand and kissed it.

“Let me close my eyes a little, I haven’t had

proper sleep in forever,”

“Sleep tight,” pulled his seat back and closed his eyes. I couldn’t help but dart at him every now and again and smiling. He’s a good boy that needs a lot of loving and if Lucky and his mom refuse to do that, I will.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 53

PROTÉGÉ

Noun

1. A person who is guided and supported by an older and more experienced person or mentor.

“Mtho,” I called. He was fast asleep. Didn’t even flinch. “Boy” I really don’t want to wake him up but I can’t leave him in the car alone. I am not taking that chance. “Mthobisi,” I yelled.

“What?!” he peeled his eyes open,

“We’re here,” I said.

“At your parents’?” he sat up and pulled his seat forward.

“Mtho, you do realize that you’ve been asleep for at least an hour? We have about 6 more hours on the road before we get there,” I said. “This where your dad and I work. Menzi and Mkhulu too...”

“Am I coming inside with you?” he inquired.

“Yes, I am not taking any risks with you.”

“Whoah! This place is cool,” Mtho praised as we headed to the boardroom where Monde said I’d find her. “Every department has a floor?” I nodded. He looks pretty stoked. He scrolled through the button inside the elevator reading each carefully. “IT” he read out loud and lingered a little longer on the IT button.

“Forensics, this place is really cool,”

“Come,” the doors opened and we got out and headed straight down. It’s quiet, most people have gone home now, except for a few individuals like my mirror image. I opened the door to the boardroom and found the whole team there, seems like they are all pulling in

extra hours.

“Sister,” Monde approached me with her arms open.

“Hey, extra hours?” I asked squeezing her in my arms.

“Yep!” she looked at Mtho, “You must be the famous 16-year-old drug dealing boy,”

“That’s him,”

“I was coerced...I mean forced” he groaned,
“Aunty what’s the proper term”

“Don’t worry about that, Colonel,” I called. “This

is him”

Mr Grootboom pulled out handcuffs. “Mthobisi you are under arrest for distributing drugs and for skipping school, hands behind your back,”

“Aunty Rainbow,” his voice squeaked.

“I gave you an option earlier to either bring the real cops or let me take you in. I took you, but I work with real cops and my boss is the boss of cops so...you’re going to jail now,”

“But you said that...I thought,”

“Relax boy,” Mr G chuckled, it’s a joke but the work Rainbow does is more important than any

work done by most legit cops. Respect her work and her badge; well her name card” he defended me.

Mtho sighed in relief rubbing the top of his head, “Yes sir! I am never doing anything illegal, I promise”

“Good,” we joined Nkozo and Sibeko.

“Everybody this is Mthobisi, Mthobisi this is everybody”

“Hello everybody,” he made a peace sign.

They all acknowledged him.

“Is that the footage from the hospital?”

“Yes, we looked at every camera from outside his room to all the exits. For Example; this is his outside his room, it’s busy, people going about their business and then its less busy for about 2 minutes, then its busy again”

“That’s a video,” Mtho spoke and we all looked at him.

“Yes, we are aware that we are looking at a video Thobani,” Nkonzo responded.

“Boy, just sit down and be quiet please, we’ll be leaving soon,” I ordered.

“First of all, my name is Mthobisi and secondly, that two-minute portion is not part of the whole

footage,”

“What is he saying?” whispered Nkonzo.

“Let him speak, give him an ear,” Grootboom spoke on his behalf. “speak young Lucky,”

“Whoever worked on this did a really good job. This is actually a video of a picture. They waited for the right moment when there was no one in this area and this could have been early in the morning before it got busy...watch very carefully. What he did was, remove that whole two minutes and replaced it with an illusion, a picture.”

“How do you know it’s a picture?” I asked. “It clearly has a recording time and date, Mtho,”

“Okay aunty Rainbow, watch the time on this...”
he moved to the front moving Nkonzo out of his place. He took the remote controlling the tv and schooled us. “Now watch the time for when it’s busy,”

“I didn’t see anything,” confessed Monde.

“Yeah same here,” so did Sibeko.

“Exactly, you wouldn’t have seen it. the font is not the same. That’s where he screwed himself over!”

“Language!” I warned.

“Sorry, aunty Rain. Now are days you can make videos using just pictures. You put a picture and add a song, it’ll count the time the song played not how long a picture is because, you can’t really count how long a picture is. Please tell me you get what I’m talking about,”

“Like an Instagram story” Monde raised her hand ever so enthusiastic. “You can add music to your story, even if it’s a picture. And then you end up watching a picture and not looking at it,”

“Exactly!” Mtho, leaned forward and gave her a high five. “The recording timer made you automatically believe you were watching a video. This was...hmmm, maneuvered in there. And the fact that there was no one in this area at that particular time made you all overlook the fact that there is no sound at all. There should

be people talking at a distance or a clock on the wall, or even the beeping of machines. There is always a sound in the hospital”

“That’s smart Mtho, how did we not see this,” I commended him. “Go back to the picture video thingy,” he did and we watched it all in silence until it continued to the normal footage. And the font of the details really was not the same. The difference is hardly noticeable, you had to have been looking for it to see it.

“Well I’d be damned...” the colonel brightened and I knew exactly what he was thinking.

“No!” I stopped him before he could utter another word.

“He would be a great asset,”

“I’d love to work in the IT department,” Mtho offered his services.

“Mtho, the only thing you will be working are your school books. He’s 16...you’re 16” I got up. “Where’s my ID card, it seems I don’t only need to hide this boy from his grandfather but also my boss,”

“Hear me out Rainbow,” he galloped up to me, “We can keep him in school but also keep him in our radar. You know groom him for the future. The minute he finishes grade 12 he has something to do,”

“That will be next year! Yess” the boy rejoiced.

“This boy is practically his father’s son.” Added Sibeko.

“Fine. I will talk to his father. When...whenever”

“Welcome to the team big Young Lucky,” Sibeko rejoiced with him.

“No! no welcoming. Nothing...”

“My youngest protégé,” the colonel completely ignored me and went over to Mtho. “You know he’s the youngest member of the underground team,”

“He is not a member,” I reminded.

For the first time in a very long while Mtho was smiling. I saw just how passionate he was in front of that screen. He explained everything like he was reciting the letters of the alphabet. The team has been looking at that video for weeks now and he figured it out at first glance. That it amazing, but still, he is my responsibility so...no joining the force now.

Mtho was so excited when we left, he couldn't shut up about his plans now that he has a job when he finishes school.

"I'm going to study so hard, especially mathematics and IT. I get Bs for IT, we need As now." He planned. "Maybe I can change schools and go to a school of technology where I will get exactly what I need, maybe I should..."

suddenly his cheery voice died down. "When will I be going back to school?"

"I don't know. I don't know anything right now okay...we just need to get you to safety,"

At 1 in the morning I arrived at my parents' place in Sandton, JHB. They waited up for us and had rooms ready for when we arrived; so we went straight to bed.

The following morning; they both skipped work, which was very kind of them. I had to wake Mtho up so I could have a talk with him and my parents before I leave. We found them around the dining table with breakfast already set up.

"Morning my angels," Suzanna sang as Mtho

and I took our seats.

“Good morning mom, dad,” I smiled reaching for a grape. I feel at ease when I’m here. Like I can let go and just be myself. It took me a while to accept that I had two moms and two dads now. It felt like I was cheating for some reason but eventually it all made sense; I am that lucky that I get to have two parents. And funny enough the Jaxa’s became more parenty and present when I found the Sibiyas.

“Morning my Rain, it’s so good to have you home,” said Mbongeni.

“Good morning sir, good morning ma’am,” Mtho acknowledged them “Thank you for having me here and you have a beautiful home,”

“A friend of our daughter’s is a friend of ours’,”
said dad pouring Mtho some juice.

“I know last night was a blur and we didn’t really
talk,” I spoke.

“It was this morning,” Mtho corrected me. My
father giggled.

“Okay smarty pants, this morning was a blur.
This is Mthobisi, Lucky’s son. I briefed you
about the situation,”

“Lucky your boyfriend?” asked Suzanna.

“Yes ma’am,” Mtho answered.

“Oh well you can call us grandma and grandpa,” said dad. They seem uncharacteristically way too excited about this, maybe it’s a good thing for all of them.

“Oh no sweetheart, can we use another word for grandma, it makes me feel old,”

“Mtho shrieked, “And you are way too young, how about I call you Darling?”

“I love this boy, can we keep him please,” we all laughed. “I’ve always wanted a grandchild,” you would have had one had I not miscarried, but this is not the time to be thinking about bad things. I have to stay on top of my game.

“Well, I kidnaped one for you,” I joked. “Mom, I will send you some money so he can get a few clothes and toiletries,”

“Nonsense!” she rebuked the idea. “Don’t worry about a single thing. Just go and do your police work, your father and I have enough money to keep this boy until he’s old and frail,” I could tell how excited they were just by looking at them and listening at them. The three of them are going to get along just fine and bringing Mtho here is just about the best idea I’ve had in a very long while.

“And we need to get him to school, he can’t just spend his days lazing round”

“Yes please!” Mthobisi interjected with a mouth full of chewed bread.

“They might trace him down dad, I need him out of the radar,” I objected.

“Keeping a child from going to school is a serious crime, every child has a right to education.” Dad explained.

“How about we change his name my love?” suggested Eunice and I must say her suggestion wasn’t all that bad.

“I could be Dwayne Johnson,” we all gawked at him. “Or...” he looked at me, “How about Athandwa Sibiya,”

“Like your little baby Rain,” Eunice rested a hand on her chest fighting tears.

“Yeah! That sounds perfect...” I sighed loudly trying to keep my tears at bay. Though my baby would have been a Dlamini but this name is perfect.

“Then leave everything to me Rain,” assured dad. “I will talk to my people and have him in school by next week,”

“He loves IT, so if you can...”

“Consider it done,”

Is it stupid that I bought an entire outfit before paying Lucky a visit? I know it is. I’m so excited to see him but when I finally lay my eyes upon him, I will not let my excitement cloud me from giving him a piece of my mind.

I was finally here; on 2031 Mota Street in Soweto at Mzingwane guest house but I couldn't get myself to go in so I drove around. Stayed in the car and watched the house. there was no sign of life, no one going in or out. At some point I went into town, did a little shopping, had something to eat and just enjoyed time by myself in a different city. At around 20:00, I went back to the house. I turned my car towards the gate as though I'd be coming in and then hooted. I stopped and waited for movement. Someone should be in by now; it's a f*****g guest house. I hooted again, for longer this time. The lights in one room switched on and my heart dropped to my stomach. What the hell do I do now? I hope Lucky is in there...I really do.

“What are you doing Rainbow?” I said under my

breath.

#bonusinsert



INSERT 54

PRIVILEGED

Verb

1. Having a particular benefit, advantage, or favor, a right or immunity enjoyed by some but not others.

“Who’s there?” He shouted standing by the entrance. He blocked the glare of the light from my car with his arm. It’s him, alive and perfectly healthy. I contemplated my next move. “Who

are you?" I switched the car off and got out. His face suddenly came alive. "Miss, what are you doing here? How did you find me?"

I don't know what to say to him. I'm shaking and I'm scared that if I open my mouth; I might do damage and I am here to do damage control. "Hold on, let me open for you," he darted back inside and then the gate slid open. Should I come in or just tell him to come back and save his son and then leave. Or should I just tell him that I'm alive I didn't die from the miscarriage and that working is really helping me deal with the depression and anxiety and not to mention that feeling of loss and abandonment. Perhaps I should tell him that I am investigating his family and kidnapped his son. I put one foot in front of the other until the gate was behind me. I walked up to the front door and stood in front of him. his hair and beard had grown, but he

seems to have gained more muscle weight. "Miss," I had no control over it, it just happened...I punched him in the face. I only realized I had hurt him once I felt my hand aching. He staggered bending down to nurse his pain. I stood there and waited for him to snap out of pussy mode. "Say something, please. Don't hit me again," he pleaded.

"I ble..." I wanted to tell him I was bleeding for two whole weeks. That I had the most intense period pain-like pains and that I blamed myself for his disappearance and I still do. I wanted to tell him that I prayed, which is something I don't do. I wanted to tell him that I missed him every single day and how sorry I was for not being able to carry his child until he was born.

"Mtho..." my voice wobbled.

“What about him? Is he fine?” my heart just burned and I had to do something again...so I slapped him.

“Fuck you!” I said softly. “You are a weak man Nhlanhla Vilakazi. I always thought Ndumiso was the weakest man I had ever encountered in my life but I was wrong...that is you. At least Ndumiso stayed around and faced his problem.” I had formed fists with both my hands and squeezing for dear life. If I open my hands, something bad might happen to one of us. “You hide behind your walk, talk and your gun but you are a coward. Just because your father was not there for you does not mean you should do the same to Mthobisi – who – by the way – has now changed his name to protect his identity,”

“Rainbow, what are you talking about?” he questioned. “Why does he have to protect his identity? Is he fine?” he kept his rubbing his cheek, which I assumed was still burning from the slap.

“Now you care?” I chuckled sarcastically. “Ok!” I had to leave. I just couldn’t be in the same space as him. He is making me sick, literally.

“Open the gate”

“I will not open this gate until you tell me what’s happening with my son...”

“He’s not your son!” I shouted. “He is mine and I will go to the ends of this earth to protect him. Everyone he loves and knows has either died, turned against or abandoned him but me...so no! he is not yours anymore,” I paused and caught

my breath. I pulled out my gun and held it against his forehead. "Open,"

"I understand you are angry and you have every right to be...but, I need Mtho, I need my baby boy," I drew the gun away from him and shot behind me to scare him.

"Open the bloody gate Lucky!" he pressed the remote and the gate started sliding. "weak ass punk" I murmured to myself marching out the gate.

"Miss," he called, "I'm sorry...I'm sorry please!" I got inside my car and banged the door closed. He ran after me and started banging on my window. "Open this door right now,"

“F***k you Lucky!” I started the car and reversed.

“I will report you for kidnapping! I swear I will kill you Rainbow, where’s my boy?” he cried. I wounded the window down a little so he could hear me loud and clear.

“If you call your family to ask about him, you’d only be making matters worse. In fact; you’d be signing off on his death,” I stepped on it and left him. I wanted him to feel what I felt when I woke in that hospital bed with questions no one could answer, in pain and alone. Karma’s a b***h, isn’t it?

I don’t know where I am. I’ve been driving around for a little while now. Passed some streets maybe twice trying to calm myself down. I stopped by a tavern or whatever this place is.

There's a cheerful chatter coming from here, its inviting. It seems like a place where I can get a strong drink. Just a glass, I won't overdo it. I won't go back to my old ways.

I entered and was immediately welcomed by a smell of meat and alcohol. It's loud and alive...everyone seems to be minding their own business and drinking the night away. I headed to the counter.

"Hey, welcome to Magwaza's" the bartender welcomed me. "What would you like to have tonight?"

"Do you have red wine here?" I asked.

He chuckled with a smirk in his face, "So you think just because we're in Soweto we can't

have a fancy bottle of red wine?" he rested both arms on the counter and stared at me.

"Actually, that is what I'm thinking," I confessed.
"Now do you?"

"I do,"

"I'll have a glass please, thank you Magwaza," he continued to smirk staring at me. He took out an empty wine glass and pulled a bottle from those neatly packed behind him.

"You're not from around here are you?" his eyes darted between me and the wine he was pouring into the glass. I shook my head. "You're a privileged one,"

“Privileged?”

“Yeah! Rich parents...silver spoon. I bet you stay in Sandton. You are currently having a mental breakdown so you wanted something to ease your mind. Your Bentley is probably parked outside right now.” I gawked at him while he made up this scenario about me. “Hold on, you wanted to create drama, maybe scare your rich parents into oblivion by coming to the township so when they track you down, they’ll find you in a dungeon like this one. They will panic, blame themselves for not being good parents and make it up to you by giving you more money!”

“Are you done?” he nodded. I gulped down my wine and finished the glass all at once. “More,” he obeyed. “The only thing you got right was the rich parents. Both my parents are rich; and

when I say both I mean both the two separate parents I have. Two moms and two dads...they are filthy rich and one pair of parents does indeed stay in Sandton. But I'm not rich, I just have enough money because I work. I drive a maroon Citi Golf and the only tracker it might have will not at all help my parents in finding me because they are not looking for me. It might help the people that want me dead though. His face immediately contoured. "But don't worry, I have a Glock with me." I pulled a forced smile. "And you are right about the fact that I'm having a mental breakdown, anyone that lost a child at 4 months would,"

"Shit!"

"And to top it all off Mr. I have to suck it all in and attend to a stupid investigation. I'm

investigating my boyfriend's family – my boyfriend who ran away when I lost the baby. I found him here in Soweto, not far from here I think, I don't know, I drove around a while. So, I hit him and told him he was weak. So yeah, that is how privileged I am," he had no signs of life in his face. "Should I go on to tell you about my abusive ex-husband? Or my brother that had supposedly died 15 years ago but then came back, tried to rape but I ended up killing?"

"What kind of fucked up world are you living in?"

"You don't want to know," I drank all of my wine again. "Another one,"

"Where's your boyfriend now?" he asked.

“Mzingwane guest house over on some street.
Fuck him...”

“Yeah!” he agreed. “Excuse me” he disappeared into the back. This place is filled with vibes, different kinds of vibes. Some positive and some negative. I have never ever been in such a space before; where people are so carefree, eating, drinking and dancing. This seems like the place where strangers become instant friends.

About 2 hours later I was on the dance floor dancing with a guy that had no front teeth but smiled like he had teeth of gold. I was drunk, wasted actually and full. I ate a lot. Tomorrow morning, I won't remember any of these people, some won't even remember me. That's the beauty of it all for me.

It was time for me to leave, maybe I'll book into a hotel or drive back home to Mtho. I can drive there and arrive safely. I staggered outside where it was even louder. This street never sleeps I see...

"This is my street now," I said to strangers laughing over a couple of beer bottles. I got inside the car and pushed the key in.

"Sisi" the bartender guy was running after me.

"Hey, Magwaza," I wound down the window.

"Your place is amazing but sadly I need to vamoose before I get drunk,"

"You are drunk, you can't drive in this state," he said.

“No, if I were drunk then I wouldn’t be able to sit behind the wheel,” I rolled my eyes, “Look” I put my hands around the steering wheel, “See, I’m not drunk,”

“what you just said is a clear indication of how drunk you are, let me call someone for you or get you a cab,”

“No,” I blew him a kiss. “I must say Magwaza, you are so kind and sexy. If I wasn’t drunk, I was totally going to bang you,”

“Thank you...hmm but I still cannot let you drive seeing as you just admitted to being drunk,”

“No, I mean I’m too drunk to fuck but not too

drunk to drive,”

“That doesn’t make sense...get out of the car,”
he ordered.

“Magwaza the sexy bartender,” I said to myself
completely ignoring him on purpose. I drove out
and forward and then blacked out.

“Thank you so much man,”

“She’s okay bro, don’t worry, just drunk,”

“What’s happening?” I opened my eyes and saw
Lucky and stars and the sky.

“It’s Magwaza, I brought you to your boyfriend,”

I gasped with excitement, “The sexy bartender,”

“I’ll come and check you in the morning. Listen, you hit your head against the steering wheel when you collided with a pole so take it easy,”

“I love you so much bartender, can I have a hug?”

“Just hug her dude,” I heard Lucky say.

“There you are, I think I’m in love with you” I hugged him and lingered more than I should have. He smelt like his place.

“Okay, I will see you guys in the morning,”

“Thank you so much, bafo.”

“Anytime”

“Bye Magwaza the sexy bartender.”

“Miss, you are hurt so just take it easy okay,” he said.

“I can’t afford to take it easy. Things will fall apart...I have to be alert and awake so I can protect the ones I love...where am I?” I asked when he threw me on a bed in a really nice room.

“Don’t worry, you’re safe,” he stood, “Take your clothes off, I’ll get you something to sleep in,”

he exited. My head is aching, I just want to cut it off and throw it away. My breath stinks and I smell like sweat; I can smell it all. I started taking off my clothes like Lucky had instructed. He came back and started assisting. He helped me put a shirt on and then cleaned the wound on my forehead. I was staring at him while he dabbed carefully on the wound, even with the hair and the beard he still looked like my Guy.

“I’m never drinking again,” I announced.

“Good for you, let me get you some pills for the pain,” he zoomed out and came back with a glass of water in one hand and two tablets in the other. He shoved them inside my mouth and helped me drink. I swallowed one tablet per time and then gulped down the water. “Now rest, I will see you in the morning. Your phone

and car keys are right next to you,” he got up, switched off the light and closed the door.

I wanted to be somebody else for a minute and be in a different world. I didn't want to hurt anyone; especially not myself. I'm mad and sad and I'm walking around this world trying to fight against crime, I'm trying to be a better person but it always never works out for me. Never!

I was ready to start afresh with Lucky and give myself over to love and happiness and peace but that was all snatched away from me. I was going to be a great mom and maybe some day wife to Lucky. I had planned things we were going to do as a family, with Mthobisi in the picture. But instead I am drunk, injured and sad somewhere far away from reality.

Where the fuck even am I? I can still hear the sound of that place, I can still smell it like I am inside those walls, I can still feel the people around me dancing and sweating against one another with not a single care in the world. And for a moment there, I was a part of those of people. I had suppressed all my cares and worries with alcohol and meat and more alcohol and meat. My head keeps replaying, ZIPH'IYKHWAMA, SYAHAMBA MANJE, SYAHMBA MANJE SIYEDURBAN IN THE MEANTIME.

I enjoyed myself. I shall cherish this night for the rest of my life. Perhaps maybe I will go back to Magwaza's, maybe when I'm visiting my parents. I smiled and closed my eyes allowing the pills to take over.

“Rest Rainbow,” I whispered to myself.

HAPPY MONDAY AND HAPPY READING ♡

INSERT 55

GIRLFRIEND

Noun

1. The female partner in an unmarried romantic relationship.

My alarm went off waking me up so I reached for my phone and switched it off.

“F**k” I muttered looking at the time on my screen. It’s 8:30. I have a bunch of messages from Monde and other stupid notifications. I

threw my phone beside me and faced the ceiling in attempt to fall back asleep. This ceiling looks very unfamiliar. Did mom and dad do something different with...when I looked around, the room looked nothing like my room at the Sibiyas. I slowly sat up. I am certainly not at the Sibiyas. "Where the f**k am I?" I went to Mangwaza's and had an awesome night. And then, I drove home...I remember driving home.

I took my phone and opened my gallery. I have pictures from last night at Magwaza's. I remember all of that. I remember the toothless guy that took numerous selfies with my phone. Could I be in his room? His place? Dear higher powers please tell me nothing happened between him and I if this is his place. I can't...it can't. Or; I could be at Magwaza's house. Either way I don't know. I got up, opened the door and looked down the passage. I have no freaking

idea where I am...how did I get here?

Hold on. I drove home last night. I remember very clearly, I drove home. So, I must be kidnapped right now.

“Hello,” I called. The only sound coming through is a sound of a dripping tap. “Hello...hey!” It was silent to a point where my own voice bounced back to me. If this really was a kidnapping, I should be tied up or locked up somewhere and what happened to my head? I hear something. “Hello...who’s there” I shouted. A door opened somewhere around this house.

“Are you up?” I followed the voice and found myself in a kitchen where I found Lucky. “Good morning,”

“Did you kidnap me?” I asked.

“Sit down, let me treat your cut,” he ordered.

“Is that where you hit me to knock me out when you were kidnapping me. I’m still not telling you where Mtho is,” it seems he went to the shop. He took out a few items from the plastic and displayed them on the counter.

“Let me fix you up,” he folded his arms to his chest waiting on me.

“I can do it myself.” I approached the counter. I see cotton wool, some liquid thing and plasters. I took the plaster which he snatched out of my hand.

“You can’t do it yourself because if you could then you’d have taken the antiseptic first,” he said dangling the liquid thing right in front of my face. “Now,” he took the cotton wool, tore the plastic open and pulled out a piece.

“I’m going home, where I was before you kidnapped me,” he got a hold of my arm, pulled me back and literally carried me and sat me on the counter. He stood right in front of me restricting me from climbing down.

“sit still,”

“Lucky, let me go,” I fought. He took my hands and held them together,

“I said sit still,” his eyes bore into mine.

“I don’t want too!” I shouted.

“Well you don’t have a choice. Are you really going to fight me right now when I am trying to help you and you think I’m enjoying this? Your breath f*****g stinks,”

“That’s mean,” I said retreating.

“I don’t care, just let me do this. That’s a nasty wound,” I folded my arms to my chest. He wetted a piece of cotton wool and then started cleaning my wound. He dabbed carefully and slowly.

“Ouch,” I winced.

“Sorry,” he looked into my eyes and then back at the wound.

“Where’s your girlfriend? You don’t want her to find another girl here with you,” his forehead furrowed.

“As far as I’m concerned the only girlfriend I have is you...”

“I’m not your girlfriend,” I disputed,

“But you are,”

“I am not. You...” I stopped myself. I am not going to bring up the baby. It’s going to throw me off my game and I’m already out as it is.

“Why did you kidnap me?”

“I didn’t kidnap you, Magwaza the sexy bartender brought; your boyfriend did,”

“But I drove home,”

“You were driving home until you drove into a pole and got this bad boy,”

“But how did he know where to find you?”

“Apparently you told him that your weak boyfriend that bailed on you was here...he knows this place,”

I heard my phone ringing from the bedroom.

“Excuse me, I need to get that,” he helped me down.

“Come back for the plaster,” I heard him say as I disappeared into the room.

“HELLO”

“AUNTY RAIN, ITS ME...” it’s Mtho, you have no idea how relieved I feel right now.

“HEY BOY, ARE YOU OKAY?” I asked.

“YEAH, I LIKE IT HERE VERY MUCH. GRANDPA AND DARLING GOT ME A NEW PHONE,”

“OKAY BUT DON’T LOG INTO ANY OF YOUR ACCOUNTS AS YET PLEASE...”

“I KNOW, I KNOW...AND GRANDPA IS TAKING ME FOR A MEETING WITH MY POTENTIAL PRINCIPAL TOMORROW,” Lucky walked in. I gave him a dirty look to which he pulled both hands up and shook his head. He then put his index finger over his lips.

“THAT’S GREAT! MTHO...”

“ATHANDWA,” he corrected me.

“ATHANDWA, I NEED YOU ON YOU BEST BEHAVIOUR AND BE NICE TO GRANDPA AND DARLING,”

“YES MA’AM,”

“DON’T WANDER OFF AND DON’T CALL ANYONE FROM YOUR OLD LIFE BUT ME; HAVE I MADE MYSELF CLEAR?”

“Speaker” Lucky mimed and I granted him his request.

“CRYSTAL. ARE YOU BACK IN DURBAN?” he asked.

“NO, I’M STILL HERE. I WANTED A DAY OFF SO I WENT SHOPPING AND HAD A NICE LUNCH AND THEN BOOKED MYSELF INTO A FANCY HOTEL,”

“THAT’S GOOD FOR YOU, YOU DESERVE EVERYTHING GOOD. AND I WANTED TO ASK IF YOU’VE HEARD ANYTHING ON BABA?”

Lucky and I looked at each other. “YES ACTUALLY, I FOUND HIM. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK TO HIM?” at the end of the day, Lucky is Mtho’s father and I can’t keep them apart.

“I THINK DARLING IS CALLING ME, I WILL CALL YOU LATER,” he disconnected the call.

“He really did change his identity” he said and I nodded.

“Can I have the plaster please,” I deviated from the topic. He walked out and I followed. He helped me to stick plaster over my nasty wound.

“All good,” he comforted. “I know I don’t deserve anything from you right now but, please...please tell me what happened? Why did he have to change his name? Is my family okay?”

“No, your family is not okay. They are currently under investigation,”

“What for?”

“They are supposedly selling drugs and dragged your son into it”

“Dragged him how?”

“Well, he was selling drugs in town. He hardly

slept, his school work was suffering and so was he. And they might be working with Ndumiso,”

“My father made my son sell drugs,” the rising and falling of his chest became abundantly clear.

“I took him and ran. He actually gave out orders for me and your son to be shot. His men chased us around town but...we managed to lose them. And now he is in Sandton with a new identity; Athandwa Sibiya,”

“Athandwa; as in the baby’s name,” his face softened up.

“Don’t talk about my baby” I ordered lowly.

“He was my baby too,”

“You left,” I reminded.

“That doesn’t change anything, he was my child too,” I want to kill him

“Where’s the bathroom?” I will not talk to Lucky about my baby, I will not talk to him about something he does not understand. I will not argue with him at all...

“Last door on your right,” he answered. “Here,” he handed me a brand-new toothbrush.

I found the bathroom and brushed my teeth. How dare he claim him, how dare he make it as

if I'm wrong for demanding that he doesn't talk about him. entitled son of a b***h.

"And I said I was going to think about that name," he showed up at the door.

"Lucky, I am not going to argue with you over a child that you left," I mumbled with toothpaste in my mouth.

"He died!" I lost control and threw my tooth brush at him. I spat out what remained in my mouth.

"But I was there, I didn't leave." my voice broke.
"I felt everything. Imagine the pain of losing a baby, having an actual human being die inside of you and then wake up to find that the man

you love so much, the man that put the baby in there is gone. He ran away...”

“I needed some time...”

“Well I needed you,” nothing but the running water in front of me was heard. “I needed you and you weren’t there, so his name is Athandwa and he is my baby.” I bent down to rinse my mouth

“Miss, I didn’t know how to deal with it. I was too weak to take care of you and myself, the blood...everything. It just took me back to Sammy,”

“We were going to take care of each other!” I shouted amidst sobbing. He rubbed his

forehead. "You protect me with your gun and I protect you with my gun because that is how we do things. You could have taken me with you or at least tell me where you were. I sent you a voice message every single day, I bled for two whole weeks and I was in physical, emotional and mental pain Lucky"

"You were right, I'm weak. I'm a coward and I failed you. I don't deserve you. Even after I left you with no explanation whatsoever, you stayed around for Mtho and protected him. I will forever be grateful to you for that," I walked right passed him and went to the room.

"I need to leave, where's my car?" I asked.

"Outside. But where are you going?"

“Sadly, for me life didn’t stop. I’m going back to work. There’s an ongoing investigation and I’ve already compromised it by telling you about it,”

“Take me to Mtho then I’ll come with you,” he followed me outside to my car.

“Mtho doesn’t want to see you right now Guy and I don’t really want to be around you so...” I open the boot and fixed an outfit from the clothes I had bought yesterday. That was really my anxiety shopping.

“I just want to see him please,”

“Do you have a dryer here?” marching back to the house with my outfit

“Yeah, she has,”

“Who is she?”

“Gladys, the lady that owns this house, she thought I was going to have a girl over but I was alone the entire time, I swear.”

“I don’t really care, we’re not together anymore. Could I have an iron please with that.”

“The hell we’re not,” he opposed. “I left yes that was wrong and I am sorry. I should have been there for you but I am not letting you go,” I heard him complaining wherever he was fetching the iron and dryer. “Miss, I’d die before I let you date...”

“Let me...” I interrupted him.

“What I mean is, it’s either you’re with me or you’re single,” I went to the bathroom, he followed me. I pulled down my underwear and began to wash it in the sink. “What are you doing?”

“I don’t have another one,” I confessed.

“You can borrow my boxers,” he offered.

“Thank you but I’m all sorted. I will dry it up with a dryer. It’s lace so it shouldn’t take long,” I went back to the room, plugged in the dryer and dried my panties.

“If I hadn’t found you, how long were you going stay here?” I tried speaking over the dryer

“I was going to show up soon, I swear. But Mtho needs me now...”

“You can see him but I can’t let you interfere with the investigation,”

“Yes ma’am,”

I am mad at Lucky and I don’t think how I feel is going to change anytime soon and I mean it, we’re not together anymore. It’s over. After he and Mtho kiss and make up, the only thing that will make our paths ever cross is work. It’s about time I chose myself.

We were driving out when Magwaza jumped out of a white Hyundai that just stopped across the street. Lucky and I both jumped out of the car to talk to him.

“Magwaza” I sang.

“The sexy bartender,” Lucky added.

“How are you guys?” he crossed over

“She’s alive and she thought I kidnapped her,”

“Listen, whatever I said last night, just forget about it. I was drunk...” I tried to salvage what’s left of my dignity.

“Even the part about wanting to bang me?” he and Lucky laughed at my drunken story and that made me want to crawl under a rock and never come out.

“I think I’m in love with you Magwaza, hug me,” Lucky assumed a high-pitched tone.

“I didn’t say that,” I protested.

“You did” Magwaza validated his input. “Why the hell do you think I’m here?”

I threw a hand over my eyes out of shame.

“Listen, this was her when I was fixing up her wound; ‘I’m never drinking again,’” Lucky added.

“But look, I’m glad you are fine. You look really beautiful,” said Magwaza.

“Thank you,” finally something to make me feel anything but embarrassed.

Lucky loudly cleared his throat, “Thank you for bringing my girlfriend here,” he emphasized on the word ‘my’.

“Sure, I hope I’ll see you again. I really want to hear more of your stories. And I am not Magwaza, that’s my father. I’m Andile Magwaza,”

“Sure thing Magwaza”

We said our goodbyes and then headed to Sandton to see Mtho. I decided to not tell him we're coming to avoid him from maybe lashing out when I'm not there.

"Oh thank you Magwaza, so sexy," Lucky says out of nowhere making fruity gestures with his hand while the other held on to the steering wheel.

"What now?"

"Were you deliberately trying to flirt with him in front of me?"

I rolled my eyes and looked out the window. I couldn't help but blush a little, it's cute that he gets jealous like that. I thought getting jealous

was just my thing.

“Yes, I’m single,” I responded.

“You are not. You don’t have to forgive me now but there is no way in hell I’m letting you go. I will kill every f*****g guy you talk too,”

“f**k you Lucky,”

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 56

MURDER

Noun

1. The act of deliberate killing of another being

I cannot see beyond today. All I have is today and that's it, tomorrow is not promised. After I allowed walls to fall, and opened up more to the possibility of pure happiness and love, I started dreaming in colour and making plans for the next day, week, month and year like they all had been promised to me. I was deliberately an optimist, I fought very hard with myself to stay positive and think 'happy thought'.

I allowed Lucky to be the man in my life, the man from whom I sought protection, direction and love and also giving the same to him. Lucky was the first person to make me want to be human and feel. To be frank; I think that was the biggest mistake of my life. I let my guard down and he made a fool out of me. He made

me a subject of mockery and I have myself to blame. I swore to myself that I would never allow a man in my heart, I promised never to be weak or even cower at the presence of a male. I said I would never allow another man so much space into life that they can hurt me. But I went against my own word and now I am haunted by my own mistakes. With me and Lucky, it was supposed to be 'just sex' but somehow that escalated to 'I love you.' I'm weak and I have no fibre of obedience or loyalty in my DNA, even towards my own self.

Every day since the miscarriage, I think about ghosting forever. I think about packing up and just take up roads untraveled. Maybe if I start over somewhere, get a new identity and lead another life, maybe I'd finally get the fresh start I dream of. I do deserve a clean slate and sadly for me; there are no do-overs in this thing called

life. While – basking in the idea of a new life is both relaxing and cathartic – I cannot overindulge in it. I have way too many people tied to me now. I can't leave Mtho, I just found my twin sister and my bio parents and, Grootboom would have to put me behind bars so for now I have to suck it up and be a big girl about it all.

“He knows you are here; I'm sure he saw you in the camera room,” said mom. “Since he found out about it, he spends most of his time in there with Robert,”

“Who's Robert?” asked Lucky.

“He's with security. He watches the cameras from the attic,” she answered. “Let me go and see if I can get him”

“Lucky, if he isn’t nice don’t retaliate. You are at wrong here,” I warned. He gave me a nasty look then looked at the floor. “Really?”

“You don’t have to rub it in,” he said.

“Rub what in?”

“The fact that my son prefers a stranger over his own father,”

“A stranger?” I’m offended by his words, after everything I have done. “I...”

“What happened to you?” Mtho asked climbing down the stairs with haste.

“Boy, I’m sorry I left. I had...”

“I’m not talking to you,” anger transformed his face. He passed right by his father and came up to me. “Did he do this to you?” he must be referring to the plaster across my forehead. He turned back to Lucky, “Did you do that her?” he slapped Lucky’s chest.

“Mthobisi, stop it! he didn’t do this,” I shouted.

“Don’t lie for him,” he pushed his father and that’s when I had to step in.

“He didn’t do it, I promise,” I shoved myself between them. Thank God Lucky was able to compose himself. “Look at me,”

“I know he did this,” he says huffing.

“You know he didn’t do this. You know he would never do this. You are just angry about something else,”

“Son, can we talk please.” Lucky begged behind Mtho.

“I have nothing to say to you. I had an epiphany last night and I think it was very comforting; you stopped being a father the day Sam died, to hell with Mtho,”

“You know that’s not true now...” disputed Lucky.

“To hell with you Lucky,” he ran up the stairs. I

got a hold of Lucky's arm who was set on running after him.

"You need to give him time," I said.

"I will kill them all Rainbow, I will kill Dlamini and then that weakling Menzi,"

"They are not the reason why your relationship with your son is strained, you are!"

"Whose side are you on?" his head cocked to the side as he squinted his eyes searching for answers in my face.

"I'm on Mtho's side,"

“I was 16 when I had Mtho...I was a boy,” he sat in the couch. “Dlamini trained me into a man and all I ever wanted was to do the same for him; make him a man. A strong man.”

“And it’s not too late for that. He is still a little boy who has lost more than he should have, just love him and be there,”

Lucky caught a taxi back to his place. I spent the night with Mtho and my parents. I didn’t want to leave him after that and surprisingly; he wasn’t mad at me. I thought he’d be fuming after bringing Lucky here unannounced.

But when the sun came up; I drove back to Durban and was met with disturbing news. The Dlaminis are dead, all but Zanele who was nowhere to be found. Monde and Nkonzo are

there right now gathering all everything they can to build a case while Sibeko and I are in the office going over everything they had gathered since this investigation started.

“MONDE, HOW BAD IS IT?” I asked over the phone.

“IT’S BAD RAIN. THEY WERE ALL SHOT ONCE IN THE HEAD. NO SIGNS OF FORCED ENTRY, NO SIGNS OF FIGHTING,”

“PREMEDITATED”

“THAT’S WHAT WE HAVE TO GO WITH NOW UNTIL WE CAN SAY OTHERWISE,”

“OKAY. WE’LL SPEAK SOON.”

How will I break such news to Lucky, Mthobisi and Zanele when she shows up? Unless I won’t have to break the news to her; what if Zanele killed her own family and then made a run for it? When we spoke, she seemed to have been against whatever new venture her father and brother had taken. It could also be Ndumiso, if indeed they were working together.

My phone rang; it’s an unknown number.

“HELLO” I picked up.

“THIS IS LUCKY, I NEED TO SEE YOU,” his voice is trembling. I took a few steps away from Sibeko towards the door, they don’t know I

know where Lucky is.

“WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU? HAVE YOU HEARD?”

“YES, HAVE YOU TOLD MTHO?”

“NO, I THOUGHT I HAD TO TELL YOU FIRST. COME BACK...”

“I’M BACK. COME TO MY SMALL FLAT,” he ended the call.

“Sibeko, I have to run. I will be back in an hour or two,” I took my keys and rushed out. Lucky must be devastated. His entire family has just been taken out, literally that is all the family he

has. The only other family he has is Mtho and Mhlongo and he killed his child so I don't see that working out. I drove like I was mad; I needed to see Lucky ASAP. He might do some stupid like hurt himself.

I parked my car outside his flat and called him. I was pacing up and down waiting for him to come and get me.

"Hey," he said. I ran up to him and hugged him.

"Lucky, I'm so sorry," he didn't hold me, he just waited for me to let go of him. He then walked in the direction of his flat and I followed.

He closed the door and locked.

“Thank you for coming,” he says leaning against the door.

“Why did you call me here?” I asked.

“They killed her, they killed Zanele and buried her in the office,”

“What?” a cold rush ran through my body leaving goosebumps at every inch.

“They told me. She’s dead,” he assured me. Why is Lucky here and not in Joburg? I left him in Johannesburg.

“Lucky, why are you here?” I asked. “When did you get here?”

“Last night. I went back to the guest house, packed and left,”

“Where did you go?” I walked up to him. His eyes kept darting between me and the floor. “Lucky, I asked you a question, where did you go?”

“I went home,” he spoke through his teeth.

“Lucky,” Lucky’s eyes had all the answers I was looking for.

“I had to do it, they knew where Mtho was and I couldn’t let them kill him Rainbow,”

“Your family,” I said under my breath, “All of them,”

“They were not my family,” he pulled me to his chest and cupped my face in his hands. “You are my family. You and Mtho are my family.”

“Don’t...” I pulled away. “Don’t say that. You killed your whole family in cold blood, Lucky. What are we going to do?” I couldn’t even bring myself to cry, I’m just scared for him and for Mtho. Lucky might be going to prison.

“I need you to promise me that you got me, no matter what?” he took my hands and held them in his.

“You want me to help cover up a murder?” I

questioned.

“They deserved to die, they were using my son, your son...our son to sell drugs,” he justified.

“We work for the police,” I reminded him, “And you and I are criminals already. You think the immunity card will protect us from this? This is prison straight; they won’t care about the information you have and your skills. No more immunity!”

“Listen to me!” he shouted. “I will go back to jozi and show up after a few days to find out about my family. We never spoke and you never saw me”

“Mtho?”

“Don’t worry about him, I will call him and talk to him,” he says. “When I show up you need to be mad at me, hit me if you must to convince them that we hadn’t seen each other,”

“Ok,” well so much for choosing myself. Let’s face it – if I don’t choose Lucky, I’m also not choosing Mtho and now more than ever Mtho needs me to choose him.

“Ok?” I nodded. Before I knew it, Lucky kissed me and I kissed him. Maybe it’s the adrenalin.
“Okay, go. I love you and be careful,”

“I love you too,” I responded.

“Remember, to send the voice messages like

you did,” he walked me out. He held my hand marching to the gate, he opened and watched me get into the car, “I love you Rainbow,” I hooted right before I drove off.

I’m scared, I’m so scared. What has Lucky done? I work with real cops, what if they see right through my lies? What if they were following me? Oh, I’m toast! Lucky killed his f*****g family. Every single one of them.

“Okay Rainbow, this is not the time to be a pussy!” I spoke to myself. I’ve come to learn that these pep talks really help. “You will not let Lucky down,” I affirmed. “Sammy, I need you baby. Help me...”

I arrived at the office heart pounding, palms sweating and head aching; but I hope the

façade I had assumed will not give them a whiff of what is really going on inside my head. I found Sibeko and the colonel sweating over a table full of papers and boxes from evidence.

“Where have you been? Get in here and work?” commanded the colonel. I took off my jacket, threw it on the chair and assumed the semblance of an occupied member of the force.

“What angle are we pursuing?” I asked.

“At this point, we are still trying to locate Ndumiso, it could have been him,” answered Sibeko.

“But this didn’t happen on our grounds, how are we investigating it?” I asked. The case is

outside of our jurisdiction so we shouldn't be taking lead.

"It's one of my people, Dlamini worked for me, and we started investigating them before they were killed." responded Sibeko, "Jele and Nkonzo are coming back with more evidence," maybe I should throw them off. I need them to look far away.

"What about Mhlongo?" Mr G looked at me.

"What about him?" he questioned.

"Well, what if he resurfaced. He does have a bone to pick with them..."

“We haven’t received anything on him since he disappeared that day,” Sibeko said.

“I’m just saying, we should keep our eyes open. And remember Menzi was sending out orders for a Lenny, keep that avenue open as well...”

“Sibeko, take Mhlongo” instructed the colonel,
“Rain, stay on Ndumiso, you know him better than us. I will pay Lenny a visit,”

“Yes sir,” Sibeko and simultaneously responded.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡

INSERT 57

YEAR

Noun

1. The time it takes the earth to complete one revolution of the sun.

2. A period between set dates that mark a year, from January 1 to December 31.

I pushed myself to wait at least 3 days until I can panic again. The secret I walked around with burdened me and tore through the very fabric of my being. I had to wake up every morning and go to work; something I never did. I never used to actually investigate in the office I wasn't an actual officer of the law. I did undercover work but Grootboom decided that he needed all hands on deck for this case. He says this just might be the biggest case he has ever worked on – the biggest being finally

catching Dlamini back when he was a criminal.

Every day I get sick to the stomach looking at pictures of dead Paul Dlamini, his wife Eunice and son Bongumenzi. I guard my tongue so as to not say anything incriminating or suspicious. I don't know what paper to touch, who to call, what evidence box to open or even what to think. Lucky has disappeared before, what if he decided to vanish for good this time and leave me with this burden to carry – he mastered that art when I had a miscarriage.

“Hold on,” Monde announced drawing everyone's attention to her. “There is one avenue we haven't explored,”

“Please, anything...I am tired of the dead ends. Ndumiso is a dead end, Mhlongo is as good as

dead and this Zanele lady is as though she never existed.” Says Nkonzo.

“Lucky,” Monde said sending cold chills down my spine. Obviously at this point I am expected to speak, maybe get a little defensive.

“What about him?” I asked accusingly.

“Rainbow, please don’t get mad,” begged Monde, “But we have to explore every possible avenue and Lucky is as good a suspect as Ndumiso is – perhaps an even stronger one,”

“I have been thinking this since day one, I just didn’t want to say anything,” Nkonzo backed her.

“You think he did it?” I asked the obvious.

“He could have...” said Nkonzo.

“How when he doesn’t even know about his father’s dealings of late?” I questioned.

“We don’t know that sis,”

“You’re right!” I concurred, “As hard as this will be but we should start exploring that avenue” I stood. “Excuse me,” I went to the lavatory with a sad and angry face.

I stayed there for at least 5 minutes and wetted my eyes to make it appear as though I had been crying and then rejoined them.

“You okay sister?”

I forced a smile, “I will be fine. Let’s just work. I will continue looking into Ndumiso, you guys take Lucky. I can’t do that...”

“You can’t do what?” the colonel asked marching in with Sibeko.

“Monde suggested that we explore an avenue that we hadn’t explored and that is Lucky. I will not be able to look into him sir. I think I should carry on with Ndumiso...” I responded.

“Everybody listen up,” Mr G commanded everybody’s attention walking to the front of the room. “I want you to drop everything you are

doing and look into Lucky” my guts twisted and my legs stiffened.

“Sir!”

“That is including you Rainbow,” he interjected “it’s time to really earn that immunity,” I looked at Monde searching for anything, refuge, comfort, just anything to make this all go away.

“I’m sorry,” she mouthed.

“I just received word that Mhlongo was murdered and Ndumiso Gumede,” announced Grootboom sending shockwaves across the room. “Their bodies are at the morgue. Both shot once in the head like the Dlaminis,”

“Ndumiso is dead?” I muttered under my breath.

“And Mhlongo...” he added.

“And Lucky?” asked Nkonzo.

“He is a prime suspect. Dig until you know his ancestors by name. He has motive and we have an eye witness that spotted him around where Ndumiso died.”

“I need some air,” I staggered and found my way outside to the car park. My whole world came crumbling down in just a matter of seconds. The ground beneath me suddenly wasn't as firm as it usually is. I can hear my own heartbeat, the tips of my fingers are tingling and burning and my tongue is dry. I

drew in some air and exhaled but my head felt heavy on my own shoulders. My eyes no longer gave me steady and reliable visual. I felt a hand on my shoulder.

“You have to breathe, just look at me,” I gasped for air, held on to her hand and kept squeezing my eyes shut and open to try and regain my clear vision. “It’s just a panic attack, you have to breathe Rain,” my sister kept encouraging me to breathe and all I am secretly hoping for is that I eventually fall and die.

“Lucky...” I said amidst fighting death.

“Don’t speak,” she instructed, “Just breathe,”

“Lay her down on her back,” before I knew it; I

was laying on the ground with Nkonzo kneeling over me. “She’s having a panic attack,” he announced. “Rain,” he called. Then he blew softly on to my face. “Do the same, do the same to me,”

“Llluu---” I attempted to speak but my heart had other plans.

“Just blow in my face Rainbow,” he instructed rubbing the top of my head. I let a tremulous exhale blowing right into his face. “That’s good,” he commended. “We are just going to keep doing that. I blow, you blow...”

After about 5 rounds of blowing on each other’s faces, I was calm. Things started making sense. I could no longer hear my heart beat and I could see clearly. Monde was standing over us with

her palms together and her forehead furrowed. I see I scared the shit out of her.

“I’m sorry,” I said.

“Rainbow, we are just investigating. It doesn’t mean he did it...you should know this by now,” she said almost reprimanding. Nkonzo and I got up

.

“Grootboom says he’s our prime suspect,” I reminded. “And there is a witness,”

“Ndumiso was also a primary suspect for a few days...it could change anytime. New evidence will come up.” Nkozo stepped in.

“I can’t lose Lucky Monde. If I lose him, for good...I might just lose myself. I will lose myself,” I sobbed.

“Come here,” she drew me into her arms, “I’m here. Whatever happens, promise me that you will be on the side of the law,” I promised Lucky that I would have his back and I had too; Lucky is my everything.

“I promise,” I lied to my sister without flinching. There was no way I was going to leave Lucky out to dry.

“Detective,” called a man in a police uniform sticking his head out the door. “The colonel would like to interrogate your sister,” Monde and I looked at each other. It was as though she knew what was going on. What if she could

hear everything I was thinking since we're twins?
Jesus I'm losing my mind.

"Just be honest with him. We all love Lucky but if he really did do this; he needs to pay right?" she waited for me to agree with her.

"Right," I coincided. Everything is going to be fine. I need to stay calm and think carefully before I answer any question but not too long that it's obvious I'm trying to piece the truth together. "I will be there in a minute, please let me gather myself," they left me. "Get it together," I whispered. I pulled out my phone and texted Lucky using that new number he called me with.

"DO NOT COME. YOU ARE NOW A PRIME SUSPECT. RUN."

I went inside and an officer took me to the interrogation room. I've been here before and it was scary the first time; now it's just terrifying. Sibeko walked in.

"Rainbow," he sang. I forced a smile which disappeared in less than a second. "Mr G has asked me to interrogate you on his behalf. Old man's got a soft spot for you,"

"And you don't?" I asked.

"I do, everybody does. But I'm very good at compartmentalizing," he boasted.

"I see,"

“So, you obviously know why you are here; I understand that everything is confusing right now but it will all make sense so long as you cooperate with the guys in blue,” he assured. “This interrogation is being recorded, just a reminder.” I nodded. “Let’s get to it.” he let out a loud sigh. “Last week you went to Johannesburg, correct?”

“Correct,”

“To do what?”

“To drop off Mthobisi at my parents’ place,” I answered. “I called and told you guys, you know this,”

“Just answer the questions Rainbow, don’t add unnecessary information. Right now, I am a detective and not your colleague, clear?”

“Crystal” things started to tense up. But I have to maintain my cool.

“So, you went to Johannesburg to drop Mthobisi, Lucky’s son at your parents’ place?” he repeated my answer in a form of a question to confirm he heard me right. I nodded. “Why?”

“Why what?”

“Why did you take Mthobisi to your parents’?” was he actually f*****g kidding me? Like is this real?

“Because,” I was really getting irritated.

“Because, his grandfather and uncle were going to kill him, they were forcing him to sell drugs,”

“How do you know they were going to kill him?”

“Not just him, myself included. His aunt, Zanele called and told me to run, that she heard them giving out orders to shoot at us,”

“So you moved a child almost 10 hours away from home because his aunt – whom I gather you had a feud with – said she heard her father and brother giving out orders?”

“We were chased around town!”

“You are not answering the question”

“The f**k Sibeko, you were there. You know everything. I communicated with this side so you knew every single move I made,”

“I was not there in person. I was taking your word from texts and calls,” he defended himself, “But I’m not the one in question here, so if we may...” his nostrils flared. “Let’s deviate a little from why you took Mthobisi Dlamini. So, you must have arrived there at around 1, 2”

“Are you telling me or asking me detective?” I cocked my head to the side leaning forward.

“What time did you arrive at your destination?” he rephrased.

“Around 1 or 2,”

“Did you sleepover?”

“Yes sir.”

“Then morning came...”

“I don’t know, did it or were you not there?” I mocked.

“Put that sarcasm away; this is a very serious case,” he reminded me.

“Morning came and I left,”

“You left and went where?” f**k! This is getting serious now.

“I went shopping and...I just went around the city. You know, to unwind?”

“And then?”

“And then what?”

“You spent another 2 days there; where were you? who were you with? What were you doing?”

“Like I said I needed to unwind, I got drunk and then lodged into the nearest guesthouse,”

“That guesthouse being?”

“Mzingwane, I think...google it. Gladys was so kind to let a drunken girl crash for a night having not booked in time,”

“Okay, you crashed a night...and then what happened after?”

“After that I went home to spend some time with Mthobisi,”

“Lucky’s son?” I gave him a nasty look and he knew not to go down that road with me.

“Fine, we’ll take a break,” he got up and took his

things with him.

On a scale of 1 to 'I'm about to my pants' I am right on 'I've shitted my pants'. Right about now, Sibeko is probably talking to the team about loopholes he found in my story. But I'm certain the team was watching this interrogation, each taking down notes and finding their own loopholes.

I'm a martyr. I have unwillingly offered myself as a martyr for Lucky's crimes and it had better be worth it, he had better find a way out of this without ruining us both for good. How the fuck would he make this worth it now? How, when he's just been classified a prime suspect?

I walked around the room killing time and praying that Lucky got my message. If he

showed up here with that act he planned, they are cuffing him and putting him in the interrogation room.

“Let’s resume,” ordered Sibeko walking in with a cup of coffee, “this is for you,” he slid the cup across the table.

“Thanks,” I took a quick sip and closed my eyes to let it in. It tasted good and it warmed me up inside.

“Shall we continue?”

“Ready when you are.”

“Here’s my theory, the colonel is going kill me

for this but, what the heck?" he shrugged. "He said not to bring it up,"

"Let's hear it, detective,"

"You know who killed the Dlamini's," he said pointing at me with a pen. I peered at him for a good few second then giggled rubbing my palms against the surface of the table. "Or you killed them,"

"I was here with you guys and when I was away you knew where I was, I communicated," I emphasized.

"Except for the two days before you returned to the office" he pointed out. "You went MIA, your sister tried to call you but you didn't answer her calls or texts, that is enough time for you to

drive back to Durban; go down to the Dlamini's, kill them and come back to work to receive the news of their death" except I didn't do it. I didn't kill them.

"I didn't kill the Dlamini's,"

"You had a motive and enough time,"

"What motive? Why the hell would I want to kill my boyfriend's family,"

"It could be that you wanted the drugs for yourself. Wanted to be the new drug lord in town. No one would suspect you stand with the blue bloods and when we found you you were posing as a drug lord...or Lucky asked you to do it,"

“Lucky is missing remember?” I could feel myself cowering by the seconds. My shoulders were falling along with my head; meaning I was losing confidence in myself,

“I know, it’s just a theory, no need to be scared”

“I don’t understand why Lucky I am being interrogated when Lucky is the suspect. We should be out there searching for him.” Before he could say anything, my phone rang, it’s an unknown number. I ignored the call. “Answer my question, why am I being questioned?” I demanded.

“Who’s calling?” he asked.

“Nobody,” it rang again and I know in my heart it’s Lucky calling.

“Pick it up, or I will and put it on speaker,”

“No, it’s a private call and I know my rights,” I could taste my own heart. It was literally as the back of my throat about to jump out of my mouth.

“Pick up the bloody call or I will, I am not scared to break 1 little rule” he yelled. F**k, it’s over.

“COOKIES,” I said.

“COME OUTSIDE,” Lucky spoke and Sibeko heard him. I had to do it, I had to pull out my

gun.

“Get up and open the door,” I demanded.

“Is he outside?” he asked slowly walking to the door.

“Shut up! You are my shield...clear? Get me outside”

“You don’t have to do this Rainbow, don’t let Lucky drag you into this life,”

“Oh! but I have to,”

“The team, your sister...I’m certain she’s already seen what is happening. They are probably two

steps ahead of you,” he warned.

Indeed, when we got outside; Monde, Mr G, Nkonzo and other detectives and police had their guns out aiming at me and I had mine aiming at one of theirs’.

“I swear I will shoot at him.” I made known.

“Everybody put your guns down,” I ordered with my gun at Sibeko’s head. “Sir!” I called, “Tell your men to stand down!”

“I can’t do that,” he shouted with his gun at hand.

“Colonel I swear, I will pull the trigger. Tell your men to stand down now!” I demanded.

“Okay, everybody, do as she say; weapons down,” he started then they all followed.

“I don’t want to hurt anybody; I just need to get to Lucky please...” I moved towards the gate with my human shield. Lucky pulled up across the street with his taxi,

“Aunty Rainbow,” Mthobisi stuck his head out the window and called out my name.

“Get in,” shouted Lucky. I made a run for it but I didn’t make it far, someone tackled me to the ground and held me down. I knew what was about to happen; from here it was going south.

“Drive!” I shouted as if it was the last thing I’d ever do on this earth. “Run” Lucky stepped on it

and drove towards oncoming traffic. Then all hell broke loose, I heard shots and shots and more shots; they were shooting at Lucky's taxi, some were running after him. I laid pinned down, unable to move, my eyes fixed on Lucky's taxi I wanted it to disappear. I wanted him to driver faster and lose them. But instead...

"LUCKY! NO" I screamed. I fought the weight that had been over me and succeeded. I ran towards the taxi, well towards the fire...the taxi blew up. "LUCKY! GET HELP!" I cried literally flying to the scene. But I didn't make it there.

"Ma'am," he called and I gave him my attention, "You were running towards the explosion and then what?" he asked.

"I don't know...I don't remember." I answered.

“Do you know who you are?” I nodded.

“I’m Rainbow,”

“Do you know where you are?” I nodded. “Where are you?”

“At a hospital for sick people. They think I lost my mind...” I wiggled my arm and felt that I was strapped down to this chair.

“Why do you think they think that?” asked Dr Simon pushing his glasses in.

“I keep telling them that I didn’t do anything wrong and Lucky will come and find me. No one

believes me, but I know he will.”

“But Lucky died in the explosion along with his son, that was all a year ago,” my eyes shot up at him.

“Don’t say that. Lucky is alive...I saw him walk out of the taxi. He was injured but he wasn’t dead. He ran and he will be back for me,”

“Rainbow, it has been a year now, don’t you think he would have returned by now?”

“It was yesterday,” I corrected him. “He’s still healing somewhere,”

“What was yesterday?”

“The explosion. It was yesterday...”

“When did we meet?” he asked.

“Today”

“Rainbow, you and I have been meeting for the past year now”

“That’s not true, I would have remembered. You want me to think I’m crazy too. I will not fall for it. Get me out of here!” I shouted. “Lucky is coming for me, untie me the f**k now!”

“What about the police you shot and killed on that day,” what the hell was he talking about? I

didn't kill anybody.

"Yesterday!" I roared pulling myself forward but I was still stranded where I sat. "And I didn't kill anybody! I was trying to help Lucky,"

"You killed 5 police officers among them detective Sibeko and Detective Jele, your twin sister" my mouth ran dry and all I could do was stare into his eyes and replay his words in my head.

"I don't...I didn't kill. No...Monde is alive, I..."

"What your mind does is that, it clears some memories and creates others, and it does that to protect you from yourself and the trauma you would go through,"

“I was on the ground, I didn’t shoot. I was...someone was on top of me holding me down,”

“That was detective Sibeko, you managed to get up and you shot at anyone that tried to stop you from getting to Lucky.”

“No,” tears streamed down my face, “I ran towards the fire and then I saw Lucky coming out and then I continued to run...and then...and then...”

“Before that, after managing to get up, you shot at Sibeko, then your sister, and then 3 more policemen,” I don’t remember any of that. It’s all a lie. Everything is a lie, it all happened

yesterday. “For the past year now, you sit there and tell me your story starting from when you met Lucky on that rainy day up until the explosion. Lucky and his son died in that explosion. I have to keep reminding you every day,” a nurse came in. “It seems our time is up for today” he got up. “Up her sedatives. She took it very hard today,”

I know what I saw. I know what happened yesterday and no one can tell me otherwise. The nurse pushed my wheel chair and hummed while at it.

“Nurse,” I uttered.

“Yes Rainbow,” she responded in a fruity tune.

“Could you take me to a mirror please”

“Okay, we’ll use the loo down the passage,”

She pushed me inside the toilet and parked the wheel chair in front of the mirror.

“My hair,” that’s the first thing I noticed when I looked at myself. My hair was unbound, wild and all over the place. “Has it really been a year? Did I really kill my sister?” she nodded sorrowfully. My hair was short yesterday when it all happened.

“It will be okay,” she assured me. “Would you like to have it made into a nice do?” I shook my head.

“I will do it when Lucky returns, thank you”

THE END.

THANK YOU FOR READING♡