

All the ifs

S2

#1

Gift: Tshiamo what was that?

Me: Stop shouting please.

Gift: I'm...

He lowered his voice.

Gift: I'm not shouting.

Me: Then?

Gift: I just don't understand.

Me: Try to.

Gift: I thought we both wanted this.

Me: I thought so too

Gift: Now you don't?

Me: My kids need me.

Gift: What's that suppose to mean?

Me: I can't give them half of me. They already don't have a father..

Gift: Wow.

Me: I don't mean it in that way.

He was hurt. You could see it in his face.

Gift: I love you and our children. I told you I'd be there for them. Dark or blue.

I shook My head.

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: So what are you saying?

Me: Give me time.

He nodded.

Gift; Okay.

Me: Thanks.

I watched as he got into his car and left. My family was still shock. Dad had asked many questions. He also didn't understand why I did

what I did. Grandma sort of understood.

Me: I'm going home.

Dad: You are home.

Me: I mean to mum's house.

Priscilla: Leave the kids here.

Me: Thanks ma.

Grandma; Are you fine?

I nodded.

Me: Bye family.

I could feel their eyes on me as I turned. I drove home and as soon as I parked my car, Nombu called.. She was Ululating.

Nombu: Were the negotiations successful?

Me: No.

Nombu: What? Where are you?

Me: My house.

Nombu: Molapo?

Me: Yes.

Nombu: I'm coming.

She hung up before I could. I got out of the clothes I was in and grabbed a bottle of gin. I was a wreck.

Nombu: Hey!

She said 30-35 minutes later.

Me: That was quick.

Nombu: I was in Roodepoort. And there's traffic

Me: Oh.

Nombu: Tshia, what is it?

She took my bottle away from me and I started sobbing.

Me; Nombu, I can't do this.

Nombu: You can't do what?

Me; I can't be strong anymore. I'm really trying but I can't. Why did God make me a woman?

Nombu: Oh Tshia calm down.

She quickly mixed warm water with sugar to calm me down.

Nombu: From the beginning.

Me: I said I Don't know Gift's family when my uncles asked.

Nombu; what? Tshia why? Don't you love Gift?

Me: I do. I love that man with all my being. I love him so much.

Nombu; Then?

Me; I carry a lot of baggage. He doesn't deserve that.

Nombu: he's comfortable with helping you offload it right?

Me: It's not fair on him.

Nombu: What you did is not fair.

I kept quiet.

Nombu: Do you think it is?

Me: I was doing What I thought was best.

Nombu: For who?

Me: Us

Nombu: No. You. That was very selfish. Gift loves you Tshiamo!

Me: I know that Buli..

Nombu: You need to fix this

I shook my head..

Me: I need to figure out what I'm going to do now.

Nombu: You really cant hurt Gift.

Me: I didn't do it intentionally.

Nombu: You did.

Me: Nombu please.

Nombu: You know I'm right. I'm going to leave now coz I'm so mad at you.

Me: Just like that?

Nombu: Just like that.

She took her bag.

Nombu: Sober up.

She kissed my cheek and left. I sat there trying to figure out my life. Trying to figure out what was I to do next. My kids! My priority. I put them first. That was going to be my main focus and nothing else. I sat in silence till Nolo came back with Rene, Tshepang and Resego.

Nolo: Tshia?

Me: hey.

Nolo: back to earth.

Me: I am

Nolo. Really?

Me: Yes

I said as I took a deep breath.

Nolo: You good?

Me: I am.

Nolo: Sure?

Me: Can I Just rest?

Nolo: Yes you can.

I went to talk to the three girls and slept.. The next morning, I woke with a headache. Rene, Tshepang and Resego were making breakfast.

Me: Morning

Tshepang; Hey sis.

Resego: you okay?

Me: Yes I am.

Rene: Breakfast?



Me: No..aren't you kids going to church?

They all shook their heads

Me: Hungover?

They all laughed and nodded.

Me: Oh makes sense.

Tshepang: that obvious?

Me: Tomato juice and cold water gave it away.

Resego: Don't tell dad

Me: Sego, you know I dont have time for that,  
where...

My phone rang.

Me: hey.

Gift: Hi.

Me: How are you?

Gift: I'm fine.. Can you step outside?

Me: Okay.

Gift: Thanks.

I took Tshepang's shoes and found him outside his car, shorts and T-shirt on. A bottle of water in his hand.

Me: Hey.

He drank up and threw the bottle away.

Gift: slept well?

Me: I did.

He nodded.

Gift: Are you keeping our child?

All the ifs

S2

#2

Me: What are you on about?

Gift: Don't play games baby.

Me: I have no idea what you talking about

ba..Gift.

Gift: So you really going to act dumb?

Me: About what?

Gift: Your raging hormones.

Me: What raging...you think I'm pregnant?

Gift: Aren't you?

Me: No!

Gift: Then explain your behaviour. I mean there's only one explanation to this.

Me; and you think pregnancy is?

Gift: Well isn't it?

Me: No.

Gift; I Don't believe that.

Me: That's all on you.

Gift: Come.

Me: Where?

Gift: let's Go.

Me: I haven't taken a bath.

Gift: so?

Me: Where are you taking me?

Gift: Get in Tshia.

He opened the passenger door and I slowly walked towards the car and got in..he closed my door and made his way to his seat, as soon as he got in, he reached his hand out to grab a plastic bag from the back of his seat and put it on my lap then he started the Ignition and drove off.

Me: What's this?

Gift: Open it.

I did

Me: Oh my goodness ba...Gift!

Gift: You know you can still call me 'baby' right?

Me: Are you serious?

Gift: Yes.

Me: I'm talking about the pregnancy tests.

Gift: We need to do it.

Me: I'm not pregnant Gift!

Gift: We need to be sure.

Me: You kidding me.

Gift: No I'm not.

Me: So where are you taking me?

Gift: To our house. Privacy!

I put the tests back in the plastic bag and looked out the window.

Gift: so you not talking to me?

Me: I don't feel like talking today.

Gift: Why didn't you tell that you not ready to get married to me?

Me: At the time I thought I was.

Gift: so you think the reasons you gave to me are valid enough?.

Me: Aren't they?

Gift: rubbish.

He said it with annoyance and sadness.

Me: Just give me time.

Gift: That's what you were suppose to say! You wasted time baby. That's not how we do things. Couldn't you communicate? What makes it worse is that you used the kids as excuses. You are damaging kids who you claim are your own. Those kids were dealing with their Father's rejection and getting over it coz they were getting used to me and now you leaving them with no father figure?

Me: That's not what I'm doing.

Gift: Oh okay

He focused on the road and kept quiet till we got to the house. I had to take the four tests. Yes four. And we waited patiently.. They were all negative.

Me: See? Please take me home.

Gift: Can we talk?

Me: Gift...

I was really tired.

Gift: Tshiamo. Please!

I sat down and paid attention to him.

Gift: I love you. So much. And I'd be lying if I said I'm not hurt by what happened yesterday..

Me: I know but...

Gift: let me finish.

Me: Okay.

Gift: I'll respect your decision

I could tell that he had forfeited. He was

probably tired of arguing with me.

Me: Thank you.

Gift: Don't keep me from the kids.

A lot of sincerity in his voice.

Me: I won't.

Gift: Whenever you think you ready okay? I'll wait patiently

Me: Thank you.

Gift: You want something to eat?

Me: I want to bath.

Gift: your things are in the bedroom..

Me: Thanks.

I went to take a shower and changed. Half of my things were still in the wardrobe. I stared at what I wanted to take...

Gift: don't take anything



I was a bit startled.

Gift: sorry..

Me: its okay.

Gift: Want something to eat?

Me: Please take me home.

Gift: You really Don't want to be here with me?

Me: I'm Really tired Gift..

Gift: Can we atleast be friends?

I Don't know how I felt about that.

Me: I guess so..

Gift: okay Lets get you home then.

Me: Okay

He drove me home and I spent the rest of the day sleeping. I went to fetch the kids at dad's at around 17:30.

Dad: Tshiamo.

Me: Pa?

Dad: Come..

I sat down and paid attention to him.

Dad: Have you spoken to Gift?

Me: yes.

Dad: And?

Me: We taking a break.

Dad: Till?.

Me: I dont know dad..

Dad: Okay Tshia..

Me: Can I leave now?

Dad: You very moody I must say.

Me: I think I'm only getting to deal with the nightmares now.

Dad: I understand.

Me: Thanks dad

3 weeks later, I was burying myself in work, work and work. I was trying to deal with myself and my kids. I took them out every weekend..they had stopped asking about their father and I was happy with that. I always found something for us to do so I couldn't see Gift.

Nolo: Going out.

Me: Have fun.

Nolo: Bye babies.

She kissed Ora and Tumi..her kids were at her dad's.

Ora: Mum.

Me: Yes baby?

Tumi: Tshia no.

Me: what is it?

Tumi: I don't want to go here.

Me: But I thought you liked going to Disney on

ice.

Ora: We've been here before.

Me: I know.

Tumi: I'm not going.

Me: But I already got our tickets Baby.

Tumi: I'm tired.

Ora: Me too.

She said Grabbing her tablet.

Tumi: Tshia?

Me: Yes?

Tumi: I want to go live with Pops.

All the ifs

#3

Me: why?

I was surprised and a bit hurt.

Tumi: Coz I miss him.

Me: But you with me.

Tumi: No Tshia.

He sat next to his sister.

Ora: You know mummy...

She locked her tablet and folded her arms.

Ora: We haven't been to pops' place in weeks.

Me: I know.

Ora: Why?

Me: We've both been busy.

Tumi: Tshia call him. I want to talk to him.

Me: I don't have airtime.

Ora: Mam'Selina sells airtime.

I was defeated.

Me: Let me see what I can do.

I dialled Gift's number hoping that he wouldn't answer but he did.

Gift: Baby?

Me: Hey.

Gift: You good?

Me: I am.

Gift: Are the kids good? Listen Tshia, I haven't seen them in weeks. Are you keeping them From me?

Me: They want to talk to you

Gift: Okay

Four eyes were on me..I quickly put It on loudspeaker.

Ora: Pops

Gift: Hello my babygirl.

There was a lot of warmth In his voice as he spoke to Ora. You could tell he was happy. I felt horrible for keeping them away but again, I was keeping them close.

Ora: Are you going to come here today?

Tumi: Ora let me speak. Pops

He was jumping up and down. The excitement on his face surprised me.

Gift: Boyza!

Tumi: where are you?

Gift: I'm at home

Ora: Are you going to come today?

Gift: What did mum say?

Tumi: she said "yes"

I sat down and decided to listen.

Gift: Okay I'll come later okay?

Tumi: Okay

Ora: Hurry okay?

Gift: Okay my babygirl.

They said their goodbyes and Ora hung up.

Tumi: You see?

Me: So we not going to Disney on ice?

Ora: no mummy.

Tumi: Tshia please pack our bags

Me: okay .

There was alot of sadness in my "okay". I couldn't believe they were choosing Gift over me. It really puzzled me. I couldn't quite understand it. I went to pack their bags and made them something to eat.

Me: you know other kids would kill to go to Disney on ice?

Ora: Which kids?

Me: Other kids that can't go.

Tumi: take them Tshia.

He left me speechless coz in all that he was saying he was just an innocent little kid who



probably didn't even understand what he too was saying.

Tumi: Do you know where they are?

Me: no I'm just saying.

Ora: Mummy, you should have asked us first

Me: Right.

Madam speaker had spoken. Ora was wise beyond her years. I couldn't understand how a 5 year old could reason the way she did. Dad always said it was normal and that his grandkids were smart. Like him. That he always emphasized.

Tumi: Thank you for the food Tshia

Me: pleasure Tumelo.

They finished their food and went out to play with their toys. I got a call from Nombu as I was washing the dishes.

Nombu: Party?

Me: with?

Nombu: the girls.

Me: I'll pass

Nombu: Oh come on..

Me: Nah. I'm good Nombu.

Nombu: You always going to isolate yourself?

Me: well it's working isn't it?

Nombu: for who?

Me: For me. I dont have time for judgmental people.

Nombu: But this was a chance to work it out. After what they saw Kananelo treat Ora the way he did, they are on your side and they've been trying to call but they can't reach you.

Me: Coz I rejected their numbers. Nombu, I can live without friends.

Nombu: Including me?

Me: I didn't mean it that way.

Nombu: Then?

Me: you know what I mean.

Nombu: Make peace.

Me: Next time okay? I just want to do some work.

Nombu: On a Saturday?

Me: Yes.

Nombu: My goodness Tshia!

Me: I'll come and see you tomorrow after church.

Nombu: You better.

Me: I will

Nombu: Have fun working.

Me: Have fun partying

Nombu: Without you? I Don't think so.

I giggled.

Me: just don't drink too Much okay? You know how you get.

Nombu: I won't. You know I don't want to get into trouble with Sthe.

Me: Way better.

Nombu: Love you

Me: Love you too.

Nombu: Tshiamo?

Me: Nombu?

Nombu: Take care okay?

Me: I will.

Nombu: bye babe

Me: Bye love

Hung up and I decided to work since my kids weren't feeling me. I heard very loud screams an hour later and I knew Gift had arrived. He

only came in 30 minutes later and he had grass stains on his light blue shirt.

Me: So much for trying to clean up.

Gift: Hey you can say that again. Hey baby.

He opened his arms for a hug and I got in. The warmest embrace. His addictive scent. I freed myself from him.

Me: Want something to drink?

Gift: Water please

Me: Okay

He still had the wool wrapped around his ring finger. I went to get him water and settled down in the other couch .

Gift: No rest?

Me: No. I have quite a lot to do. I've been offered a better job at another company so I'm Just trying to push before I leave.

Gift: What! That's good news. You keep soaring high.

Me; I have to.

Gift: When do you start?

Me: in a month

Gift: Ready?

Me: always

Gift: I'm happy for you

Me: thank you.

Tumi: Let's go pops.

He was suddenly in the room. Ora went to fetch their bags.

Me: I packed four outfits for them just in case. You know how rough they are

Gift: No problem.

Me: And I'll see you tomorrow kids .

Gift: Can I bring them back on Monday?

Ora: no

Gift: what do you mean babygirl?

Ora: We not coming back here.

Me: Are you two serious?

I had a lump in my throat

Tumi: yes Tshia

Ora: bye mummy

She said hugging me.

Me: Aren't you going to...

Gift: I'll take care of them.

All the ifs

#4

Me: Please

Gift: I will.

Ora: Let's go pops.

They didn't even have time for me. They were just happy that they were leaving.

Gift: I'll come get the rest of their clothes tomorrow.

Me: Okay.

Gift: bye

I hugged him again. My son already had the car keys in his hand, ready to bounce, ready to leave me. He had absolutely no care in the world for his mum. I watched as they drove off and couldn't help but tear up but quickly wiped the tears off.

"Tshia!"

I turned.

Me: hi.

Banele: hey girl.

Me: Hi.



Banele: How are you?

She had three kids apparently. From what I heard.

Me: I'm fine.

Banele: Looking good

Me: Thank you.

Banele: how's everyone doing?

Me: Everyone's fine.

Banele: Tshia?

Me: Yes Banele?

Banele: I'm sorry..

Me: Okay.

Banele: Can we start over?

Me: that's not a good idea..

Banele: please

Me: No.

Banele: Tshia please.

Me: You fooled me once. I won't let you fool me again. Lets just be civil to each other okay?

Banele: Tshiamo get over yourself.

Me: Okay.

I walked away from her, left her there and she watched as I closed the door, I didn't have the time or energy for her. I had a lot to deal with. I worked till 20:00 and had to close my laptop When Nolo came back.

Nolo: wine?

Me: 5litre Mara?

Nolo: I know you need it.

I giggled.

Me; Yes.

Nolo; How was Disney on ice?

Me: We didn't go.

Nolo: Why?

Me: They weren't interested.

Nolo: Ora and Tumi weren't interested in Disney on ice?

Me: No.

Nolo: Impossible.

Me: I'm telling you..

Nolo: So they chose their grandparents over you?

Me: I wish

Nolo: what now?

Me: They moved in with Gift?

Nolo; what?

Me: Yes.

Nolo: Moved in?

Me: Yes. They protested. Told me that they missed Gift and that they wanted to live with

him.

Nolo: Tshiamo!

Me: Sad right?

Nolo: No.

Me: What do you mean?

Nolo: Can't you see?

Me: See What?

Nolo: This is your last shot at Happiness?

Me: Bonolo no please

Nolo: Your kids adore Gift.

Me: Well clearly.

Nolo: what are you going to do?

Me: Nothing.

Nolo: Really?

Me: yes Nolo..

Nolo: Wow.

Me: Lets drink.

Nolo: Avoiding the topic?

Me: Drowning my sorrows.

Nolo: Want to go out?

Me: Music and wine will be just fine.

Nolo: You sure?

Me: One hundred percent.

Nolo: Okay then.

Me: No lectures please.

Nolo; But you need to be lectured.

Me: then I'm going to bed.

Nolo: Okay fine. Sit!

Me: Let's have a good time okay?

Nolo: Okay.

Me: Thank you.

We had a very great night..it was fun, we

laughed a lot and Just had a very good time.  
The next morning, we had to go to church with  
hangovers. Gift's two kids were with him.  
Looking all excited and very cute..they had new  
outfits on. Ora had a princess dress on and  
Tumelo was wearing a white shirt, crossbelts  
and a very cute pair of jeans. Their new dad was  
in a suit. I went to find a seat next to Gift.

Gift: You look hungover.

Me: Do you blame me?

Gift: I'm not sure what that means.

Me: I'm childless.

He giggled.

Gift: No you not

Me: They don't even acknowledge me.

Gift: they just missed me.

Me: and they Don't miss me?

Gift: no. Not yet.

We stopped talking when the singing stopped. The service was very uplifting and we had no other choice but to go home for Sunday lunch as always.

Gran; Tshiamo!

Me: Ma?

Gran: were you drinking?

Me: No.

Gran: Tshia don't lie to me

Me: I'm not lying.

Gran: You look so thin. Have you been eating?

Me: Yes.

Gran; You work too much.

Me: I know Gran.

Gran; You'll die..

Me: No I won't.

Gran; yes and I won't be there to bury you.

I kept quiet.

Gran: Now, im going to dish up another plate for you okay?

Me: No you Don't have to...

I was too late. Gift was still with his kids and they were taking selfies. They only greeted me at church and that was it. After Gran forced me to eat my second plate of food, I washed the dishes, spent time with the family and we all went our separate ways. For the next 3 days I tried all I could to be my head in the right place. I called to check on them everyday but it wasn't enough..they were having a good time.

Me: I should lock up?

Nolo: Yes.

Me: You really not coming back?



Nolo; Yes Tshia. I'm sleeping at Asa's!

Me: why didn't you tell me though?

Nolo: but I Just called you.

Me: At 19:30?

Nolo: Still called.

Me: Well I guess you did

Nolo: Will you be fine?

Me: I will be.

Nolo: Okay..

Me: You better be at Palesa's.

She laughed

Nolo: You Don't have a child who's the same age as me.

Me: Oh whatever.

Nolo: Bye cuz.

Me: Bye cuz.

As soon as I hung up, the door opened.

Me: Learn to...

A slap landed on my face. As I tried to get up, another one landed.

Kana: Where are the fuck are my kids?

All the ifs

#5

I regained my strength and decided I wasn't going to let him break me again, I reached for the vase I had on the table and hit him with it on his head, I was hoping he was dead but his chest kept moving up and down, I went to grab a bottle of water, let it down my throat and sat down. I was waiting for him to regain consciousness. I was ready for him. Ready with a frying pan, a knife and a bucket full of water. I poured about 3 buckets until he eventually woke up. His head was heavy you could tell.

Me: welcome

He was trying to get up.

Me: you need help?

Kana: where are my kids?

Me: what happened to “fuck?”

Kana: I’m not playing games

Me: I thought we were.

Kana: where are my kids/

Me: aren’t they with their mother Seipati? What are their names again? Oh yes...Rorisang and Atlehang

Kana: damnit! I’m talking about Ora and Tumelo.

Me: OH Gift’s kids?

I giggled.

Me: with their dad. Diepkloof

Kana: what do you mean Gift’s kids?

Me: they are Gift's kids. They are not yours.

Kana: don't make me lose it.

Me: don't make me stab you.

Kana: Tshiamo.

Me: leave now

Kana: TSHIAMO!

He's voice was scary but I wasn't going to fall for that. I had had enough of Kananelo and his controlling crazy ways.

Me: go back to your family

Kana: give me my kids

Me: don't make me call the police

Kana: give me my kids

Me: leave!

I took the half full bucket of water I had and I poured it over his body again, his jaw dropped as he felt the cold against his skin, I kicked his

balls twice before he could attack me again and I dragged him out of the house. Made sure he was on the street and quickly locked myself in. I quickly dialled Gift.

Gift: mummy

Me: are my kids safe?

Gift: our children are safe yes

Me: Gift!

Gift: Tshiamo what is it?

Me: Kananelo was here to attack me.

Gift: That piece of rubbish.

Me: what do you mean?

Gift: he bumped into the kids and I at the mall eating ice-cream

Me: you not supposed to feed those kids...

I calmed down. I decided to deal with one thing at a time.

Me: and then?

Gift: and then nothing. The kids didn't acknowledge him. Did he hurt you?

Me: no.

Gift: You sure?

Me: I'm fine.

Gift: Where is he now?

Me: I dragged him out.

Gift: You dragged him out?

Me: Its a Long story.

Gift: I'm coming over

Me: I'm fine! Gift! Stop it!

Gift: You still my fiancée.

Me: I'm Okay

He was frustrating me.

Gift: Okay fine. Lock the doors

Me: I did

Gift: Where's Nolo by the way?

Me: She's sleeping out.

Gift: Lock the doors.

Me: I did

Gift: Double check.

Me: I'm not 5 Gift. I'll be fine. I can take care of myself besides, Kananelo left.

Gift: Okay. Be safe.

Me: I will be.

I took a very deep breath after I hung up, went to see if I was bruised and yet again, I wasn't.. I thanked the heavens coz if I was Gift was going to land himself in jail again, cleaned up the water on the floor then took a shower, got into my PJs and decided I was going to watch TV. For a change.. Something I hadn't done in forever. As I was getting some snacks, I saw

car lights from the gate. Looked out the window and it was a car I knew very well. I unlocked the door and went out. Knocked on the window.

Me: I said I'm fine!

Gift: What are you doing outside?

Me: What are you doing here?

Gift: here to make sure you safe.

Me: I'm protected.

Gift: Really?

Me; Yes.

Gift: Then how did you get attacked?

Me: You making a big deal out of nothing.

Gift: I'll sleep in the Car.

Me: Gift. Where are the kids?

Gift: At my mum's. With Ulrika.

Me: Ulrika? As in my Ulrika?



Gift: Yes.

Me: She works for Kananelo

Gift: She quit a long time ago. Right after you left.

Me: Are you serious?

Gift; Yes

Me: oh okay. Can I get you something to eat?

Gift: I'm fine...

Me: Come inside.

Gift: Inside where?

We both giggled.

Me: The house Gift.

Gift: I thought you wanted me inside of you.

Me: No. I can't let you sleep in the car.

Gift: so you letting me sleep in your bed?

Me: In the guestroom or the couch

Gift: Okay

Me: park in okay?

Gift: take the things in the trunk please

Me: Okay

I got his suit cover, box of shoes and overnight bag then went in, leaving him to park the car in the garage. He came in minutes later.

Gift: you watching TV?

Me: yes.

Gift: That's unlike you.

Me: Thought I should just catch up.

Gift: You chose TV over work today?

Me: yes I did

Gift: I'm hungry

Me: What do you want to eat?.

Gift: pap

Me: Who's going to cook that?

Gift: You.

Me: You telling me?

Gift: You asked what I wanted to eat

Me: I was hoping you'd settle for bread.

He laughed .

Gift: No. I feel like a home cooked meal and dessert afterwards.

Me: Custard? Pudding? Cake?

Gift: Cake

Me: Okay.

I got up and started cooking for one person who was just switching through channels.

Me: Here you go.

Gift: Thank you. This looks like it was made with love. Thank you.

I stopped myself from giggling.

Me: I'm going to clean up okay?

Gift: Okay.

I left him there to clean up and washed his dishes when he was done. I prepared the guestroom for him and before we both slept, he went to take a shower.

Me: Goodnight.

Gift: Goodnight babe.

I fell asleep as soon as I put my head down, I was woken up by gentle fingers running on my waist. I jumped up...

Gift: shhh..

It was still dark. When I turned to look at the digital clock, it was 3:21

Gift: lift your body

I did and he took my shorts off.

Gift: Make way.

I was still very sleepy but suddenly woke up when he started moved in circles around my clit.

Me: No Gift please...

My body was tingling. He moved in harder and when I tried to get his head from me he pinned my hands on the bed with his. I was pretty sure my wrists were going to get bruised because he had them down pretty hard. I wasn't ready for what was next coz he took control. He had his way with me however he wanted, flipping me over when he wanted, had me changing positions when he felt like it. It was his show and he was running it. I was breathing heavily when he was done.

Gift: Sleep tight..

Me: Its time for us to wake up.

It was 4:50

Gift: We should probably sleep for the remaining ten minutes then.

Me: You weren't meant to do this.

Gift: I asked for cake.

Me: Next time act like a guest okay?

Gift: Did you not like that?

Me: No.

I said turning my back on him and he giggled.

Gift: Okay. 20 minutes.

We woke up at 5:30 and got ready for work.

Gift: I'll fetch you later okay?

Me: Why?

Gift: I have to fetch you.

Me: Where to?

Gift: Tshia just pack your bags after work okay?  
I'll come fetch you.

Me: I don't understand Gift.

Gift: You coming to live with me.

Me: Are you telling me?

Gift: Well you don't exactly comprehend when you asked nicely so I'm telling you..pack your bags, I'll come fetch you after work.

All the ifs

#6

Me: Gift...

Gift: I'll see you later.

He put his mug down, kissed my cheek and left. I took my handbag and laptop bag then went to work. I made sure I completed all I had to and got home to pack. I was instructed to.

Nolo: And now?

Me: Hey

Nolo: You going somewhere?

Me: Gift's.

Nolo: You guys are back together?

Me:no.

Nolo: Then?

Me: Kananelo came to attack Me.

Nolo: What happened?

Me: he came to attack Me..

Nolo: Why?

Me: He saw the kids with Gift and freaked out.

Nolo: So now they are his kids?

Me: Imagine.

Nolo: The nerve. Did he hurt you?

Me: No. I dragged him out before he could.

Nolo: you go girl.

I giggled.

Nolo: So Gift?



Me: You know how he is.

Nolo: Protective.

Me: Yeah. So I have to.

Nolo: Oh well.

Me: Yes well.

She sighed.

Me: what's wrong?

Nolo: I got my money back for the house.

Me: why?

Nolo: They decided to turn it into a family house.

Me: That's hectic.

Nolo: I know right!

Me; What now?

Nolo: I don't know.

Me: You know this is a family house right?

Nolo: And I practically own it.

We both laughed.

Me: True.

Nolo: thanks Cuz.

Me: Got you. Always.

Nolo: You really leaving?

Me: Yes.

Nolo: I'm going to miss you

Me; You hardly spend time with me so I don't know why you sad.

Nolo: You always away..

Me: Lies

Nolo: Okay fine.. Maybe not.

Me: There's no "maybe"

Nolo: Okay fine fine...

There was a knock And as soon as she said "come in", Gift entered.

Gift: Hey Nolo.

Nolo: Hey Gift.

Gift: you good?

Nolo: I am. You taking my cousin from me?

He giggled.

Gift: well she is mine isn't she?

I rolled My eyes. Nolo was amused.

Nolo: Of course she is. Take her.

Gift: you ready Ms Monareng?

Me: I am.

Gift: okay.

He took my two suitcases and pushed them out,  
I gave Nolo a hug

Nolo: You deserve happiness

Me: I'm not back with him.

Nolo: in my mind you are. Bye.

I giggled and she walked me out. Gift was waiting for me to open the car.

Me: Where's your car?

Gift: work. I got a lift here.

Me: because you didn't trust me right?

Nolo; do you blame him? We all know how hard headed you are

Me: Whatever..

They both laughed and we packed the bags in. I hugged Nolo again and passed Gift my keys so he could drive. We hooted at Nolo as we drove off.

Gift: bum cheek shorts?

I was wearing shorts yes, with a body suit and sandals coz it was hot.

Me; You don't like them?

Gift: They are too revealing

Me: Shame. Tough luck.

He giggled.

Gift: just like that?

Me: It's hot Gift.

Gift: it just feels uncomfortable.

Me: for who?

Gift: me. I don't think I like the idea of people staring at you.

Me: eyes were made to stare besides we only going to the house.

Gift: I'm not going to win this right?

Me: No.

Gift:: fine. How was work?

Me: Hectic.

Gift: That bad?

Me: not so bad but I can't wait to finish the

workload I have so I can relax before I start at the new company.

Gift: Know where you want to go?

Me; Why are you asking me that?

Gift: Coz I want to tag along. I need a break as well.

Me: You actually need it more than me.

Gift: So? Answer me.

Me: I don't know yet.

Gift: when's your last day at work?

Me: Next week Tuesday .

Gift: Pretty close

Me: It is.

Gift: can I choose?

Me: Oh God!

Gift: please.

Me: but I didn't even invite you.

Gift: I invited myself I know.

Me: We going there as friends.

Gift: Fine

Me: good .

When we got to his house, his two kids ran to him as soon as he got out of the car. They started screaming when I stepped out and ran to me.

Tumelo: Tshia!

Ora: you came to see us mum?

Me: well I'm moving in with you

They were excited but left me to help Gift. With what....I don't know. It felt good being around them and seeing Ulri. She missed us. And I realized that I missed her too, her happy self and caring ways. She left at around 18:00 and We decided to have pizza for dinner..I

witnessed the madness they all got up to and they only slept at 21:00 after bath time.

2 days later, I was still dealing with Gift and the kids. They had crazy fun. I really couldn't understand how he could deal with that. The backyard was always a mess which I had to always clean up. They learnt something new from him everyday, how to make juice, how to make sandwiches, how to make cars from 2litre bottles, they were making dog houses coz Tumelo felt he needed a dog so Gift was going to get him one. Thabsi and Nokuthula were very excited when they heard I was back and had decided that they also wanted to move in with us but we obviously had to talk to their mums first which was something we were going to do on the weekend.

Gift: Are you okay?

I sighed as I sat across him. I was exhausted and boy was I glad that my two little rascals



were fast asleep

Me: just tired.

Gift: You've been awfully quiet today.

Me: I know

Gift: Are you fine?

I nodded.

Me: Just tired Gift

Gift: massage?

Me: I just need to sleep.

Gift: Okay

Me: Ntando?

Gift: Tshiamo?

He was annoyed. I couldn't understand what he had against his name. He closed his laptop and took off his glasses.

Me: can I ask you something?

Gift: yes babe.

Me: Is it...

I paused and cleared my throat

Me: Is it too late for us to start over?

All the ifs

#7

He took off his glasses and closed his files.

Gift: Follow me.

He got and he led the way to the backyard. It was a very warm night. Very beautiful. I sat down as soon as he did. My heart beating fast. I took a deep breath in and let it out again without him noticing.

Gift: brought you out here coz the kids are sleeping.

Me: Okay

Gift: what did you ask?

Me: If we can try again?

Gift: Tshiamo what do you want?

Me: to be happy..

Gift: With who?

Me: You and the kids.

Gift; I don't think so.

Me: I mean it.

Gift: One minute you hot the next you cold.

Me: I know that

Gift: Then?

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: For what?

Me; pulling you back and forth.

Gift: Damn right you did. That was wrong and selfish. You let your emotions take over you and you expect everyone to string along.

I looked down at the table coz in as much as he was shouting, he was right. I had acted selfishly.

Gift: did you ever think of how it would make me feel?

I shook my head.

Gift: So you used emotions instead of your head?.

Me: I'm really sorry.

Gift: Tshiamo, I love you...

Me: I know

Gift: So is that why you keep playing games?

Me: No.

Gift: Then?

Me: I'm really sorry.

Gift: I didn't ask for an apology. I asked a question

I had never seen him that serious.

Me: I don't know what came over Me.

Gift: Okay.

He got up.

Gift: Think about what you really want.

He left me sitting there and I sighed..it didnt go as expected.. Maybe there was no hope for us. Maybe I had messed up the only chance I had with him. I sat there for about 10 minutes and went back in. He was behind his laptop working again.

Me: Goodnight.

Gift: Night babe.

I walked away a bit sad and went to bath then slept after thinking about what he had spoken about. I had to force myself to sleep. The next morning, I got the kids ready for work and the kids ready for school.

Tumelo: Pops!

Gift: Boyza

Tumelo: Who's fetching us today?

Gift: I think Aunty Ulri is.

Ora: why aren't you fetching us?

Gift: I'm going to knock off a bit late.

Ora: why?.

Gift: I have a meeting

Ora: Can we go with you?

Gift: No you can't.

Ora: Why?

Gift: it's about work.

Ora: Can you take us out night?

Tumelo: For ice-cream.

Me: You two aren't supposed to eat ice-cream.

Tumelo; Why Tshia?

Me: coz I said so.

Tumelo: Thats not right.

Me: Really? Finish your food.

They both kept quiet and finished their food.

They didn't even say bye to me when they left. I locked up and left 10 minutes later and at lunch, I had an unexpected visitor.

Nombu: Tshiamo.

Me: Oh dear!

Nombu: You promised to come on Sunday

Me: I know babe but you know how they are about family lunches.

Nombu: So why didn't you call me?

Me: I wanted to.

Nombu: But?

Me: I got busy

Nombu: I went to the house and Nolo told me you moved out.

Me: yes..I live with Gift now.

Nombu: You two are back together?

Me: No.

Nombu: Then?

Me: Safety reasons coz Kana tried to attack me.

Nombu: What?

Me: Yes Babe.

Nombu: Are you fine?

Me: Yes I am

Nombu: so when are you getting back with Gift?

Me: I don't know.

Nombu: You don't?

I shook my head.

Me: Let's not talk about it please.

Nombu: Okay. Invite.

Me: to?



Nombu: Spa Day.

Me: With?

Nombu: The girls.

I sighed.

Me: Okay.

Nombu: what is it?

Me: When?

Nombu: Tomorrow.

Me: Okay.

Nombu: You coming right?

Me: Do I have a choice?

Nombu: Not really.

Me: Thought as much.

Nombu: Can't wait

Me: Yeah right.

Nombu: I also bought you lunch from that place

you love.

Me: ah! So good.

Nombu: You need to eat.

Me: I am going to eat..where's your food?

Nombu: Got the same thing..we can't exactly eat here right?

Me: Yes. Let's go.

We headed to the garden area.

Nombu: Apparently the guys tried to reach out to Gift.

Me; And?

Nombu: And he's ignoring them

Me: Its going to take him some time before he comes around and it's a big "Maybe"

Nombu: You know Thats exactly what Sthe said.

Me: Tell them to give him time.

Nombu: You can try talking to him.

Me: Woah! We not so good hey.

Nombu: That bad?

Me: Not really but...

Nombu: I hope you'll be fine.

Me: me too. Topic change please.

We did And she left 10 minutes before my lunch hour ended. I worked till 15:00 and went home, the kids were with Ulri, I let her go home early and Dad decided he was coming to fetch his grandkids for the weekend and they happily left with him.

Gift: Boyza! Sunshine!

Me: They are not here.

Gift: Where are they?

Me: Dad's.

Gift: Why didn't you tell me? I would have tried

to get here earlier so I could see them before they left.

Me: Sorry. Didn't want to disturb.

Gift: I'll call them.

He said taking out his phone

Me: Can we talk first?

Gift: Okay.

He slowly put his phone down.

Me: May I be given a second chance?

Gift: You sound so level headed when you say that.

Me: I mean it.

Gift: Have you thought things through?

Me: I have.

Gift: do you know what you really want?

Me: You.

Gift: I'm not playing games this time.

Me: I know.

Gift: I guess we can give it a try.

Me: really?

He smiled

Gift: Really.

I bit my lower lip

Gift: What is it now?

Me: I need to be under you.

September 9 at 9:50 PM · Pub

All the ifs

#8

Nolo: you better not fuck up this time.

Me: I won't.

Nolo: You promise?

Me: I'm ready.

She said zipping up my dress at the back. Gift's uncles were coming back.

Nolo: You know them okay?

I giggled

Nolo: I'm serious

Me: I know them yes.

Nolo: Good

Me: how do I look?

Nolo: Like a bride who wasn't forced to get married to a stranger.

I smiled as I looked at my glowing self. I was happy..very..I was finally getting married to my soulmate. My love.

Me: Thank you.

Nolo: You know what you want now?

Me; Yes.

Nolo: good coz if you dont...

My phone rang.

Me: Excuse me.

Nolo: You'll have me to deal with.

Me: Yes.

I quickly answered my phone.

Me: Mr K.

Gift: Future Mrs K.

Me: How are you dear Sir?

Gift: Very Well thanks Ma'am. Checking up on you.

Me: Lies.

Gift: And if you still want to be my wife.

I laughed.

Me: Yes. I do.

Gift: how are my 4 kids doing?

Me: Well the girls are with the mum in the

kitchen. And your two little ones are playing outside with the other kids.

Gift: I miss them

Me: You'll see them soon.

Gift: No I wont.

Me: I don't know what that means.

Gift: It means I'm having you all to myself tonight.

Me: Mmm...

I decreased the volume.

Gift: what do you think?

Me: well that would be nice.

Gift: is that you saying "yes?"

Me: Yes.

Gift: Later then.

Me: I love you.



Gift: I love you too baby.

We both hung up and 5 minutes later, the uncles were outside. The negotiations went pretty well and Gift was happy. We both were. He came to fetch Me at around 17:30.

Gift: Hello.

Me: Hey there.

Gift: How are you?

We kissed.

Me: I'm fine.

Gift: are you?

Me: I am. Where to?

Gift: Somewhere nice.

Me: Where?

Gift: somewhere nice.

Me: Aren't you going to tell me?

Gift: No.

Me: You are so mean.

Gift: Am I?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Well be strong.

Me: Do I have a choice?

Gift: Not really.

Me: Fine. Drive

Gift: Is that an instruction?

Me: I think it is.

Gift: who wears the pants in this relationship?

Me: Well we both wearing pants now.

He laughed

Gift: Ask me nicely.

Me: Baby please start driving.

Gift: That's how you do it.

I rolled my eyes.

Gift: You too

Me: Have you decided on the colors you want for the wedding.

He drove off

Gift: No.

Me: Why?

Gift: it's your wedding.

Me: And it's not yours?

Gift: You know what I mean.

Me: No I don't.

He sighed.

Gift: What I'm saying is...you'll be thr one that everyone will be looking at you..

Me: Us

Gift: Baby..

Me: No. You planning this with me.

Gift: Is this another instruction?

Me: Yes! Now I am. This is our wedding.

Gift: But I don't know anything about weddings.

Me: Well so do I. My wedding was planned by that aunt of mine.

Gift: Okay fine

Me: good.

Gift: anything else Ma'am?

Me: No.

Gift: You sure?

Me: One hundred percent sure.

Gift: Do inform me if there's anything else okay?

He was teasing me and I punched him lightly on his shoulder .

Gift: That hurts

Me: as it should.

We both laughed and he drove all the way to Graskop. A very nice secluded lodge/resort.

Me: you want to keep me here?

Gift: Till Monday yes.

Me: Well I don't mind. This place is beautiful.

Gift: Like it?

Me: A lot. It is stunning.

We had a very beautiful time there. I didn't want to go back home on Monday. He had to force me to leave the room.

Me: You sure we can't add a few more days?

Gift: Im sure.

Me: why?

Gift: Coz we need to go to work.

Me: Right.

Gift: We'll come back.

Me: I know we wont.

Gift: Why do you say that?

Me: Coz knowing you, you'll want us to go to a better place.

Gift: True. And that's not a bad thing right?

Me: well no.

Gift: can we leave now?

Me: I guess so

We checked out and hit the road. On the way he got a call from his office. Apparently something was up so we decided to stop there.

Gift: Will you be fine here?

Me: Yes.

Gift: I'll tell them to come get you a drink...

Me: I'm fine.

Gift: You sure?

Me: yes.

Gift: I'll be back..

Me: Okay babe.

I got a magazine to read and about 20-25 minutes later, my phone rang.

Me: Hello.

"Hey"

Me: what do you want?

Kana: I heard they were paying lobola for you on Saturday.

Me; Yeah so?

Kana: Must feel proud.

Me: I do actually.. Nothing beats getting married to the one you truly love.

Kana: Is it?

Me: Yes.

Kana: Well I want my kids.

Me: Well good luck with that. I have full custody remember?

Kana: Tshiamo you forget how powerful I am don't you?

Me: Well you forget that you forged my signature and that my kids witnessed you beat me up right?

It was silent...

Me: try me! Try me Kananelo.

Kana: Those are my kids.

Me: it's either jail or custody case. You decide.

All the ifs

#9

He was quiet for a few seconds.

Kana: Tshiamo...



Me: No. Fuck you. Fuck you Kananelo. You said my kids aren't yours. And you right... They not. I'll get a restraining order for you this time if you keep bothering me. I'm getting tired of your nonsense.

Kana: Those are my...

Me: Go to hell.

I hung up and blocked the numbers he called me with. I wasn't going to let him get to me. I continued reading the magazine and Gift came back after 30 minutes.

Gift: Let's go baby.

Me: Done?

Gift: Yes I am.

Me: Sorted?

Gift: Yes ma'am.

I got up and he locked his office.

Gift: Are you fine?

Me: Can we get to the car first?

Gift: Okay

He took my hand and led me out to the car.

Gift: Talk to me.

I sighed.

Gift: Can't be good.

Me: Kananelo.

Gift: Oh Fuck man! What now?

Me: he said he wants to fight for custody

He laughed.

Gift: Is Kananelo high on something? What does he smoke? Rat poison?

Me: Well I have no idea.

Gift: That shouldn't stress you out

Me: You think?

Gift: Trust me.

Me: We both know how powerful he is..

Gift: Some of us are more powerful than he is.

He started the ignition.

Me: what do you mean?

Gift: It means our kids will stay with us. Stop stressing.

Me: Okay.

Gift: Hungry?

Me: For what?

He blushed.

Gift: Food

Me: A bit.

Gift: Your favorite?

Me: Yes please.

We went to sit in at my favorite restaurant and

after 2 hours, went to fetch our 4 kids at Dad's. As usual, Ora and Tumi were happy to see Gift and my two girls were happy that I was back.

Thabsi: Welcome back moms.

Me; Thank you baby. How was your stay here?

Nokuthula: Perfect.

Me: was it?

Thabsi: Yes.

Me: Well it's time to go home. Go get your bags

Noku: Granddad won't like that.

She loved dad. They got on so well. It was amazing how we all blended in, like we were just one happy family. Dad loved the fact that he had two more granddaughters which Meant, he had more kids to spoil.

Me: Well your grandfather needs to be strong coz I'm taking my kids with.

Thabsi; Do we have to go home?

Me: Yes

Nokuthula: cant you fetch us tomorrow moms?

Me: no.

Thabsi: That's not nice.

Me: That's very nice.. Go get your things in the mean time. I want to go talk to your grandfather..

Thabsi: Okay

I went to find dad who was with his son-in-law.

Me: Daddy.

Dad: Lily. How are you?

Me: I think I'm fine.

Dad: Think?

Me: I'm just tired that's all.

Dad: When are you two getting engagement

rings. This elastic band and wool business gets to me.

We laughed.

Gift: soon Timer.

Dad: and have you two decided when you'll have the wedding?

Gift: We decided that we going to have the gift exchange ceremony first and we'll take it from there.

Dad: Wise one.

Me; So we thinking of having it in 2 to 3 weeks.

Dad: So soon.

Me: The sooner the better dad.

Dad: can't wait to get married?

Me: well I am getting to the one I really love this time. No arranged nonsense .

Dad: you look happy

Me: I Am happy.

I said looking at Gift.

Dad: take care of my daughter, son.

Gift: I will timer.

Me: He is dad.

Dad: okay Spokesperson.

We laughed.

Me: I'm going to see Mum and Gran.

Dad: okay then.

I left dad with his son and went to see Priscilla and Gran. They were already planning my wedding and all I did was listen to them. I let them be coz I knew I wasn't going to go with all they were saying. I wasn't having it. At all. We drove back after Dinner and the kids went to bath then straight to bed.

Me: Aren't you coming to bed?

I asked after taking my shower.

Gift: In a minute

Me: Your minute is an hour. Come on.

Gift: thats not true

Me: baby come to bed.

Gift: Right behind you.

He was right behind me.

Me: So Nombu Texted me

Gift: oh No.

Me: Since I missed that Spa date thingy and we missed the lunch they invited us to, she's having a dinner thing.

Gift: What is it with Nombu and Dinners/  
lunches and all of that?

Me: You know how she is.. She and Sthe are the glue..



Gift: Fine we'll go. Only coz Nombu's a nice person and we can't keep disappointing her.

Me: And she's my maid of honor.

Gift: Yes that too.

Me: You know who your best man is?

Gift: my son. Boyza.

Me: you serious?

Gift: why not?

Me: baby he's the page boy.

Gift: Tshia, let's cross that bridge when you get there coz I feel like you going to control me.

I laughed

Me: No I'm not.

Gift: Yes you are.

Me: No I'm not.

Gift: yes you are..

Me: Goodnight.

We both giggled and snuggled till we both fell asleep. The next few days were hectic and When Friday came, I was a bit emotional coz it was my last day at work. They threw me a farewell party and when came knock off time, it was hard saying bye to my teams but we promised to stay in touch and they were definitely getting invites to my wedding. The kids were going to My mother in law's for the weekend

G's mum: Tshia, I have a few ideas for the wedding

Me: Mama, we've decided that we'll have the gift exchange ceremony first so we plan on calling a meeting with the elders soon.

G's mum: Oh That's also perfect. I want you to have my wedding dress.

Gift: Oh no no no! Ma, I'll buy my wife a dress.

I pinched him.

G's mum: Tshia, we'll talk about this okay? I want you to have my dress. You are my first son's wife and I've been keeping it for his wife.

Gift: Thabo got married, why didnt you give it to his wife?

G's mum: He's not my first son..and stay out of this Gift

He kept quiet

Me: I'll come tomorrow ma for the fitting.

G's mum: Thank you my child.

Gift: Bye mama.

G's mum: Bye you little devil.

Gift and I laughed, went to say bye to the kids. Tumelo was having the time of his life. Why? One word. Dogs! Ora was excited coz she and my mum in law always did the garden together so she always looked forward to that. And

they'd always brag about their granny telling them stories. Now that's something the four of them liked. Yes. Thabsi included, it didn't matter how old she was, Gran's stories always hit home. From the in-law's we drove straight to Nombu's. She was excited to see us though we were late. The others were eating starters. Kananelo was with his wife. Gift greeted them with his attention to Sthe. He wanted Sthe to pay him his money..some bet they had.

Amanda: Congratulations guys.

Gift: On?

Mora: The negotiations.

Me: Thanks

Kat: So when's the wedding.

Me: soon.

Thembi: I have a few ideas on the bridesmaids dresses. I would like to share them with...

Me: Ummm Thembi?

Thembi: Yes friend?

Me: Only Nombu gets to be the maid of honor honor, my youngest daughter as my page girl. I've decided to use my two sisters and my daughters as my bridesmaids. I'll send you guys the invites though.

Kana: Must be nice. You've already taken decisions. You want my kids to be part of your stupid wedding.

Gift: You need to chill.

Bongani: Gents...

Gift: Just a few weeks back you wanted tests done on those kids and today you claim they are yours? Kananelo you need to grow up. You failed as a father admit it and let men who know that a child needs both parents do the work for you. Grow the fuck up and focus on your own family. I'm getting tired of your

nonsense. Don't make me send you to an early grave!

All the ifs

#10

Me: I think we should leave.

Gift: No. We staying.. Nombu invited us.

His word was final. Kananelo was quiet.

Seipati: We should leave.

Gift: Smartest thing you've ever said since you wrecked another woman's home.

As if he hadn't wrecked my wrecked home.

Gift: Tell your husband to stay away from my children or else you'll be a widow.

Seipati: let's go Kananelo.

He got up and they left. We carried on as if nothing had happened. Real quick.

Me: Did you just really do that?

I said it softly, almost giggling. Only he heard me.

Gift: enjoy yourself.

Me: well I plan on doing just that..I'm going to get more of these.

Gift: Slow down on that

Me: no.

Gift: Baby you going to get drunk.

Me: It's a Friday.

Gift: Doesn't give you a right to turn Into a drunkard

I giggled.

Me: Taste.

Gift: I know it's sweet.

Me: Baby just have a sip.

Gift: no.

Me: Dont make me force it Down your throat.

He giggled and had a sip.

Me: And?

Gift: Not bad

Me: Nice right?

Gift: no.

Me: Then?

Gift: it's not my cup of tea.

Me: well I'm going to drink this

He smiled

Gift: Do you ever listen?

Me: No.

Gift: Baby don't drink too much of that. Its not healthy, you know...

Me: No I don't know

We both laughed.



Gift: Just listen to me please.

Me: Fine

Gift: Thank you.

Me: I never say anything when you drink beer.

Gift: I don't over drink.

Me: mmm...

Gift: Do I?

Me: I don't know. I'm going to help Nombu in the kitchen.

Gift: okay babe.

I left him and went to find Nombu.

Me: Need help?

Nombu: No. Everything's fine.

Me: Sure?

Nombu: Yes. You look happy.

I felt myself blush.

Me: I am happy..

Nombu: I can see.

Me: If I can just get Kananelo off my back.

Nombu: You Don't think Gift did a good job?

Me: He might come back.

Nombu: Okay true. You just never know what's going on in his head

Me: exactly.

Nombu: I understand. But don't stress about it.

Me: Hard not to. He's trying to get into my way of happiness.

Nombu: Exactly! Don't let him.

I sighed.

Nombu: Gift loves you. You love him. Focus on that.

Me: You are actually right..

Nombu: As always.

I laughed.

Me: Can I have more of this?

Nombu: You tipsy aren't you?

Me: Just one more Nombu..

Nombu: you are going to get drunk.

Me: Just refill my glass please hostess! 0

She shook her head and did

Me: This is nice.

Nombu: And is making you drunk..

Me: Bye Nombu.

Dinner went well and when I got home, I went straight to bed. The next morning, I had a very heavy head. I was really exhausted

Me: Did you undress me?

Gift: Someone had to.

Me: Thanks babe.

Gift: Here.

Me: tomato juice?

Gift: Drink up

I did and drank up the cold water he brought me.

Me: I needed that.

Gift: I asked you to not get drunk..

Me: I wasn't drunk .

Gift: Baby..

Me: Was I misbehaving?

Gift: No.

Me: Okay.

Gift: It's not healthy.

Me: I drink occasionally..

Gift: And please let it be that.

Me: yes dad..

He giggled

Gift: I'm just trying to keep you young and beautiful.

Me: Well thank you for that Mr Kunene.

Gift: It's a pleasure Mrs Kunene. Want to join me for a shower?

Me: You going to keep your hands to yourself?

Gift: No

Me: Let's go then

He didn't keep his hands to himself as stated and we went on and on and on till we were both tired. Started in the shower, bed and we ended up on the carpet on the floor.

Gift: Can I keep you locked in here?

Me: No I have to meet up with Winnie.

Gift: so Winnie is more important?

I giggled

Me: Don't you dare

Gift: I'm asking

Me: Today she is .

Gift: Baby you serious?

Me: yes

Gift: I can't believe this

Me: Believe it

I went to take another quick shower and got ready to meet up with Winnie but before I could even grab my keys and bag, dad called and requested a meeting. He told us to ask Gift's mum to give us the kids for just 2 hours and I also had to reschedule the "dress fitting" appointment I had with my mother in law as well as my date with Winnie. Ora and Tumelo were happy to see Gift...as usual and when we got to dad's, we figured out why dad had called us.

Gift: Here goes nothing.

Me: you can say that again. Let's go babies.

We all walked in, greeted and waited for dad. Ora and Tumelo were sitting in between Gift and I. Not one of them went to greet their father

Dad: Kananelo wants his kids.

Me: Kananelo doesn't have kids with me and honestly dad, I'm getting tired of this. He's a bitter old man that needs to focus on his new family and leave us alone. He's got two kids with his wife, he needs to leave mine alone.

Dad: well that's not your decision to make coz if you do that these kids might end up resenting you.

Me: I doubt.

Dad: Tshia, hold on.

He turned his attention to my kids who were not even listening, they were playing games on

Gift's phone.

Dad: Rats.

Gift: Grandpa is talking to you.

They lifted their eyes from the phone which I took and locked

Ora: Yes Grandpa?

Dad: would you like to spend sometime with your dad?

Ora looked at Kana and slowly shook her head. She had tears in her eyes which meant she hadn't forgotten about what he did. She wasn't going to. She had an elephant's memory and in all honesty, she wasn't one anymore of course she'd remember stuff and cry about things that her. She was human too

Dad: you Don't want to?

Ora: No grandpa

My stepmother took her outside to comfort her



coz she could see it was becoming too heavy on her. Tumelo was still not having it. He just wanted the phone from me. Being a 2 year old!

Dad: and I guess I'd be wasting my time asking Tumelo right?

Me: baby would you like to spend time with your father?

Tumelo; He made Ora cry now and he pushed her away. No Tshia.

All the ifs

#11

Me: Tshepang don't do that.

Tshepang: I'm sorry.

Me: put a very nice color okay?

Tshepang: I am

Me: Good.

Nolo: You are such at ease.

Me: Am I?

Resego: Yes. So chilled.

Me: Wouldn't you be if you were getting married to the love of your life?

Nombu: I'd be nervous as hell

Me: Not me

I was excited, I was glowing, I was happy and I wasn't forced. That's what made it more beautiful. So beautiful.

Tshepang: Close your eyes

I did. She was making me look pretty. When she was done, Nombu decided she wanted to toast.

Nombu: To Happiness!

"To happiness" we all said.

Nombu: Ready?

Me: Yes I am.

Tshepang: Should I go tell them you ready?

Me: Yes.

Tshepang: okay.

I looked in the mirror and took a deep breath.

Resego: you look stunning sis.

Me: Thank you my sis.

Resego: Go get him.

We both laughed coz I always said that to them everytime they told me about their crushes.

Tshepang: Let's go Ladies!

She was back.

Tshepang: Dad's waiting outside.

Me: Okay

They all looked beautiful. Ora was with Gift. She had absolutely no time for mummy. I was hoping she wasn't eating sweets wherever she was. They all left and I took a deep breath

before I could step out. Dad was waiting for me at the reception area of the venue.

Dad: you look Beautiful Lily.

Me: Thank you daddy.

Dad: Ready?

Me: Yes

Dad: let's go

We stepped out and signalled at Tshelang to make way down the aisle. When the last walked down, dad and I stepped into sight and everyone got up. I walked down to my yummy one with Anthony's "point of it all" his favorite. He looked so good. An entire snack. We smiled at each other and I couldn't wait for dad to hand me over to him.

Dad: take care of her.

Gift: Always.

Dad: Be good to him Lily.

Me: I'll try.

Dad: Do it.

We giggled and the pastors began the ceremony.

Pastor: Would you two like to say your own VOWS

We both nodded

Pastor: Tshia?

I took a deep breath.

Me: I never thought something that started out so silly would turn into such a beautiful thing. With you, I'm at peace, you know how to handle me at worst, know how to bring out the best in me. You've brought me so my happiness and I vow to take care of you at your worst, I'll be by your side when you need me. I promise to be a good wife to you and a great mother to our kids. I love you so much.

He was a bit teary and I emphasize on "a bit".  
He smiled when I was done.

Pastor: Gift?

He cleared his throat.

Gift: let me start off by saying I love you so much. Loved you from the very first day I saw you. I vow to love you more than I love you now, to keep protecting you, I vow to keep you happy, to keep you glowing. I promise to be the best father I can be to our kids. I vow to deal with all your crazy ways.

We all giggled.

Gift: to be patient with you at all times and to submit to you as you submit to me. I love you so much my love.

Me: I love you too

We didn't even let the pastor finish his " you may kiss the bride" statement. We were just

happy that we were married. Noku, Ora and Tumelo had closed their eyes for that part. We had a photoshoot after the matrimonial, went to change for reception.

Gift: Enjoying your day?

Me: I am.

Gift: Well I'm glad you are.

Me: This is perfect.

Gift: Thought of a honeymoon destination  
I shook my head.

Gift: I have a few places

Me: Really? Something I'd like?

Gift: definitely.

Me: private?

Gift: Definitely.

Me: Hot?

Gift: yes.

Me: I'm down for it.

Gift: I'll lay out my options and you'll decide

Me: Okay

They called us up for our first dance and it was beautiful. I remembered that I didn't even have one with the man I once called my husband. The experience was very different. Very beautiful. The next day was our traditional at Gift's house

Nombu: And?

Me: And what?

Nombu: You ready to start a new life with him?

Me: I have his ring on my finger already.

Nombu: And boy am I glad! I didn't understand this wool and elastic band business.

We laughed



Me: It was cute.

Nombu: Ridiculous!

Me: No.

Nombu: It was.

Me: Oh whatever!

Nombu: Let's get you to the In-laws.

Me: Please

Nombu: Let's go.

My family and friends accompanied to Gift's. Winnie and Mikey were there as well. Of course! Those two were my ride or die's although I was always busy for them. Mikey made me vow that I'd never do that to them again. Another beautiful day and the next Monday, we decided to go back to our house. My mother in law wanted the kids to spend the next two weeks with her. Gift was obviously against it but we had a honeymoon to plan.

Gift: So you really let mum take them?

Me: Baby, we are always with them. You know they love being at Gran's.

Gift: I know that but still.

Me: let those kids be. We have a honeymoon to plan but for now...

I sat next to him.

Me: Husband duties dear sir.

I said taking off my shoes.

Gift: Just like that?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Not even 72 hours?

Me: of course.

Gift: This is abuse.

Me: oh?

Gift: You dont think it is.

Me: No. Do you know what abuse is?

Gift: Do tell.

Me: Abuse is me being big, having swollen feet, missing work and struggling to walk coz you carrying a life inside of you.

Gift: That's blackmail. Besides, you not carrying a life yet.

I cleared my throat and passed him the tests

Me: I am. 2 weeks.

All the ifs

#12

Gift: What?

He had a smile on his face.

Gift: Are you serious?

Me: I am.

He put my feet down and came up my face to kiss me. He was ecstatic. I was happy he was

because I thought he was going to freak out and I was scared that maybe the timing wasn't right.

Gift: Why didn't you tell me?

He was touching my belly.

Me: I was scared you'd freak out.

Gift: Me? Freak out?

Me: and that the timing wasn't right.

Gift: The timing is perfect.

Me: Really?

Gift: absolutely. Do you know the gender yet?

I giggled.

Me: 2 weeks baby. 2 weeks.

He laughed.

Gift: I'm sorry.

Me: Your sonogram.

Gift: You've already been to the doctor?

Me: On Friday while I was running the wedding errands.

Gift: Is everything fine?

Me: Everything's perfect.

Gift: thank you.

Me: For?

Gift: Bringing me so much happiness.

Me: And you have too.

Gift: Have I?

I nodded.

Me: I can safely say you are my universe and everything In it.

He blushed.

Gift: I love you.

Me: I love you too baby. Now can you massage

my feet?

Gift: Yes ma'am.

He started doing what he was suppose to do.

Me: So tell me...

Gift: Oh No.

I giggled.

Gift: What is it?

Me: Just listen.

Gift: everytime you say "so tell me..." I know it's going to end up in a fight

Me. No it doesn't.

Gift: Yes it does.

Me: Baby please listen.

Gift: Okay.

Me; What are you hoping for?

Gift: What do you mean?

Me; I mean Gender wise.

Gift: Well I hope it's a boy.

Me: Not hoping it's a girl?

Gift: No. I have more fun with Tumelo than I do with the girls.

Me: So you love Tumelo more?

Gift: No all I'm saying is, Tumelo doesn't abuse me.

Me: Why do you claim you being abused?

Gift; But I am. Thabsi has made me her ATM, Nokuthula has made me her chauffeur and there's Ora who makes me babysit dolls and always tries out make up on my face.

I laughed.

Me: don't make it sound so bad.

Gift: It is

Me: it's being a parent.

Gift: They don't do that to you.

Me: Well they chose not to.

Gift: why?

Me: I don't know baby.

Gift: Coz when they see me they see a Disney character.

I giggled.

Me: I'm not going to say anything .

Gift: Coz you on their side.

Me: No.

Gift: Yes.

Me: No. So you telling me that if this is a girl you won't love her as much?

Gift: You twisting My words.

Me: How so?

Gift: I said I'm hoping it's a boy.



Me: Right.

Gift: Don't be sad.

Me: Kind of hard not to

Gift: Don't let your hormones play with you please.

Me: I hope it's a girl.

He shook his head and laughed.

Gift: Baby, I won't love her any less.

Me: You will

Gift: You see what I mean?

Me: About what?

Gift: About your "So tell me" I told we going to end up fighting

Me: I'm not fighting with you.

Gift: you are.

Me: leave my feet alone.

Gift: You see?

Me: you boy preferring husband.

He laughed and let me go.

Gift: This is going to be a long one. I love you.

Me: I don't care. I'm going to take a bath.

Gift: can I join you?

Me: No.

Gift: babe...

Me: no stay there.

Gift: Do me a favor okay?

I folded my arms.

Gift: Don't you ever say "so tell me" again to me okay?

I stopped myself from laughing.

Me: I won't.

Gift: good.

I got up from the couch and made way to the bathroom, he used the other bathroom to take his shower and we slept earlier than usual. We were tired. The next day, I woke up feeling very sick. The nausea got to me. Everything I'd drink or eat, came back.

Gift: do you need the doctor?

Me: I'll be fine. Your Cologne Smells horrible.

Gift: But I always...

I gave him a dirty look. I couldn't even understand what had changed. The one I was carrying was probably waiting for us to tie the knot before he or she could make me sick and moody.

Gift: I'll give it up.

Me: Thank you.

Gift: you need to see the doctor.

Me: I'll be fine.

Gift: you sure you don't need something for the nausea?

Me: I'm fine. I just need to go to the office

Gift: Office?

Me: Yes baby, I have a few documents I need to fetch and I'll be back.

Gift: now?

Me: Yes. I just want to work through them before we decide we want to leave.

Gift: you are working a day after Your wedding?

Me: Baby, I'll be back okay?

Gift: Be safe okay?

Me: I'm just going to the office

Gift: you still don't like your new colleagues?

Me: No they have no etiquette whatsoever. They are very unprofessional.

Gift: You have a problem with everyone.

Me: No I don't in fact...

There was a knock.

Me: expecting anyone?

Gift: no. I'll get it.

Me: Okay.

He did and I heard him ask What the person wanted and I headed to the door.

Me: What is it now?

Kana: I'm not here to fight

Gift: Then?

Kana: Can I come in?

Gift: sure.

He did.

Kana: I know it's a been month and about 3 weeks since that meeting we had with the children and I've accepted that I've been a horrible father to them. I accept their rejection

towards me and Gift, You are a better man than I am.

Me: That goes without saying.

Kana: Fair enough. I'd like to thank you for accepting my kids as yours. I've never seen Tumelo as happy as he is When he's with you. Tshia, I'm sorry I hurt you and our daughter. I shouldn't have done what I did but it's too late now. I guess what I'm trying to say is, I've accepted that you are no longer mine, that I've accepted defeat and that despite everything that happened, I really wish you both the best of luck. You look very happy together and all the best. I guess it's true what they say...one man's trash really is another man's treasure.

All the ifs

#13

Gift: You can leave now.

Kana: Gift boy, can't we...

Gift: Leave now.

Kana: Okay.

Gift: Sho.

He slowly got up from the chair

Kana: Bye Tshia

Me: Bye.

I wanted him out of my house. I couldn't stand him anymore. He made me angry. So angry. Seeing his face brought back bad memories. He had wiped off every good he had done for my sister and I, and where there was love for him, it had completely turned into hate. It turned into hate the day he put his hands on Me, the day he said his kids weren't his. The day he pushed my daughter from him. Every bone in me hated him and although it wasn't healthy, I was planning on keeping it that way. For good.

Gift: Are you good?

Me: Please accompany me to the office.

Gift: Okay..

He changed his shoes and we drove out.

Me: You think he was genuine?

Gift: Yes

Me; Really?

Gift: He was once my friend. Best friend.

Me: Okay..

Gift: You don't think he was?

Me: No.

Gift: Why?

Me: I don't trust him.

Gift: fair enough

Me: But anyway

Gift: Is my son still fine?

He said touching my belly



Me: what if it's a girl?

Gift: nah

Me: Oh?

Gift: I'm certain its a boy..

Me: I've booked a doctor's appointment for tomorrow

Gift: Why is there anything wrong?

Me: No. Just to double check if everything is fine and if we good to go.

Gift: Makes sense..

Me: Yes sir.

Gift: Sure about the place?

Me: yes.

Gift: Sure?

Me: I am.

Gift: Don't want to take you to a place you won't

like

Me: I'm sure..

Gift: one more thing please...

Me: yes baby?

Gift: please control your moods

Me: Don't start with me please.

I was already annoyed. I turned the volume up and looked out. he didn't say anything until we got to the office.

Gift: We here.

Me: Thank you. I'll be back. In exactly 10.

Gift: Okay baby.

I walked right in and everyone was surprised that I was at work, I got the documents, checked my emails, responded to some and I was out again.

Me: Hungry?

Gift: not really

Me: I am.

Gift: what do you feel like?

Me: Mam'Paulina's mogudu with probably chicken feet on the side and that chicken breast salad she makes

Gift: You don't like chicken feet.

Me: Ntando let's not fight please

Gift: fine..I apologize.

Me: Can we go?

Gift: Okay

We headed back to the house and we went to buy my food. I brought it all back after drinking juice.

Gift: Baby are you fine?

Me: Baby I am..

Gift: You've been running up and down since

8am.

Me: I'll be fine.

I said using the mouth wash for the hundredth time already.

Gift: Can't I get you something?

Me: Well in most pharmacies it needs to be prescribed. I'm going to the doctor, I'll ask her tomorrow.

Gift: Fair enough.

He looked worried.

Me: I was born to go through this.. I'll be fine.

Gift: it's a girl now

I laughed.

Me: Oh you've changed your mind now?

Gift: Mood swings and nausea give it away.

I laughed again.

Me: idiot!

Gift: Still married me.

Me: Coz I'm the only one who can handle you.

Gift: Lies

Me: Not

Gift; No love there?

Me: and that too.

Gift: I thought as much.

My notification tone went off. It was Nombu as usual.

Me: So Nombu invited me to a spa date tomorrow..

Gift: Tomorrow?

Me: And she says I cant say no coz its a post-wedding gift

Gift: I think you need it

Me: you think?

Gift: Yes

Me: But there's a spa where we going to

He giggled

Gift: we leave day after tomorrow. Go have fun with your bestfriend

Me: Want to join?

Gift: No. I'm going to see my son tomorrow.

Me: The appointment we have with the the doctor is at 9 and Nombu says I should be there at 11:30

Gift: Perfect.

Me: I hope you not going to tell mum to not take Tumelo to school tomorrow..

Gift: That's exactly what I'm going to do.

Me: Gift!

Gift: No baby stop it. Focus on your nausea

Me: You did this. Acting like you had no hand in this

Gift: We both did this.

Me: whatever

We spent the day chilling, my mood swings got better but not the nausea. The child I was carrying was going to be the death of me. The next morning, we went to see my doctor and everything was fine. Gift was excited you could tell in the way he was asking questions. He asked more than I did. Even wanted the gender but obviously it was too early for that. He drove me to the spa after we had breakfast and luckily, the nausea was better. I was happy to see my bestfriend, of course she had invited the other wives and Seipati was there too. I didn't mind. Honestly

Mora: Looking at the glow. Marriage life must be good .

Me: It is

Mora: I can tell

Nombu: champagne?

Me: No juice.

Amanda: You should be drinking as much as you can coz you'll be drinking white things on your honeymoon..

We laughed

Me: You are disgusting..

Thembi: Very

Amanda: You know I'm right.

Me: I actually need the bathroom now .

Seipati: Can I come with? I need to pee too .

Me: Okay

They were all surprised but I walked with her to the bathroom. She looked unhappy.



Seipati: Tshia?

Me: Yes dear?

Seipati: I shouldn't have wrecked your home I'm sorry, I shouldn't have treated you the way I did

Me: Kananelo wrecked his own home before I did. And honestly, he came to you knowing he was married and even if it were the other way around, it was going to be his responsibility to tell you he's taken. I don't blame you for it

Seipati: And I'd really like you to know that I had no hand in him distancing himself from the kids. He said because you cheated there's a great chance that they aren't his.

Me: Seipati I'm over it.

Seipati: I just really feel bad Tshia. I'm a mother and I know how important it is that kids have both parents in their lives. It's just that one cannot, even for a minute, challenge Kananelo

Me: He has a hold over you doesn't he? The fact that he provides and is the sole provider right?

She kept quiet.

Me: Talk to me.

She lifted her dress and she had bruises all over her thighs and just above her bump.

Me: He hits you?

Seipati: I've covered up some with make up on my arm

Me: As pregnant as you are?

She had tears in her eyes.

Seipati: Its been happening since the day you walked down the aisle to get married to Gift

All the ifs

S2

#14

Me: What?

I felt my heart break into a million pieces. No one deserved to go through that

Me: Move out.

Seipati: I sold my house.

Me: Why would you do that?

Seipati: he said I should.

Me: relatives?

Seipati: They live far.

Me: Withdraw whatever amount you have in your account that is, or transfer it to another. Make sure he doesn't receive the notifications. Then leave with your daughter.

Seipati: You make it sound so easy.

Me: It is

Seipaiti: Is it?

Me: It is. Pack your things and leave it wont end well.

Seipati: I don't think he's over you.

Me: I'm over him..Kananelo is a control freak

Seipati: now I see that.

Me: do what you think is best for you okay?

She nodded

Seipati: Thank you so....

My phone rang.

Seipati: So much.

Me: Its okay. Excuse me.

She left the bathroom and I answered my phone.

Me: Baby?

Gift: My love.

Me: Hey.

Gift: still good?

Me: I am.

Gift: Thought I should check on you.

Me: I'm good

Gift: Really?

Me: You dont believe me?

Gift: You know how your moods are and the nausea.

Me: I'm fine..

Gift: okay then

Me: with Tumelo?

Gift: yes but he's sleeping.

Me: Tumelo?

Gift: yes.

Me: Is he fine? He hardly sleeps during the day.

Gift: he is. The first thing I did was check his temperature. Apparently he was up since 5am with Kevin. You know how they are.

Kevin was Gift's younger brother. Thabo(the married one) was the second born..

Me: Give him a kiss for me please..

Gift: I will baby.

Me: Thank you my love.

Gift: Enjoying the retreat?

Me: Haven't even begun. I was feeling pressed.

Gift: You'll tell me When to fetch you

Me: Okay my love.

Gift: Have fun

Me: Will do

Gift: I Love you.

Me: I love you too.

I hung up, washed my hands and went to join the others.

Nombu: You okay?

Me: I am.

Nombu: Really?

Me: Yes.

Nombu: Snack?

Me: no.

Nombu: No champagne. No snack. What's up with you?

Me: Nothing

Nombu: really?

Me: Yes

Nombu: Talk to me.

The other ladies were chatting happily.

Me: Say what?

Nombu: Talk!

Me: So apparently I'm pregnant.

Nombu: What?

She was excited.

Nombu: Finally you join us. Baby number 3.

I laughed.

Me: no babyshower please

Nombu: oh no. I'll definitely throw one.

Me: Let's keep this between us please.

Nombu: Why?

Me: please..

Nombu: Okay

Me: Thank you..

Nombu: Is Gift happy?

Me: He's excited.

Nombu: This is by far the sweetest wedding gift ever.

Me: you think so?

Nombu: Yes. You don't?

Me: Well I just didn't think the timing is perfect.

Nombu: Well it is.



Me: Okay fine.

I took a deep breath.

Nombu: everything is as it should be.

Me: You are right.

Nombu: Be happy.

Me: I am.

Nombu: Good and enjoy your treatment.

Me: Okay okay okay.

Nombu: Enjoy!

Me: Let's do this.

We had a very beautiful time. I, however, couldn't wait to be with my husband. I said bye to the girls and kissed my husband the moment I saw him

Gift: Hey.

Me: hey.

Gift: Missed me?

Me: A lot.

Gift: How was the treatment?

Me: Needed it..

Gift: now, Nombu's a good friend.

Me: I know right? So how are My kids doing?

Gift: All good.

Me: No complaints?

Gift: They don't even Miss us. Kevin is making sure they having a good time .

Me: Well that's good.

Gift: It is?

Me: Yes. We get more time to ourselves.

Gift: Actually now that you put it....that's fine.

Me: Exactly. So I spoke to Seipati.

He sighed.

Me: Kananelo beats her up..

Gift: Shame.

Me: You don't feel sorry for her?

Gift: you know how I feel about women abuse but I dont care about Seipati. She had a hand in your unhappiness.

Me: True.

Gift: So I don't care. Can we dismiss this?

Me: Okay.

Gift: Thank you

We discussed the honeymoon and when we got home we packed.. We played a lot that night and the next morning, we had to force ourselves out of bed to get ready to leave.

Me: Babe!

Gift: Im coming.

Me: Dont forget my blue bag please.

Gift: Where is it?

Me: Bed. On top of the bed.

Gift: okay

Me: Thanks!

Gift: What else do you need before I come there?

Me: Turn off the geysers on the main switch!

We were screaming at each other. I was making sure the house was in perfect condition.

Gift: That's all?

Me: yes.

Gift: Okay

Just then his phone rang.

Me: Gift's phone hello?

Silence.

Me: Hello!

The person hung up and as soon as I put it

down, a text came through.

" you've really forgotten about our night of passion haven't you? Remember those few hours we had before you got hitched? I miss you"

All the ifs

#15

I decided to ignore the text. I was going to pretend as if everything was fine. I had to keep my sanity. I had to.

Me: Babe!

Gift: Baby I'm here. I'm done

Me: Let's go

Gift: got everything?

Me: Yes

Gift: Okay let's go

We locked up and we hit the road.

Gift: You know we going to get there early right?

Me: Yes coz you said we going to have breakfast first.

Gift: But you've already had breakfast. Twice .

Me: I'm still hungry..

Gift: That child is going to make you fat.

Me: And are you going to love me less?

Gift: Going to love you even more. I mean you bringing half of me into this world. No reason to love you less. Every reason to love you more.

I nodded.

Me: I see..

Gift: You don't believe me?

Me: I didn't say that .

Gift: Well you don't sound convinced.

Me: oh no Gift.

Gift: What is it?

Me: Don't start please.

I was getting irritated.

Gift: Your moods have changed?

Me: Who said so?

Gift: Well, I'm the only one in the car with you unless if that kid can already speak

I kept quiet trying not to lose my temper over nothing. I was so dramatic but I couldn't help it

Gift: We not on speaking terms?

Me; Well I'm going to be with you for 7 days it's hard not to talk to you.

Gift: Let's talk about how we going to handle your moods coz I can't deal with them.

Me: Really?

Gift: I've never dealt with a pregnant woman before. You know I wasn't there for the two

baby mamas

Me: So you want to discuss my moods?

Gift: Well yes. I don't want us to constantly fight.

Me: Okay.

Gift: Can we talk?

Me: Gift, I said "okay"

Gift: Okay fine. How about you keep your moods to yourself?

Me: Oh?

Gift: Coz I don't know how to handle you

Me: okay

Gift: you not saying anything

Me: what does "okay" mean?

Gift: Ouch.

I said that with a lot of attitude and disrespect.

Me: I'm sorry.



Gift: So is this what I have to deal with?

Me: Baby I'm sorry.

Gift: What's wrong? Did I do anything wrong?

Me: No

Gift: Then?

Me: I just feel annoyed

Gift: At me?

Me: Everything.

Gift: So what can I do to help?

Me: nothing. I'll be fine.

Gift: You sure?

Me: Yes

Gift: Okay then..

He left me alone and sang along to almost every song they played on the radio. I was thinking about the text and trying to fight it off.

He was very happy. Very relaxed, very calm.  
Very Gift like. He was at peace. You could tell.  
When we got to the airport, we went to have  
breakfast for the third time and off we went.  
Beautiful place. Peaceful life.

Me: Beautiful.

Gift: Right?

Me: Very beautiful.

Gift: Glad you like it..

Me: I love this. Thank you baby.

My mood had changed. Mind you, I hadn't  
spoken to him in the flight. I was sleeping most  
of the time.

Gift: its a pleasure. What do you want to do first?

Me: take a bath with you.

Gift: then?

Me: Then do whatever you feel like doing

Gift: okay then

He unzipped my dress and I let it fall. I took off his shirt, unbuttoned his shorts and let them fall too. We made our way to the bathroom, the tub filled up quickly and we were soon moving in rhythm. He was making sure that the water stayed in the tub. It felt so good. I couldn't get enough of him.

Me: Go deeper.

Gift: I'll have to take you out.

Me: It's fine.

He carried my soaking wet self out of the tub and placed me gently on the bed. That was the only time he was gentle and after that, he went as deep as I told him to go.

Me: Stop! Please!

I was heating up. I couldn't take it anymore. Pain and pleasure. I wrapped a towel around my

body as soon as I wasn't under him anymore.

Gift: I'm sorry.

Me: That was nice

Gift: But it hurt?

Me: in a good way.

Gift: Tshia talk to me.

Me: About?

Gift: You not yourself

Me: I am.

Gift: Baby...

Me: Baby I'm fine..

Gift: I don't believe that

Me: I'm fine really.

I got one of oversized shirts I had packed for myself and put it on.

Me: What do you want to wear?

Gift: Sweat shorts..

Me: Okay

I took them out for him.

Me: Here..

Gift: Thank you. Room service?

Me: I'm fine

Gift: You not hungry?

Me: No.

Gift: okay

He ordered room service. Even for me.

Me: I said I'm not hungry

Gift: its my job to make sure you well fed.

Me: I'm not 5

Gift: What is wrong with you?

Me: Get off my back

Gift: no I won't

Me: Gift!

Gift; Tshiamo.

Me: Get off my back

Gift: Im getting tired of your moods honestly.

Me: Then leave me

Gift: Oh?

Me: I mean really, what am I expected to do? Is it my fault that pregnant women have mood swings?

He raised his eyebrows. Shocked

Gift: okay

I grabbed chocolate from the tray and went out to look at the view. I was heating up from rage. I wanted to confront him but didn't want to act crazy coz I was going to.

Gift: Tshiamo.

Me: Ntando.

Gift: baby please talk to me.

Me: I asked you to leave me alone.

Gift: Tshiamo

Me: No Gift...

Gift: listen to me. I'm running out of patience. Something I don't want to do. What the fuck....I'm sorry. What is going on? I can't take this anymore. It's the attitude, the mood swings..

Me: Then go on. You already have someone to help you relieve the stress right? Go on! Go on to your Mmabatho! Your night of passion partner! I'll deal with this pregnancy on my own. I'm used to it anyway.. Get on the next flight and leave!

All the ifs

#16

Gift; you need to calm down .

Me: Don't tell me to...

Gift: Hey!

I kept quiet.

Gift: I still deserve to be respected.

Still kept quiet.

Gift: What are you talking about?

Me: Mmabatho.

Gift: What about her?

Me: you asking me that?

Gift: Well I have to.

Me: You slept with her the day before our wedding?

Gift: What?

Me: I'm asking .

Gift: I don't know what you talking about .

Me: really?

Gift: yes.



Me: Check your messages.

He went to get his phone and went through it

Gift: I last saw this person months ago. Before you and I even hooked up..

Me: Who is she?

Gift: we just slept together

Me: Why is she claiming you two were together the day before our wedding

Gift: Baby, I don't know.

Me: Ntando don't play with me.

Gift: I'm not playing.. Where do I find the time to cheat? I'm always with Boyza or with you. You really think I'd put you through hell again?

Me: You tell me.

Gift: I have no explanation for this coz I don't know what it is.

Me: baby then why?

Gift: I don't know

He was voice calling the number with the new sim he purchased right after we landed. It went straight to voicemail. He tried it multiple times and even left messages.

Gift: Please believe me. Why Didn't you confront me before we left?

Me: I didn't want to overreact.

Gift: Well you did

Me: Wouldn't you?

Gift: How about you communicate with me? Sit me down and ask me. I, myself cant understand what's going on. I Haven't seen Mmabatho in months.

I kept quiet.

Gift: we promised to communicate. Please let's do so.

Me: You really not cheating?

Gift: I'd go through great lengths to prove it. I've worked hard trying to build you up again. I can't let that go to waste

Kept still.

Gift: Please believe me

Me: Okay

Gift: all good?

I nodded.

Gift: Thank you

Me; Okay.

Gift: Are you hungry?

Me: I actually am.

He giggled.

Gift: So you decided to let the little one suffer as well?

Me: I was angry.

Gift: promise to communicate.

Me: I promise.

Gift: Thank you.

Me: I'm sorry for the mood swings.

Gift: Don't apologize for that.

Me: still sorry.

Gift: I'll get to the bottom of this though. I promise..

Me: Okay baby.

Gift: For now, let's honeymoon.

Me: great idea.

Gift: Deal?

Me: Pretty much .

He gave me my food.

Me: thank you..

Gift: so have you thought of any names?

Me: baby it's too early.

Gift: So we going to keep calling the child "kid" or 'little one ?"

Me: How about we let your mum name our child?

Gift: why?

Me: she has a right

Gift: a right?

Me: Yes .

Gift: I'm afraid she won't give a nice name

Me: But she gave our two daughters beautiful names..

Gift: I don't know..

Me: You have a huge problem on the name issue why?

He sighed.

Me: You don't even like your own name.

Gift: do you really want to know?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Okay. I was named after my father by my mum

Me: okay..

Gift: he was very abusive..I watched him beat her up everyday, even when she was pregnant. Mum lost about 3 kids due to the abuse.

Me: What?

Gift: Yes. Thabo and Kevin survived but the other 3 didn't. At some point, I got tired of watching my mum being beaten up like a dog and when I tried to defend her, my dad pushed me against the wooden chair we had and that's how I got my scar on my left arm. From that day, I didn't want to be called Ntandoyenkosi anymore because I felt like I'd follow in his footsteps and probably be worse. So from grade 8, I started using my second name more.

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: you didn't know baby

Me: but still...

Gift: it's all in the past.

Me: so your dad died?

Gift: that guy's not dead.

Me: But you said...

Gift: Dead to us. Yes.

Me: oh!

Gift: he got married again

Me: Still is?

Gift: With 2 other kids.

Me: and you don't care?

Gift: I don't. She's the reason my mother's limping.

Me: I'm sorry...

Gift: that's why I decided I needed to save you from Kananelo. Coz often when men can't handle the truth, the truth that they have been caught cheating, they turn tables. You are suddenly on the wrong and instead of him showing remorse, you get beaten up for catching him out..

I didn't know what to say.

Gift: You okay?

I nodded.

Gift: can we name our own child?

Me if that's what you really want.

Gift: Giamo

Me: no

We both laughed.

Gift: You don't like it?

Me: Thula is crazy. Never.



Nokuthula had decided to call us "Giamo". Our names combined. My husband and I were not fans of such. We just didn't see the need for it. "Gift and Tshiamo" was the way we liked it.

Gift: What are some of your favorite names?

Me: Well I like, Masedi or Masego

Gift: And I like Okuhle.

Me: Isn't that a girl's name?

Gift: Its a unisex name.

Me: Really Bab'Kunene?

He laughed

Gift: Yes wife.

Me: well okay.

We had an amazing time on our honeymoon. He was still trying to get to the bottom of this. I told him to stop. As soon as we landed, he was looking for IT people. My husband though.

Everything was fine until two days after we came back, when I heard a knock while he was still asleep and found a box. A box that had sex toys, lingerie and a picture of a girl in that very same lingerie. Note written "let's play again soon, yours, Mmabatho" I quickly went to find cable ties and tied Gift up. He was sleeping deeply he only realized I was tying him up when I was done with his feet.

Gift: hey baby

Me: hey you.

Gift: Appetite so early in the morning?

Me: You think?

I said lighting up a candle. Not the scented one. The ones we usually use when there's no electricity.

Gift: And now?

I let the wax drop on his leg.

Gift: Tshiamo! Fuck!

He tried to move but he couldn't. I moved to his bare chest

Me: who...

I said dropping the wax on his chest.

Me: The hell...

Still dropping and him screaming.

Me: is Mmabatho?

I dropped more wax on him and eventually stopped. I took the lingerie and threw it at him.

Me: What bullshit is this?

All the ifs

#17

He was still trying to get over what I did to him.

Me: I asked a question.

Gift: I don't know what that is.

Me: It's called lingerie.

Gift: Please untie me

Me: Are you going to tell me the truth

Gift: baby I'm not cheating!

Me: You are!

There was a crack in my voice.

Gift: I'm not.

Me: Just when...

I paused.

Gift: Please don't cry.

Me: Just when I thought "a bit of happiness finally", you go and do this to me?

Gift: Tshiamo untie me.

Me: No.

I lit it up again and made him scream a few more times.

Me: This is what I get for loving you?

Gift: Tshiamo stop!

Me: Why?

I could feel the tears on my cheek.

Me: Am I not enough?

Gift. You are.

Me: Then why?

Still dropping wax on him. I got tired of his screaming and eventually let him go. I cut the cable ties off him and left the room. 30 minutes later, he was dressed and ready to go out.

Me: And now?

No response.

Me: Gift!

Nothing.

Me: Gift I'm talking to you!

He grabbed his car keys and banged the door on his way out. I listened as he drove out and buried my head in my hands. I was stressed out. I had a lot of things on my mind. I suddenly got a call from Nombu.

Me: Hey..

Nombu: Gate

Me: Oh okay.

Nombu: Cool.

She hung up and I opened up for her. It was 12:30 and I hadn't even realized.

Nombu: You still in PJs?

Me: Yes

Nombu: That's unlike you.

Me: Let me go take a quick shower okay?

Nombu: You better be quick.

Me: Feel at home.

She was already grabbing the remote. I took a quick shower and got dressed

Nombu: Where's your husband?

Me: I don't know.

Nombu: What do you mean?

Me: he left.

Nombu: Have you had breakfast?

Me: No.

Nombu: let's go.

I sighed.

Me; now?

Nombu: Yes.

Me: I don't know.

Nombu: Let's go.

Me: Fine

Nombu: Stop being lazy.

I locked up and we left

Nombu: Are you okay?

Me: I'm fine.

Nombu: how was the honeymoon?

Me: it was great.

Nombu: Just great?

Me: yes it was.

I passed her my phone so she could see the pictures.

Nombu: this is so beautiful.

Me: thanks friend

Nombu: Are you really fine?

Me; Yes I am. I'm jist exhausted.

Nombu: Makes sense.

Me: So how were you without me?

She laughed.



Nombu: bored.

Me: you and the ladies didn't go out?

Nombu: Moratua and Lebohang had a fight.

Me: So?

Nombu: We were nursing her heartache.

Me: oh what now?

Nombu: She caught Lebo with another girl at some hotel..in bed.

I almost choked on my food.

Me: what? Weren't those two happily in love?

Nombu: Clearly not. She's so heart broken

Me: well obviously. I can relate. I feel for her.

Nombu: Give her a call.

Me: Do you think that's a good idea?

She nodded

Nombu: She'd appreciate it..

Me: Okay.

Nombu: Men!

Me: Will always be dogs.

Nombu: You can say that again.

Me: Anyway, how's Sthe doing?

She blushed.

Me: Oh.

Nombu: we happy.

Me: That's good..

Nombu: Right?

Me: Yes it is

My phone rang.

Me: babe

Gift: where are you?

Me: Having brunch with Nombu.

Gift: come home.

Me: I'm having br...

Gift: Tshiamo. Home..

He hung up.

Me: I have to go.

Nombu: why?

Me: Gift needs me.

Nombu: Okay then let's ask for Doggy bags.

We did that and she dropped me off at home.

When I walked in, he was with some guy and the girl in the photo I had found earlier on.

Me: Dumelang.

They greeted me back.

Gift: Mmabatho, tell her.

Mmabatho: Kananelo forced me to send texts and gifts here..he wanted to break you guys up. I haven't seen Gift in ages. Kananelo threatened my son's life so I had to do what he told me to

so. I'm Sorry for causing you trouble.

Gift: Dan?

Daniel: here you go.

He gave me some papers.

Dan: Those calls come directly from your old house. As you can see. It confirms everything Mmabatho just said.

I was speechless.

Gift: Thank you.

Dan: Not a problem.

Mmabatho: I'm sorry for causing you trouble.

Gift: I'll sort you out okay? I'll make sure you not threatened anymore.

Mmabatho: Thank you.

He walked them out and minutes later, came back.

Me: Baby I'm sorry.

Silence.

Me: Baby please...

I tried grabbing his hand.

Gift: Don't touch me.

Me: Baby..

Gift: I'll sleep in the guestroom from today onwards.

All the ifs

#18

Me: Please don't do this

Gift: Stop trying to touch me.

I kept my hand to myself.

Me: I'm sorry

Gift: Leave me alone.

Me: please Baby.

He walked away from me. Grabbed his car keys

and he finally told me where he was going to.

Gift: I'm going to fetch my kids..

Just like that and he left. I felt so stupid. I felt so helpless. He was hurt that I could tell. He was also disappointed in me. I wasn't suppose to freak out the way I did. I should have waited but I acted impulsively. Irrational thinking. I sat sighing and sighing until I heard laughter coming from outside the gate. The next thing I heard was the phone ringing.

Me: Yes

Tshepang; We at the gate sis

Me: who's "we?"

Tshepang: Resego and I.

Me: Okay.

Thet both looked stunning. Both from work.

Me: So what brings you two here?

Resego: Hey sis.

Me: Hey Seggo.

Tshepang: How are you sis?

Me: Im fine. What brings you two here?

Tshepang: You promised us a sleepover after your honeymoon.

Me: Really?

Resego: You don't remember?

Me: No.

Tshepang: Pregnancy symptoms.

Me: What?

Resego: Gran said you have pregnancy symptoms.

Me: Right. Go put your bags in the guestroom. I'll get you guys something to drink.

Tshepang: Thanks sis..

Me: Keep it as neat as you found it.

Resego: As always

Me: Good.

I watched as they walked to the guestroom and I went to get them snacks. I was happy to see them but their timing wasn't right.

Me; Where's Lesedi?

Resego: At work

Me: Bontle?

Resego: Drama rehearsal.

Me: Bontle is always busy.

My younger sister was always busy. She was always up to something. Something good that is. I was glad Ora had an aunt like Bontle coz she had a lot to learn from her..as young as she was. Still In primary, she was goal driven. Always wanted to be at different places, exploring and discovering things. She reminded



me of me when I was young, care free and well me. Before life threw curve balls at me.

Resego: She's always up to something

Me: it's a good thing..

Tshepang: You think?

Me: I like an active child.

Resego: You've been blessed with two active kids.

Me: that's true. So talk to me.

They looked at each other and smiled.

Tshepang: So we met two guys.

Me: at the same time?

Resego: Yes. Brothers

Me: Oh no. They aren't twins right?

They laughed

Tshepang: No.

Me: Then?

Resego: Their fathers are brothers so that makes them brothers too.

Me: Oh. Way better. Go on.

Tshepang: We like them.

Me: Clearly. Names?

Resego: Thabang.

Me: And?

Tshepang: Raps

Me: Raps?

Tshepang: Rapelang.

Me: Yes. You suppose to say that. How did you two meet?

Tshepang: Well we met at the mall. We were having lunch and they asked if they could join us.

Me: Do you think its a good idea that you two

are dating brothers?

Resego: Yes.

Me: I don't know Seggo.

Resego: It will be fun.

Me: Okay.

Tshepang: Don't stress.

Me: Go on.

Tshepang: We really like them

I nodded coz it was very obvious.

Tshepang: Rapelang has a child though.

Me: And that's a problem?

Tshepang; Yes.

Me: it shouldn't be. Everyone Has a kid these days. It's rare to find a person who doesn't. Be it a girl or a guy. Just don't have babymama drama

Resego: Exactly what I told you.

Me: See?

She took a deep breath and her phone rang.

Tshepang: Heeey

She answered and walked away from us  
blushing

Me: And Thabang?

Resego: He's nothing short of amazing.

Me: listen to you

Resego: But dad though

Me: what about Dad?

Resego: Will he approve?

Me: You guys are old now.

Resego: with dad?

Me: but you obviously not going to introduce  
them to him now right?

Resego: no not now

Me: good

Resego: But I'm going to introduce him to you

I laughed

Me: that goes without saying.

Resego: When?

Me: anytime

Resego: Okay.

She was blushing as well.

Resego: I'll go give him a call.

I giggled as I watched her walk away. I decided to start cooking and they joined me minutes later. They were peeling and chopping. I was the masterchef. We were laughing and talking when Gift came back with my 4 rascals. I was happy to see them.

Noku: Good to have you back moms.

Thabsi: yes too good. I have a lot to tell you. I also have a few complaints about dad.

Me: Oh no.

Thabsi: oh yes. I'll tell you all about it after my bath

Me: Okay

She walked away from us and Noku was chatting with Resego. They got on. With Both my sisters. They were so aunty like around them. Giving advice and all. Tumelo and Ora didn't even have time for me. They were playing soccer outside with Gift. Dinner was okay. Gift and I didn't give it away that we were not on good terms.

Thabsi: Please talk to him.

Me: you know he had every right to be angry right? You should be focusing on school not boys.

Thabsi: But I am.

Me: There's a time and place for everything. I mean think about this, you almost done with school, soon you'll be free to do whatever.

Thabsi: You think so?

Me: We only want the best for you .

Thabsi; Okay

Me: Got it?

Thabsi; Yes mums.

Me: good. Nightie

I gave her a hug and went to the main bedroom. I was actually glad that my sisters were there. It meant Gift wouldn't be sleeping in the guestroom but in his rightful place..next to me. When I got the bedroom, he was getting the sleeper couch we had in the main bedroom ready.

Me: And now?

Gift: And now what?

Me: Do you really have to sleep on that?

Gift: Yes

Me: Baby please I'm...

Gift: Stop apologizing!

I kept quiet.

Gift: I'm tired of your apologies

Me: Sor...

I refrained from saying anything else.

Gift: Pack your bags tomorrow morning and leave.

Me: What? Baby we've only been married for a week.

Gift: I don't care..pack your bags tomorrow, go find a relationship expert that you can talk to and come back when you've learnt a thing or two about relationships. I better not find you



here tomorrow after work.

All the ifs

#19

Me; No baby please don't do this. I'll try to...

Gift: I told you to stop begging.

Me: Please.

I could feel the tears in my eyes.

Gift: Tshiamo, I don't know why you crying.

Me: Please don't kick me out.

Gift: I'm not kicking you out. You need to go seek help.

Me: What about the kids?

Gift: What about them?

Me: They need me.

Gift: I'm here. I can take care of our kids

Me: Baby I'm sorry.

Gift: you should start packing.

He took out my smallest travel bag.

Me: Gift please

I was holding on to his hand.

Gift: Let me go.

Me: Please

Gift: Tshiamo. Let my my hand go

He was very calm.

Me: I won't do what I did again.please.

Gift: Pack and let my hand go.

I let it go.

Gift: now pack.

I slowly walked to the closet to pick out what I would need. I was sobbing and all he did was watch. He didn't even care coz I soon as I zipped the bag. He told me "goodnight" and made himself comfortable on the couch. I kept

tossing and turning and at around 2am was when I finally slept. The next morning, I was sick. The nausea was back and u had a headache but I still had to prepare the kids for school.

Resego: It was nice sleeping over.

Tshepang: We'll definitely come over again.

Me: Make sure you call next time.

Gift: Are you okay?

I nodded

Gift: You don't look okay.

Me: I'll be fine

Ora: She was vomiting.

Me: I wasn't.

Ora: Yes you were. I Saw you.

Tumelo: You must clean your stomach.

Me: I'm fine Dr.Tumelo.

Resego: You really don't look fine

Noku: Are you pregnant moms?

Gift choked on his coffee and Ora hit his back to help.

Gift: Thanks sunshine. What kind of a question is that?

Noku: I'm just asking dad.

Tumelo: what's Pregment?

Me: Nothing.

Tumelo: Ora? What's pregment?

Ora: I don't know

Tumelo: Thabsie is that a game?

She didn't answer.

Me: It means sick.

Tumelo: How?.

Me: Why are you asking so many questions?

Tumelo: I want to know.

Me: Finish your food.

He kept quiet and he dug his head in his food.

Me: I won't be here when you kids get back from school.

Thabsi: Why mums?.

Me: I'm going on a business trip.

Noku: With dad?

Me: No he's staying.

Thabsi: Until?

Me: It will depend on the project we working on.

Thabsi: Can I go back to Granny's or I'll go to Grandpa's. I'll come back when yoibdo

Gift: You don't want to stay here with your dad?

Thabsi: No.

Gift: if you still mad at me for what I did then go

back to your grandmother.

She kept quiet and gave me that "you see?"

Look. I quickly reprimanded her with my head as I shook it and she focused on her food. They finished eating and Resego and Tshepang washed the dishes before they left.

Resego: bye sis

Tshepang: video call please.

Me: I don't have time for that

Tshepang: I'll do it

Me: Good.

I hugged them and watched them get into their car and drive off. I went back inside to make sure everyone was super ready for school and gave them each a kiss. Even gave Gift one although it was not as warm as it should have been.

Gift: Time to settle in the car. Go on.

They all took their bags. Tumelo leading the way. He took the car keys and they all followed him out.

Me: Am I allowed to call and check on you?

I was about to cry and I hated it. I tried to keep it all in but I couldn't. He was just staring at me.

Gift: No you not.

I swallowed hard and nodded.

Me: Okay

Gift: But do tell me where you are..

I nodded. I didn't even know where I was going, let alone who was going to help me.

Gift: Bye

Me: I love you.

Gift: I'll see you when you come back.

He took his laptop bag and left. I went to put on my shoes after they left, took my bags and left

as well. When I got to work, I searched online for a relationship expert and found one in Sandton. I quickly dialled them and made an appointment, I also searched for accommodation. I could hardly concentrate at work and had to stop myself from trying to call Gift every 30 minutes. It was hard. Very hard. After work, I checked in and settled in.

Me: How are you kids doing?

Thabsi; We fine.

Me: You not giving your dad a hard time?

Thabsi: No..we well behaved.

Me: That's good. I miss you kids.

Thabsi: I miss you too moms. Do you know when you'll back?

Me: No. Not yet.

Thabsi: Oh man!

Me: But I'll try to make things move fast Okay?



Thabsi: Yes moms.

Me: How are your siblings doing?

Thabsi: Noku is fine. Ora is also fine. Playing school with her teddies and you know Tumelo, always with his father.

Me: That's good. I'll keep calling okay?

Thabsi: okay moms. I love you

Me: I love you too my baby.

I hung up and couldn't help but cry a little. If I hadn't acted the way I did, I would have been at home. With my 3 daughters, my son and my husband but no, I had decided to use wax on my husband. Why was I like this? The next day was work as usual and at 17:00, I had an appointment with the relationship expert. I told her everything. Every little thing. And honestly, it was good to let it all out. It was very nice talking to her and for the next two weeks, I had an appointment with her every second day, I

worked on myself missing my kids but I checked on them everyday. When I finally decided to go home, she was happy with my progress but I still insisted on having appointment with her atleast once a week. I packed my bags on that Friday morning and checked out. I had taken the day off. My bump was growing and I had put on weight in just two weeks. I drove all the way to randpark ridge and was warmly welcomed by the staff.

"Go on"

Me: thank you.

I made my way there and found him putting up a picture on the wall. A collage of all the family picture in a portrait. All in black and white it looked stunning. I knocked. He was in jeans, all star and a vneck shirt. So much for being a boss. He looked like he was going to a pub for a Saturday chilled day.

Gift: Hey. You look fat.

I was offended but I decided to ignore it.

Me: How are you?

Gift: I'm good. How are you?

He was looking at my bump. It was cute. No lies. It was the cutest bump I had ever had the pleasure of having. I felt proud of it.

Me: I'm okay.

He walked towards me to touch it.

Gift: How are we doing over here?

Me: Getting there.

Gift: You look beautiful.

Me: Thank you.

He was himself finally. And I realized how much I really missed him. I missed him in every way. I had been deprived for almost 3 weeks. But who was I kidding? I had experienced worse when I

was with Ora and I didn't mind..there was something about Gift that kept me wanting more of him.

Gift: do you want something to eat?

Me: Can I come back home?

All the ifs

#20

Gift: take a seat.

I didn't like the sound of that but I did as I was told.He closed the door and told his PA to cancel all meetings and that she should take messages for whatever call came through.

Gift: Here you go.

He passed me a bottle from his mini bar. I don't even know why he had that in his office. I found it rather unprofessional but hey, it wasnt my office

Me: Thank you.

I made myself comfortable.

Gift: I'll start by apologizing for punishing you the way I did.

Me: I guess I deseved it.

Gift: you did yes. You needed to find yourself.

I kept quiet.

Gift: How was it?

Me: It was therapeutic.

Gift: Had time for yourself?

I nodded.

Me: I'm sorry for the wax incident.

Gift: I'll never mess with you.

He had a smirk on his face.

Me: Baby I'm serious.

Gift: So am I.

Me: Do you forgive me?

Gift: yes.

Me; Really?

Gift: Im a tough guy..I can handle wax. I just don't like how you react to problems.. You don't think. You just do what your head tells you to.

Fair enough. I wasn't offended this time around.

Gift: I love you.

Me: Really?

He laughed.

Gift: yes.

Me: I love you too.

Gift: From today on, we communicate.

Me: Deal..

Pinky promised. He got up to lock his door and cleared his table, turned the Cams off.

Me: Here?

Gift: Where else do you want it?

I kissed my shoes off and got out of my dress.

Gift: Won't I hurt....

I laughed.

Me: No.

I walked towards him and got his jeans off him, my lips still on his. He quickly got me on his table and what happened afterwards was magical. He had me holding on to the edges of the desk. I was satisfied and so was he. As soon as we were dressed, everything in the office was as I had found it and we were off. He took the rest of the day off and we went out for lunch

Me: I don't like what you said to me earlier on.

Gift: What did I say now?

Me: You called me "fat"

He looked confused and suddenly his face

relaxed again.

Gift: Baby you've put on weight.

I rolled my eyes at him

Me: it's the same thing.

Gift: I said it in a nice way

Me: No

Gift: I'm sorry.

Me: You really think I'm fat?

I was stuffing his fries from his plate

Me: Am I?

His eyes were fixed on me.

Me: I'm asking.

He slowly nodded.

Me: You did this to me.

Gift: Your eggs betrayed you.

I laughed. I missed him. So much.



Me: Here.

I passed him my sonogram.

Gift: What's this?

Me; Your child

Gift: no head? No Toes?

I giggled.

Me: I'm 6 weeks pregnant.

Gift: What am I looking at?

Me: An embryo. Your child.

He tilted his head.

Me: Nothing?

Gift: I'm sorry baby.

He was remorseful.

Me: It's okay. Men are idiots anyway.

He laughed and sipped on his drink afterwards, still laughing.

Gift: Just like that?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Thanks babe.

Me: its a pleasure. Are you going to eat those wings?

Gift: Well I was.

Me: but?

Gift: You'll give me hell if I don't.

Me: But I asked..

Gift: I'm going to eat them yes.

Me: Okay

I took two.

Gift: Marriage is hard madoda!

Me: Right?

Gift: very. Especially if your wife is a bully.

Me: asking you to share is bullying?

Gift: You took.

Me: I asked .

Gift: And I said no yet you still did it

Me: Marriage is about sharing.

Gift: I should have opted for a prenuptial

Me: too late

We were the old Gift and Tshia. I was happy. My heart was at peace.

Me: So I'm going to meet up with Lizzy every Wednesday.

Gift: Who's Lizzy?

Me: My therapist.

Gift: The sessions you had weren't enough?

Me: I asked for more.

Gift: Why?

Me: I don't know..I feel like I can do better than

I'm doing now. I'm committed to making us work. I'm finally with the one I CHOSE to be with. I have to make it work. I have a family to think of. Kids to think of. Thabsi and Noku grew up with their parents separated. Ora and Tumelo were going to go through the same had you not decided to step in and father them. Let me secure a peaceful and Happh for my 5 kids...Woah that is alot!

My last line made him laugh

Gift: Big families are fun families.

Me: Really?

Gift: Yes.

Me: I'm not having more though.

Gift: Fair enough.

"Love birds"

It was Kananelo as we turned. I remembered that he liked the place we were at. Came every

second day for their food.

Gift: And now?

Kana: how are you Tshia?

I kept quiet.

Gift: What do you want?

Kana: Is it a crime to greet the ex wife and the ex bestfriend?

Gift: no but what's criminal is you trying to come between us forgetting what I'm capable of and forgetting how I am when it comes to who and what I love

He looked like he was cringing.

Gift: There's war coming your way. Get your soldiers ready.

All the ifs

#21

Me: Maybe we should go for a neutral color.  
White.

Gift: You love White don't you?

Me: Its a pure color. This child is pure

Gift: Well true.

We were at the hardware store. Looking for paint for the nursery. It had been 2 weeks since the Kananelo incident and we were growing stronger and stronger. I was happy and so was he.

Me: So?

Gift: Does it make you happy?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Okay.

He picked the paint and put it n the trolley.

Me: We done.

Gift: Sure?

Me: Yes.

Gift: You look beautiful.

I blushed.

Me:really?

Gift: Yes

Me: what do you want?

Gift: What do you mean?

Me: Your compliments are often followed by requests.

He laughed.

Gift: I have none.

Me: Seriously?

Gift: I promise.

Me: No getting drunk?

Gift: No we said we having a Saturday thing today. I haven't been giving you my attention.

Me: We all know who you love the most.

He giggled and shook his head. I loved him. So so much.

Gift: Boyza is the only person I can relate to in that house.

Me: Oh?

Gift: but he likes what I like

They had grown so close. Too close. Ora was his princess, he'd just randomly buy her gifts when he felt like it. Nokuthula was my dad's princess. And Thabsi had grown to be my best friend. It was amazing how it all worked out. I loved my kids so much and even his baby mamas had given in. They had accepted that I was now number one in their daughters' lives coz that's how they treated me. Thabsi called her mum by name so did Noku but I, I was "moms". I loved how classy they were though, Gift had a great choice when it came to women.



They respected their husbands, respected their baby daddy and respected me. Rare but yes it was what it was. We put the kids first and they trusted me with them. They never addressed their daughters as "my child" it was always "your daughters Tshia..." Thabsi got the respect she deserved as the eldest and she was very responsible and protective of them. Especially of Ora coz Noku thought Thabsi crowded her and Tumelo well...Tumelo didn't exactly need her protection. In fact, Tumelo as young as he was, felt he needed to protect Thabsi. Gift's orders.

Me: Yeah right

Gift: Seriously.

Me: Okay baby let's get out of here please.

Gift: Can't take it anymore?

Me::its too hot.

Gift: Okay

We paid and because I was hungry again we drove to the nearest mall.

Me: why are you looking at me like that?

Gift: we having another child after this one is born.

Me: Oh hell no.

Gift: I mean pregnancy is the only thing that keeps you eating.

Me: And you like that?

Gift: I like a healthy wife..

Me: so I wasn't healthy before I fell pregnant?

Gift: no.

Me: Yeah right.

Gift: We having another one right?

Me: no.

Gift: it's not like we cant afford a lot of kids.

I coughed.

Me: excuse me?

Gift: but it's true.

Me: so that means I need to keep popping kids?

Gift: A woman's purpose is to bring lives

Me: I have fulfilled my purpose .

Gift: so you defying me?

Me: yes

His jaw dropped

Gift: just like that?

Me: You wanted me to lie?

He laughed

Gift: Wow.

Me: I still love you though.

Gift: Then have 5 more

Me: no.

Gift: but why?

Me: we have enough kids in that house

Gift: baby....

Me: no husband. We have more than enough..  
Don't try to turn me into a mad woman please.

Gift: okay fine. You are right.

Me: I'm always right.

Gift: Try to be modest

Me: to you?

Gift: Yes

Me: Never

Gift: Where did I find you?

I laughed.

Me: You stole me.

Gift: I'm glad I did

Me: Aren't you proud of yourself..

Gift: I am..

Me: Why did you wait so long though?

Gift: Well I was respecting the "bro code" back then.

Me: And realized you shouldn't anymore?

Gift: It's useless

He was annoyed when he said it..

Me: Want to update me?

Gift: About?

Me: The guys. They were trying to get on your side again right?

Gift: I made peace with them.

Me: Really?

Gift: I figured why not?

Me: well that's nice.

Gift: We actually going to some soccer match

tomorrow.

Me: Saturdays belong to me baby.

Gift: I know but they already bought the tickets my love..

Me: And Is Kananelo invited?

Gift: I actually don't care. He knows he can't mess with me.

Me: Well have fun. I'll just sleep.

Gift: Alone?

Me: Yes

Gift: Date night with Nolo?

Me: let me enjoy My sleep before this kid comes.

Gift: You've turned your back on Nolo?

I laughed

Me: Nolo has a new guy in her life.

Gift: I thought she gave up on that.

Me: Nope.

Gift: Well she's a real lover then.

Me: Yes she is. I hope this one is genuine.

Gift: I hope so too

Me: Behave

Gift: But you know I always do.

Me: Good.

The kids were at Dad's. We finished eating and headed home to rest..watched movies till I fell asleep first(as usual) and the next day, he had prepared breakfast for me. He also prepared lunch later on in the day and at around 19:00 his friends came to pick him up.for the soccer match. I decided to order pizza coz I was hungry at 19:15 and figured why not?

Me: it's not a big deal Nombu.

Nombu: It is. You are always with Gift. It feels like I've been replaced.

Me: I'll come there after church.

Nombu: no. I'll Come to your house.

Me: okay. I have to go my pizza is here..

Nombu: Love you.

Me: Love you too friend.

It took me 5 minutes to go out coz I was looking for my other shoe which I had kicked under the couch. I apologized for the delay and got my pizza. Went back inside and waa ready to feast on my pizza. As soon as I opened the box, there was one slice missing. And a note on the box.

"Helped myself to your BBQ chicken, hope you don't mind. K.Tefo"

All the ifs

#22



I quickly locked the doors and burglar gates. Threw the pizza in the dustbin and thought about calling Gift but I didn't. He deserved a break as well. I made myself a sandwich and decided to go bath and sleep afterwards. I knew I was safe coz Gift had tightened up security for the kids' sake. When I woke up at 6am, Gift was sleeping on the couch in the lounge.

Me: Baby?

He slowly opened his eyes after a 100 years

Gift: Hey.

He said, pulling me to his lips and I gave him a warm baby kiss.

Me: Come to bed.

Gift: What time is it?

Me: 6:10

Gift: Let me get some.

Me: some sleep yes.

Gift: I'm not talking about sleep.

Me: No its still very....

He already had been on my back on the couch, he slid my shorts off in seconds and he was already making way inside of me. He moved in his own pace, making sure he satisfied both parties. He was quite pleased with himself when he was done and we went to take a shower together and got ready for church.

Me: How was the match?

Gift: Stupid boys lost.

Me: Mm

Gift: what is it?.

Me: They aren't stupid when they win.

Gift: Baby don't...

Me: Did you have fun though?.

Gift: I did. Caught up with the guys

Me: That's good.

Gift: They tiptoe around me.

Me: Well you are intimidating.

Gift: Do I intimidate you?

Me: No

Gift: So how did you come to the conclusion that I am.

Me: Because you carry alot of their secrets and they don't want that out.

Gift: No I've got my own life to worry about. They can cheat all they want. I tried talking to them, it didn't work so why should I keep wasting my time?

Me: Just like that?.

Gift: we are all over the age of 18

Me: fair enough.

Gift: slept good without me?

I decided to ruin the mood before church.

Me: I ordered pizza last night and one slice of it was missing.

Gift: So you mad?

Me: Here

I gave him the note

Gift: What? Did he get to you?

Me: No. He just helped himself to my pizza

Gift: Did you eat any of IR?

Me: no.

Gift: Good

He didn't seem angry. At all.

Me: What are you going to do?

I was worried. My husband was unpredictable.

Gift: Pray about it

He looked at his watch.

Gift: Let's go baby

Me: Okay.

I cleared up quickly and he locked after me then we made our way to church. Our kids were very happy to see us but they obviously couldn't come to Us Coz they were where they should be.

Gift: You okay?

I nodded.

Gift: Baby?

Me: Can't say I'm not worried.

Gift: let's discuss this after church.

Me: Okay

The sermon was uplifting. It was like listening to Ntate Thuso and Ntate Maine every Sunday morning when I still hated the idea of going to church.

Tumelo: What's this?

He was pointing at my belly.

Me: nothing.

Tumelo: Tshia.

Me: I'm bloated.

Tumelo: who put air in you?

Me: the lady in the garage

Tumelo; Tell her to take it out.

Me: she doesnt work there anymore.

Tumelo; She told you?

Me: yes.

Tumelo: You must take it out.

Just ike that, he was gone. Gone to join the others.

Gift: is that the best you could do?

We both giggled.

Me: yes.

Gift: you are a terrible liar.

Me: Thanks for the compliment

Gift: pleasure

Me: Should I go dish up for you now?

We still had lunch at dad's every Sunday. His mum and Brothers joined us whenever they could. We wanted to keep The family close.

Gift: Yes please.

I did and after that we all sat around the table.

Me: So I have an idea....

Gran: Oh no.

I laughed.

Me: It's not abseiling

Gran: Oh good.

Me: I was hoping we could go out as a family.

G's mum: As in Family vacation?

Me: yes ma.

Dad: Are you well enough for that?

Gift: Good question dad

Priscilla: She's pregnant not sick

Me: Thank you ma. It would really do us some good

G's mum: I'd appreciate that.

Gran; I would too.

Dad: So we outvoted Gift.

Me: yes.

Dad: when?

Me: Maybe next month.

Dad: okay Lily.

Me: Thank you family.

Gran: it's a lovely idea

Me: You can tell Gratitude Koko. I'll let Nolo



know. Baby?

Gift: I'm not letting those two know..

Me: Baby...

G's mum: I'll tell them my child.

Me: Thank you ma.

We had lunch and Thabsi and Nokuthula washed the dishes..the elders were having their own chat.. Lesedi was with his brother in law and I was with my sisters.

Me: So you let him dump you?

Tshepang; What was I suppose to say? Or do!

Me; I'm sorry sis.

Tshepang: Well atleast Resego still has her boyfriend.

Me: Don't be sad

Tshepang: I am

Me: I warn you about dating brothers though.

They managed to giggle.

Resego: Told you she'd say that.

Me: Coz I'm your big sister and I know best.

Tshepang: Well I'll nurse my broken heart.

Me: Wine does the job.

I suddenly got a text.

"I want you back"

All the ifs

#23

I closed the message and turned my attention back to the sisters. I was boiling inside but had to keep my composure. I listened as they spoke and we were soon heading home with our kids

Gift: study time!

It was exactly 17:30

Noku: Can we just watch...

Gift: I said its study time Tinker.

She gave up before she could even start arguing. I loved how he made sure he was involved in the kids lives and studies.

Gift: Sunshine!

Ora: pops!

Gift: Get today's newspaper. Its time to read.  
Boyza, Pen and paper.

They all did as they were told. My older daughters went to their rooms to start studying. Ora got ready for her reading session and Tumelo practiced writing his name and surname. I, well, I went to nap.

Gift: Baby?

There was a soft hand on my back

Me: Hey.

Gift: Here. Your vitamins.

Me: Thank you.

I drank up, went to brush my teeth and came back.

Gift: Did I do or say anything wrong?

Me: Why?

Gift: You've been awfully quiet since we came back.

Me: Your child makes me moody.

Gift: please leave my child out of this.

I sighed

Gift: What's wrong?

Me: Kananelo sent me a "I want you back" text

Gift: okay

Me: Gift?

Gift: Hey.

Me: You still not saying anything

Gift: What's that suppose to mean?

Me: You reacted this way in the morning.

Gift: I know.

Me: What are you going to do?

Gift: pray about it

I didn't like that answer at all. He had said the same thing. Twice in a day

Me: Please talk to me.

Gift: I'm talking to you baby

Me: please don't do anything stupid

Gift: Prayer is stupid?

Me: I'm no idiot

Gift: No one said you are wife.

My heart started beating fast. Maybe telling him was a bad idea. My husband was unpredictable I did mention. And this...well it just topped it off coz even though he said he was gong to "pray

about it". His face betrayed him. His eyes did too ciz they had changed from loving caring Gift to "You don't want to mess with me" Gift. It was the same look he had given me when he told me to pack and go seek help. Not even my tears shook him that night.

Me: Don't do anything stupid.

He kept quiet and I immediately got a call.

Me: Friend .

Nombu: I give up on you

Me: what did I do?

Nombu: I came there knocking and nothing

Oh crap!

Me: I'm so sorry. I totally forgot

Nombu: You forgot about me.

Me: No babe, I forgot about the appointment

Nombu: Horrible friend.

I giggled.

Me: can I make it up to you?

Nombu: You think you have a choice?

Me: clearly not.

Nombu: Saturday.

Me: Deal.

Nombu: Good. Take care..

Me: you too my babe.

Nombu: Love you

Me: love you too my babe.

We hung up.

Gift: Had an appointment?

Me: an after church one.

Gift: you never keep your promises..

Me: What do you mean?

Gift: it means you always forget about Nombu.

Me: Pregnancy brain.

Gift: Excuse

I giggled. I knew he was trying to make me forget about Kananelo.

Me: I'm going to check on the kids

Gift: They are all sleeping.

I looked at my watch which was rested on my pedestal and it was 21:30.

Me: Will I even be able to sleep?

Gift: You'd win sleeping competitions.

I was offended.

Me: you live to offend me dont you?

Gift: no...

He was giggling.

Gift: I didn't mean it in a bad way.

Me: you did. I'm going to bath.



Gift: Can I join you?

I knew he had already taken his shower coz I could smell the shower gel on him.

Me: no.

Gift: why?

Me: You already took yours.

Gift: Okay.

Me: Stay there.

He did and I took a bath. When I went back, he was deep in thought.

Me: What is it?

Gift: something doesn't feel right.

Me: what do you mean?

Gift: I don't know baby.

Me: it's probably nothing.

Gift: Maybe.

Me: Maybe Kananelo's actions are going getting to you now.

Gift: You could be right.

Me: can we all drive in one car tomorrow?

Gift: missing the crazy family moments we used to have every morning?

Me: yes.

We used to drive in one car but due to him going in early that had to stop.

Gift: whatever you want.

Me: thank you.

Gift: Now for what I want....

He got up and let my towel fall. His finger ran down to my navel.

Gift: Pregnancy looks good on you.

Me: does it?

His finger still running down. He was going

down too. He pushed me towards the couch and got his head in between my thighs, I tried getting him out but my body resisted. I wanted him inside of me. I couldn't control my movements. He moved me from the couch and what happened afterwards was magical. It was never the same thing with Gift. Love making got better every time. I woke naked with only a sheet around me. It was 5:30. We took a shower together, got the kids ready for school and we were all in one car. I remember us talking and laughing at Tumelo and Nokuthula's madness. After that, I was on a hospital bed, Drips and all

Gift: Hey you up.

He had a bandage on his hand.

Me: whats going on?

Gift: We were in a car accident..

Me: what?

I suddenly remembered bits and pieces. I remembered me screaming but what happened after nothing

Me: Where are the kids?

Gift: Noku, Thabsi and Tumelo are with the doctor. Just minor injuries. Our baby is also fine. He said touching my belly.

Me: What about Ora?

I noticed that his eyes were bloodshot ready. He suddenly looked down.

Me: Gift, where's my child?

Gift: Sleep baby.

All the ifs

#24

Me: Don't tell Me to sleep.

Gift: You need to rest.

Me: Where's my daughter?

Gift: please sleep.

Me: No!

I finally shouted!

Gift: Please calm down.

Me: Don't tell me to calm down.

Gift: Think of the child you are carrying.

Me: I don't have time to think of the child I'm carrying! I want the child I carried 5 years ago. Where is my daughter?

I got myself up and took the drip off.. I realized that my hand was injured too but I had one of those square shaped plasters on and I felt no pain at all.

Gift: Tshiamo...

Me: Don't touch me.

I got off the bed and he tried to help me but I told him not to. I also saw my bag on the other

chair and I knew that he had asked Tshelang to pack it for me. She was his "go to" chick for whatever I needed. I wore the slip-ons that were on The floor and headed out. I didnt even understand why I had a drip on. I went straight to the nurses on the floor i was on. Spoke to them and one led me to the doctor's office. I left Gift there not giving a damn about him.

Doc: how are you feeling now?

Me: I'm fine. Is the baby fine? Where are my other kids? Where's Ora?

He sighed.

Doc; You shouldn't have taken the drip off but it's fine.

Me: Where's my daughter?

He looked behind me and I did too. Gift was behind me.

Doc: their grandfather came to fetch them

Me: where's my daughter?

Doc: Tshia, think of the baby you carrying.

Me: I will stick this pen in your throat! Where's my daughter!

I was making threats! Unlike me..but I was stressed. The man above understood what I was going through better than they did.

Doc: Please calm down.

Me: Where's my child?

Doc: We not sure if she'll make it.. She lost a lot of blood.

Me: is she...

I felt tears on my face.

Me: Is she badly injured?

Rhetorical question!

Doc: yes..

Me: Can I see her?

Doc: That's not...

Me: Can I see my child!

Doc: Your husband said...

Me: I don't care what my husband said. I want to see my daughter.

Gift: Baby it's not good for the...

Me: One more time Gift! Try me!

I stood up. He had my robe in his hand..

Gift: Here.

Me: Thanks

I put it on..he and the doctor exchanged looks and he nodded. He led me to the intensive care unit.

Doc: Hands.

I sanitized my hands, put on that plastic apron and followed him in. Her little self was covered in machines. More tears came down my face



and I remember screaming. I was taken back to my ward and was calmed down. When I Woke up again, Gift's hands were covering his face.

Me; Baby?

He looked and quickly wiped something off his face. Tears! I had never seen him cry. Not once..his eyes were still bloodshot red. I got off the bed and went to kneel before him. My hands found a way around him

Me: She'll pull through. She's a strong girl.

Gift: This is all my fault.

Me: No.

Gift: Kananelo tampered with the car.

Me: What?

Gift: the cameras in the garage show it.

Me: Let me see.

He passed me his phone

Gift: Videos.

I found the video and watched as he did something to the car.

Me: this was yesterday?

Gift: While we were at church. He missed that camera.

Me: Kananelo did this?

I couldn't digest it.. I was not sure what to do or say. I was crying again but no scream this time. it was his turn to comfort me.

Me: Can we go see her again?

He shook his head.

Me: please.

Gift: no baby please.

Me: Please.

"Listen to your husband"

It was dad.

Dad: Lily.

He helped me up.

Me: Dad.

Dad: How are you?

Me: I don't know.

Dad: you hungry?

I shook my head.

Dad: Your mum and gran are in the waiting room.

Me: okay

I got my shoes again and we followed dad out. They had lunch boxes for us and 5 minutes later, Gift's mum and his brother Kevin were with us.

G's mum: Did the doctor say Anything?

Gift: no ma..Tshepang just donated blood an hour ago

I didnt even know that.

Priscilla: She'll be fine.

I kept quiet but the minute Kananelo walked in, I just welcomed him with slaps and when dad tried to pull him from me, I kicked him in his chest and he almost lost balance.

Me: Get out!

Kana: Tshia I...

Me: my daughter is in there fighting for her life because you have a bruised ego! You divorced me! Why can't you leave us alone! Why!

Kana: Tsh...

Me: Get out! Get out and dont you ever come back here.

I took the Bottle Kevin had and threw it at him. He walked out and we all sat there in silence until Gran broke it out.

Gran: lets pray.

We all got up and my hand found its way into

Gift's.

Gran: Lord we call you...

She said a very long prayer and after her "amen", Gift left the room. He wasn't okay at all. My eyes followed him till he left us.

Dad: It's not his fault Tshia..tell him.

Me: I tried dad

Dad: Go be with him.

I quickly got up and followed him out. I waited and watched where he was going and headed that way.

Gift: Sunshine...

There was a crack in his voice.

Gift: Sunshine, after your own flesh and blood pushed you from him, I vowed deep in my heart that I'd protect you and love you. That I'd give you all the love you deserve, I named you sunshine coz that's exactly what you are to

me....

He paused trying to hold it back in.

Gift: Please come back to me. There's still a lot of love I need to give you.

All the ifs

#25

I felt my cheeks wet. I slowly walked out the room, found the nearest bathroom and cried. I was broken..more broken than I was before. It wasn't his fault. It was Kananelo's. He was the monster in all of this. Gift was obviously going to blame himself because he was behind the steering wheel. I washed my face and walked out again to the waiting room.

Dad: how is he? Where is he?

Me: Still with Ora

Priscilla: You need to stop crying Tshia.

I took a deep breath.

Priscilla: It's not healthy for the child.

Me: Kev, please go talk to him.

Kev: Okay

Me: Thanks.. Please get him out of there.

He got up and I knew he'd figure out where the intensive care unit was. There were signs for heaven's sake.

Me: How are the kids doing?

G's mum: the kids are fine Tshia..don't worry about them.

I figured that they had went via Dad's to see them.

G's mum: Is it fine if I keep them?

I nodded. They would be better off at her house anyway.

Me: Is Tumelo asking questions?

Gran: Tumelo is worried that they are 3 instead

of 4

Me: What did you tell him?

Priscilla: Tshepang told him that Ora was still here because she has flu.

Me: Bad lie

Priscilla: Tell me about it.

I kept quiet and stared into space.. I was worried about Gift and Ora. I had never seen him in that state. I only came back to earth when Gift called my name.

Gift: Hey

He was fine. Well he looked fine. Better than he did when he was in the Ward

Me: Hi.

Gift: Come. The parents are about to leave..they want to see Ora.

The last time I checked they were in the room



with me. When they left, I didn't even see or hear a thing.

Me: I didn't see them.

Gift: They did say that you were out of it when they left.

Me: How's she now?

Gift: Still the same.

Me: Oh

I had expected a different answer. Why? I didn't know.

Gift: how are you holding up?

I sighed..

Me: I don't know

Gift: What do you feel now?

Me: Hate..Rage..I want to kill Kananelo.

I had no tears. None at all.

Gift: you don't mean that.

Me: I do.

Gift: I'll deal with Kananelo.

Me: No you won't. You'll "pray about it"

Gift: I'll deal with Kananelo.

His tone scared me..he sounded as if he had a plan at hand was ready to set in motion. After he said those words, I kept quiet

Gift: Baby talk to me.

Me: I don't feel like talking.

I didn't feel like talking. At all.

Gift: let's go home..

Me: And who's going to stay here and watch over Ora?

Gift: I hired two people to stay here the night so She's safe

Me: Kananelo?

Gift: they have his picture. They know who to let in.

I knew he was going to go extreme on that.

Me: Okay.

Gift: Do you want to go see her?

Me: No.

Gift: Okay then.

He took my hand and we waited for the parents then eventually went our separate ways. Mind you, I had discharged myself. When we got home, I just took a bath and he cooked.

Gift: Here

Me: I'm not hungry.

Gift: please eat.

He had put in a lot of effort in that so I decided I should.

Me: Can we go back to the hospital?

Gift: The doctor's said you need to rest

Me: Gift...

Gift: Tshia no.

My eyes fell back on the food and I decided to dig in. I had alot of "get well soon" messages from Colleagues and my divas. A lot of missed calls from Nombu. I texted her that I'd call her the next day but she called a minute after I sent the message.

Me: Babe.

Nombu: Are you fine?

Me: I am.

Nombu: Gift told Sthe that you were all involved in an accident. Are the kids fine?

Me: Yes .

Nombu: okay and Ora?

Me: I don't know.

I said it in a low voice.

Nombu: I'll come see you tomorrow.

Me: okay

Nombu: please rest.

Me: I will.

Nombu: And answer my calls. Damn it! I was worried.

Me: I will Nombu..

Nombu: Good. Now rest.

Me: Bye .

Nombu: Bye.

We spent the entire week going in and out of hospital but I was glad when she finally pulled through on Saturday. She was a bit out of it but on Sunday, she was the Ora he all knew. I had even lost weight.

Ora: Pops?

Gift: sunshine?

Ora: the food here is not nice. When am I going home?

Gift: soon

Ora: when Pops?

Gift: Maybe tomorrow.

I was watching them converse. He was happy..she was too.

Ora: No but...

I didnt get what she said coz I had to answer my phone.

Me: Hello.

"I've been trying to call you"

Me: who's this?

"Seipati"

Me: oh hey.

Seipati: hey..how"s Ora doing?

Me: she's awake.

Seipati: Tshia I Think Kana was behind this. I went through his history and it seems like he was googling how to tamper with a car.

Me: I know.

Seipati: I'm sorry

Me: why are you still there?

Seipati: I'm not allowed to go out without him.

Me: what?

Seipati: This looks like a prison. He caught me trying to escape.

Me: This is not good..you need to get out of there

Seipati: I'm trying.. I really am

Me: There's a hidden gate at the back.

Seipati; He closed it. Built a wall where there

used to be a gate.

Me: call the police

Seipati: There's nothing I haven't tried yet Tshia. Kananelo keeps threatening me.. I begged the helper to let me use her phone to call you..I only found out that you were involved in an accident when Bongani was here to let him know that You had been involved in an accident.

Me: I'll get you out of there.

Seipati: I'd appreciate that.

Me: okay bye.

Seipati: Tshia?

Me: yes?

Seipati: Take care..

Me: You too.

I hung up.

"The women I love are now bestfriends. How



lovely is that"

He came out from some hidden corner

Me: I thought I told you to not come hete.

Kana: Good job keeping me out.

Me: Fuck you.

Kana: Seipati will only be free if you come back to me. With you as my first wife and her as my second.

All the ifs

#26

I couldn't believe this.. Why did Gift stop me from attempting to murder this man?

Me: I told you to fuck off

Kana: How's our daughter doing?

Me: You have a daughter with me?

Kana: Tshia please don't do this. Let me see her please

Me: Your daughter is with her mother Seipati.  
You are about to welcome your second  
daughter soon.

Kana: You can't keep me from my child..

Me: Really?

Kana: you can't.

Me: You think I don't know that you were behind  
this?

His eyes dropped.

Me: Your own flesh and blood? Look, I know you  
didn't want Ora but to go such great lengths to  
bring me misery really?

Kana: She Just got caught in the crossfire.

Me: Damn right she was. I'm going to show her  
what you did.

Kana: No.please. we can fix this.

Me: Stay away from my children.

Kana; Tshia

He tried touching my hand and I pulled away.  
He pulled it again a little tighter this time and I  
could feel my wrist hurt.

Gift: Get your hands off my wife.

He did

Gift: Get out of here.

Kana: That's my daughter you keeping me from.

Gift: Kananelo...

He was very calm.

Gift: Leave Mfethu.

Still chilled.. Gift was very unpredictable. I knew  
he was angry but how he remained to keep  
calm... I don't know.

Kana: Hai boy you...

Gift: Leave!

He gave up and left. I took a deep breath as he

walked out

Gift: Are you fine?

Me: He needs to be dealt with

Gift: He will be

Me: You should have let me kill him.

Gift: He'll be dealt with

Me: When?

Gift: he'll be dealt with. Come.

We went back to Ora. Well he did while I decided to talk to the doctor about discharging my daughter

Me: She's not safe here.

Doc: She'll be out in two days..she's fine.

Me: Can't we take her today?

He shook his head

Me: She's not safe here.

Doc: I understand your concern Tshia but...

Me: Please.

Doc: One more night..

Me: Okay.

Doc: But get someone to look after her..

Me: Okay. That's fine.

Doc: Good.

Me: Thank you.

Doc: You and Gift are great parents.

Such warmth.

Me: Thank you. We try. Thank you for all your help.

Doc: It's my job

Me: right!

We both laughed and I went to Ora. They were chatting away.

Gift: Deal?

Ora: Yes

Me: What are you dealing?

Ora: Ice-cream..

Me: You want ice-cream?

Ora: yes.

Me: The doctors won't allow that

Gift: The doctors don't have to know anything

They looked at each other and giggled..it was a cute scene.

Me: stop corrupting that child.

Gift: Treats won't hurt

Me: You better not do that.

Ora: But mum...

Me: No Ora

Ora: Okay...

She said it softly.

Me: good

We left the hospital really late .Gift added two more guys as security and one more nanny.

Me: The doctors said She'll be discharged tomorrow.

Gift: How did you pull That off?

Me: It was easy.

Gift: well that's good. I need my kids under one roof

Me: Those three don't want to come back.

Gift: They will.

Me: Who's that lady you added as the nanny?

Gift: some retired nurse.

Me: Okay. Background check?

Gift: All good baby

Me: Okay.

Gift: Don't worry.

Me: After what happened today.

Gift: She comes highly recommended.

Me: Well okay.

Gift: How's the little one doing?

He asked touching my belly.

Me: I think the little one is still fine.

Gift: you need to eat now

Me: I've been eating.

Gift: Baby, you need to eat.

Me: Now you sound like Nombu

He laughed

Gift: I don't.

Me: You do.

Gift: She's a great friend.



Me: Yes she is

She was always at the hospital.. The divas came too..a couple of times. And the guys. We Really appreciated their support. A lot. Winnie and Mikey did too.

Gift: Look at you smiling.

Me: I haven't really had the best luck with friends

Gift: Ah! I'm your friend now

Me: That's right.

We were happy again. We had been stressed and miserable.

Gift: You gon let me in now that Everything's fine.

I laughed.

Me: That thirsty?

Gift; Baby!

Me: Nah! You'll have to wait until Ora is back at school.

Gift: What?

Me: yes.

Gift: Not fair.

Me: Oh you'll be fine.

We had a good rest When we got home and the next day, Ora came back. I was happy. My mother in law had decided that the others would come back the next day. Made sense. Ora needed to rest.

Nombu: Okay baby... Bye.

She hung up.

Nombu: That was Sthe.

Me. duh

Nombu: he says they just received some news about Kananelo.

Me: He can go jump.

Nombu: Apparently he got burnt in his car. The engine just caught fire and when he tried to get out he was locked in..how! Nobody knows because he had the key with him inside.

Apparently his lower body is badly injured

All the ifs

#27

Nothing shocked me anymore. I knew Gift had a Hand in this. He had been on the phone with people since we came back from the hospital to get Ora.

Me: Shame!

Nombu: he deserves it

Me: Couldn't have said it better..

Nombu: Maybe his ancestors are punishing him.

Me: Nombu, I don't care .

Nombu: Makes sense ....

Me: Did Seipati tell you what's going down in her house?

Nombu: yes actually. This is a blessing in disguise for her.

I thought it would be. I decide to call her. Her phone rings lucklily and she answers.

Me: You got your phone back?

Seipati: Yes I did.

She breathing heavily

Nombu: are you okay?

We've put her on loud speaker.

Seipati: I am. I'm just packing my things.

Me: and security?

Seipati: I'm trying to figure it out..

Nombu: okay do that.

Me: he can't do anything to you now.

Nombu: how bad is he?

Seipati: his cousin says he's burnt right up to the knees. Apparently he was locked in but the people around him were able to help him.

Nombu: Oh that's bad.

Me: Just get out of there.

Seipati: Okay.

Me: Keep us updated okay?

Seipati: I will.

Nombu: Be careful.

Seipati; Thanks guys

Nombu: and tell us where you are.

Seipati: I'm heading straight to Mafikeng

Nombu: how are you going to get there?

Seipati: Taxi

Me: Good plan.

Nombu: Talk later.

Seipati: bye

We sighed as soon as we hung up

Nombu: Well you are a better person than I am

Me: why do you say so?

Nombu: how concerned you are about Seipati

Me: my mum always emphasized humility

Nombu: Teach me some of it.

Me: Oh you have a lot of it.

She smiled. She did. That's why I loved so much.

Me: Grab something to eat

Nombu: And what do you want?

Me: Cheese sandwich.

Nombu: you not exactly a fan of cheese..

Me: This kid is..let me go check on Ora.

Nombu: Okay then.

I went to check on her and she was still asleep. That kid didnt know how to sleep. She was already on the edge of the bed. I had to pull her back to the middle and put a polar on her little body. I felt happy. Who wouldn't be? My daughter had made it.

Me: still sleeping.

Nombu: The meds got her out?

Me: I am glad they did..Ora talks too much.

She laughed

Nombu: She's adorable.

Me; you think?

Nombu: she is.

Me: I'm glad you think so coz she's not.

Nombu: she's a great kid. Tell me, How's the pregnancy treating you?

Me: Back to eating at 1am and again at 4an.

Nombu: that's great!

Her inner child was out..

Nombu: You look like you have kwashiorkor.

It was my turn to laugh

Me: whatever!

Nombu: You know it's true.

I rolled my eyes at her and poured us some wine.

Nombu: You trying to kill my Godchild?

Me: one glass won't hurt.

Nombu: Says who?

Me: Experts.. You know this too.

Nombu: I never drank while pregnant.

She took my drink and downed it down her throat.



Me: Just like that? Down your oesophagus?  
Just like that?

Nombu: I won't let you kill my Godchild. You know I almost lost him..

Me: him?

Nombu: it's a boy. I can feel it. Godmother!

Me: You shouldn't have drank that vodka when you walked in here.

Nombu: I was trying to destress.

Me: And you better not plan a babyshower. I know you!

Nombu: You telling me?

Me: Yes

Nombu: You can't do.that.

Me: I just did.

Nombu: You are having a babyshower.

Me: I wont come. Babyshowers are for first time

mothers.

Nombu: Says who?

Me: me.

Nombu: We'll see. You think I'll let you waste money?

Me: as if that's something new.

We both laughed

Nombu: It's not my fault that I'm married to a rich man.

Me: well excuse some of us who still live in Diepkloof.

She laughed

Nombu: You are married to the wealthiest.

Me: that's what you said about Kananelo.

Nombu: That was before we all figured that Gift is the leading man in this and shows less than what he really is.

Me: he does that alot. I just work coz staying at home would drive me crazy. He doesnt let me do anything with my money. He's already settled fees for the next two years

Nombu: we'll travel.

Me: Well that's a great idea.

Nombu: a man's job is to provide for his family. Let him..

Me: okay fine.

Nombu: Now eat.

She was already making more sandwiches. She helped me cook and left at around 16:00.

Nolo: I'll come Tomorrow.

Me: No problem cuz.

Nolo: How is she though?

Me: Better than the last time you saw her at the hospital

Nolo: That's good. Sabelo has been worried

Me: Sabelo is such a great cousin though.

Nolo: A pestering one too.

I laughed.

Me: Thank you for your support cuz.

Nolo: Don't mention it. It's a must

Me: Well thank you.

Nolo: I love you.

Me: I love you too babe

Nolo: Give Ora a kiss for me.

Me: I will.

Nolo: Bye love

Me: Bye babe.

I hung up Gift came back 20 minutes after, went to check on Ora who was still asleep and came back to me.

Me: Babe?

Gift: Hello there.

Me: How are you?

Gift: Great. How are you?

Me: I'm fine. Kananelo's in hospital.

Gift: I know

Me: Were you responsible for that?

Gift: Yes so?

Me: Look, when I said " I want to kill him", I didn't mean it literally. I was just angry. You can't be going around burning people, it's not..

Gift: Listen, that bastard almost killed my wife, My three daughters and my son. You think I'll just let him get away with this?

Me: But it's really not worth it. Our child is fine.

He threw some book at me. I knew It very well. It was a notebook Kananelo always kept in his

office. I thought it was for numbers. I opened it to the marked page. "Accident" was scratched out. " kidnap Tumelo " was the second point. I looked up at him.

Gift: This is worth it!

All the ifs

#28

I couldn't believe it. The Kananelo I knew wouldn't do anything to hurt his kids. Everything to protect them. Where was his madness coming from? Was he good at hiding it? Did I drive him to it? I couldn't understand. I was trying to figure it out but I couldn't. I mean I had experienced his caring and loving side. I had also experienced his bad side. But to do this to his own kids?

Me: Something's wrong with Kananelo.

I was heartbroken.

Gift: Right.

Me: The Kananelo I know would never do this to his kids.

Gift: well he is doing it. I won't allow that to happen..

Me: is this even normal behavior?

Gift: I dont know.

He grabbed an apple and a bottle of water.

Gift: I'm going to check on Ora

Me: You were there a few minutes ago.

Gift: Tshia, let me be please

Me: Okay

Gift: Thank you. Love you

Me: Love you too

I watched as he walked away and I called Thabsi.

Thabsi: Moms.

Me: Hello baby.

Thabsi: How are you moms?

Me: I'm okay baby. How are you guys doing?

Thabsi: we are fine. How's Ora? Is she back?

She was very worried.

Me: Yes she's back and she's fine

Thabsi: Can you come fetch us now?

Me: No baby.

Thabsi: Why mum?

Me: I spoke to your grams..we decided that you kids will Come back tomorrow. We want Ora to rest a bit

Thabsi: Okay I understand.

Me: Are the two little ones fine?

Thabsi: they are. They went out with Uncle Kev.



Me: Okay then. I'll call you before you sleep okay?

Thabsi: Okay moms.

Me: Can I talk to your gran?

Thabsi: going through ma'am.

Me: okay receptionist.

She giggled and gave her grandmother the phone

G's mum: Masechaba.

She gave me that name after my lobola negotiations

Me: Mama.

G's mum: how are you? Is Ora fine?

Me: She's okay..she's with Gift.

G's mum: oh that's good. I can't wait to see her tomorrow.

Me: she can't wait to see you too mama. Are

those three giving You a hard time?

G's mum: Please tell Gift to come fetch his son.

I laughed.

Me: That kid is a problem.

G's mum: but I'll miss him the moment he walks out with his bags.

We laughed. She loved the idea of having a "grandson". Thabo and Kevin were having none of that. Although one of them was married.

Me: You need to rest now..you know they'll be up in there after two days..

G's mum: That's right. How are you holding up? Masechaba, I hope you are eating because that grandchild you carrying needs food

Me: I am ma.

She sounded just like Nombu.

G's mum: Good. You can't be losing anymore

weight.

Me: Yes ma'am.

"babe"

That was Gift.

G's mum: Gift?

Me: yes mama. I have to go.

G's mum: Okay then..see you Tomorrow.

Me: Okay ma.

We said our goodbyes and I went to Gift

Me: Babe?

Gift: Come see this..

I sat next to him.

Me: You done checking on Ora?

Gift: She's still asleep.

Me: Is she fine?

Gift: The doctors did say she'll be out of it for a

while..

Me: She needs to wake up and eat.

Gift: no..let her rest

I sighed

Me: Okay

Gift: So?

Me: so?

Gift: Choose one you like.

Me: A car?

Gift: Yes baby.

I was looking at family cars.

Me: do we need one?

Gift: yes.

Me: why?

Gift: We expecting another child.

Me: okay this one

I picked out some 7 seater car

Gift: It's ugly.

Me: Oh no.

He laughed

Gift: don't be dramatic.

Me: but you asked and I answered

Gift: What about this one?

Me: It's nice

Gift: Can we decide on one?

Me: Okay let's Compare features.

Gift: Okay.

We spent about 20 minutes and finally made a decision. One we were both happy with.

Me: Baby?

Gift: Yes Wife?

Me: So I want to go see Kananelo.

Gift: You want to confront him?

Me: I feel like it's something I want to do.

Gift: Do you want me to come with?

Me: Do you want to come with?

Gift: no I'll stay here with the kids.

I giggled .

Me: You like wasting my breath don't you?

Gift: I love listening to your voice.

Me: Ah. I figured. Want me to sing to you?

Gift: No no no no. Let's stick to talking okay?

Me: Bad husband!

Gift: No I'm not.

Me: Yes you are!

Gift: no I'm not.

Me: Okay whatever husband.

Gift: You not mad at me?

I shook my head.

Me; You were just protecting us.

Gift: I'm hungry.

Me: let's okay.

I left it at him being random, I dished up for us and Ora woke up for about an hour and then went back to bed. We slept at 23:00 and the next day, I decided to go to the hospital.

Kananelo's cousins and mother were there. I just greeted them and stood at the corner with My eyes fixed on him until his mother suggested that they leave and give us space.

Me: Why?

I asked. My cheeks were already wet.

Me: You almost killed your daughter now you want to kidnap my son?

Kana: really? You don't even greet.

Me: what have you turned into? This is not you.

You didn't even want a fly to sit on your kids but now..

Kana: If you weren't so stubborn, if you were just submissive, If you weren't this defying person that you are, If you hadn't cheated, if you hadn't slept with Gift, if you hadn't married him, if you hadn't fallen pregnant for him then we wouldn't be here. You are responsible for this. You drove me to this. This is all you!

All the ifs

#29

I felt my blood boil. He was laying on that bed accusing me of nonsense. I stepped closer to him, took my hair pin off and started poking his burnt legs with it. I had no idea why I did that but the fact that he was screaming in pain gave me comfort. I was glad that no one was around.

Kana: Stop it Tshiamo!

Me: What did you say?



This time I hit his right leg and he screamed

Kana: Fuck!

Me: don't blame me for your nonsense! Don't! You cheated on me, had a child with Seipati, divorced me without my knowledge and now you going to blame me for putting your children's lives in danger. They should have burnt you to death.

Kana: Tshiamo.

Me: Fuck you!

I poked for the last time and left his ward. Went past his family like they were invisible and drove back to My house. Going there was not a bad idea after all. I felt lighter, weird I know but I did. I could hear the noise from the driveway and I knew the other three were back from school.

Gift: Your turn Tinker.

Noku: "My name is Tinker, I'm so very fly oh my

it's a little bit scary..."

Gift: Join in Chubby

Thabsi: Oh no dad

That was Thabsi's nickname. Apparently when she was a chubby from the day she was born till she started high school and felt the need to lose weight. I thought she had a great body but hey...teenagers

.

Gift: Join in.

It was Singing time. They were always forced to do that with their father and I knew deep down that they enjoyed it.

Thabsi: Okay.

They Still couldn't see me. Thabsi joined in and so did Ora. Gift and Tumelo were enjoying the performance. So was I. I clapped when they were done.

Me: turning my house into a madhouse?

The three laughed and met me half way to hug Tumelo; I missed you Tshia.

Me: I missed you too.

Tumelo: The uncle from the garage still hasn't taken the air out of your stomach.

I looked at Gift and he gave me that "leave me out of this" look.

Me: No.

Tumelo: Why?

Noku: That's not air

Me: hey!

Gift: Homework Time.

Noku: But dad.

Gift: Homework!

Thabsi: Can we atleast eat first?

Gift: Then do your homework

Thabsi: Okay

Thabsi carried Ora to the kitchen while Noku and Tumelo raced there. I never quite understood Why they felt the need to do that

Gift: Garden?

Me: That would be nice.

He took my hand, asked Mme Sophie to look after them and we went out.

Me: You going to ask about the visit?

Gift: Was waiting for you to tell me.

I sighed

Me: Why didn't you kill him?

Gift: I'm not a murderer.

Me: But he almost killed you.

Gift: Killing him would be an easy way out don't you think?

Me: Maybe you right

Gift: What made you so angry?

Me: Does it show?

Gift: Your "kill" question gave it away.

Me: He Blames me for his actions.

Gift: what do you mean?

Me: he said if I hadn't cheated, hadn't defied him, gotten pregnant then he wouldn't be doing all of this.

His face changed.. I suddenly didn't like that anymore.

Gift: He said that?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Okay

He was Gift again. I wasn't sure what had just happened

Gift: You should just relax

Me: well I will

Gift: And eat..

Me: You all need to stop telling me about food

Gift: you not eating for one anymore.

Me: Wow thanks babe. Great reminder. Thanks for reminding me to get fat

Gift: I didn't mean it in a bad way.

I stood up

Gift: Whoa! Tshia...

I walked away from him and went to the bedroom. I faced the curtains and minutes later, not sure how many but it seemed like a while, the door opened.

Gift: Are you sleeping?

Me: So you can call me "lazy"

He giggled.

Gift: No.

He walked up to me and squatted near the bed

Gift: You need to give birth as soon as possible

Me: You need to leave

Gift: What did I do?

Me: leave me alone.

Gift: Nolo's here

I got up from the bed, fixed it and my hair.

Me: Thanks

Gift: I'm going to see a client.

Me; At this time?

Gift: Yes.

Me: Okay. Be safe.

Gift: Oh she still cares. Not all hope's gone.

I punched him lightly and he pulled me close to kiss him.

Gift: you know I love you right?

Me: yes.

Gift: With all your flaws and mental problems right?

I giggled.

Me: I love you too. And I don't have mental issues.

Gift: That's what you think but I love you either way.

Me: let me go

Gift: Okay

He grabbed his car keys and we went out. Nolo was talking to Thabsi. He said Goodbye to her and I went to join them.

Me: Homework dear daughter of mine.

Thabsi: Yes ma'am.

Me: Where are those other two?

Thabsi: with Mme Sophie. Noku is already in the



study room.

Me: Okay then baby.

She said Bye to Aunt Nolo and walked off.

Nolo: Is Ora sick?

Me: Yes.

I answered laughing. Ora was back to being herself. Hyper and well Ora. She wanted to go play netball outside but Gift had to stop her coz although she was home, she wasn't fully healed

Nolo: Strong kid

Me: You can say that again.

Nolo: how are you holding up?

Me: I'm good and how are you?

Nolo: I'm okay..you need to eat thought. You've lost a lot weight.

Me: Not you again, you all keep telling me to...

My phone rang

Me: To eat. I have to nurse Ora back to health first you know?

I finally answered

Me: Aunty

Aunt Celia: Tshia.

Me: Ma?

Aunt Celia: How are you and the kids doing?

Me: We all fine.

Aunt Celia: Im sorry I couldn't come see Ora. Your father told me what happened. Lerato just dumped her kids and has been gone for two weeks.

She sounded sick.

Me: Golo are you fine?

Aunt Celia: BP nana. Are you busy?

Me: Well Im with Nolo. Is everything fine?

Aunt Celia: The Tefos just left..they told me to

tell you that according to them you are still married to Kananelo because no one let them know about the divorce and that no such thing exists in their culture.. That although he's married to Seipati, they didn't pay lobola for her.

Me: So what does that have to do with me?

Aunt Celia: They are going to see your father they said and they also demand that you go back to your marital house and nurse your husband back to health

All the ifs

#30

Me: What?

Aunt C: Yes Tshia.

Me: why do they keep doing this? My goodness!

Aunt C: Calm down.

Me: Fine .

Aunt C: Call your dad. He'll know what to do

Me: Okay. Thank you Golo.

Aunt C: Okay baby..keep well. I'll come see you soon.

Me: Okay Golo.

Aunt C: Bye Nana.

Me: bye Golo.

I hung up and sighted.

Nolo: is Lerato giving her trouble?

Me: No. The Tefos are. Apparently I'm still their bride and I need to go back to my "marital" home and nurse their stupid son back to health .

Nolo: What?

Me: I need to call dad.

Nolo; Go on.

Me: Get a drink okay?

Nolo: Okay.

She went to the kitchen and I had to call dad and tell him.

Dad: What?

Me: yes dad.

Dad: Okay. I'll handle this.

Me: Thank you.

Dad: worry about your family okay?

Me: Okay dad

Dad: Good.

Me: Thanks daddy.

Dad: Okay Lily. I'll come see those four tomorrow.

Me: 5

Dad: That one is still developing.

I giggled

Me: I love you

Dad: I love you too

I let him hang up and went to Nolo.

Nolo: And?

Me: he said he'll handle it.

Nolo: That's good. I hope Gift Won't lose it.

She clearly didn't know Gift.

Nolo: is he badly injured?

Me: Well he is.

Nolo: that bad?

Me: he'll never wear shorts again.

Nolo: I couldn't believe it when you texted me

Me: I don't even feel sorry for him

Nolo; You shouldn't.

Me: But Nolo you dealt with such behavior before.

Nolo: Before I met my first baby daddy yes.

Me: What happened?

Nolo; Well he was kind, caring, loving, had a problem with the fact that I was working, he always wanted to provide, wanted a submissive girlfriend. The same thing Kana did.

Me: And when did it change?

Nolo: it changed when I started looking pretty, wearing make-up, when I stopped being a sweatpants and oversized t-shirts

Me: So you saying they all start off like this?

Nolo: They always start off like that..these people love a lot and end up hurting us a lot. They do all they can to keep us in their lives.. Bear in mind, we have such women too.

I sighed again.

Me: but the expense of his kids?

Nolo: He just acts. Doesn't think.

Me: I hear you.

Nolo; He'll eventually get back to his senses.

Me: But he started all of this.

Nolo: He blames you?

Me: Yes

Nolo: He's crazy.

Me: Tell me about it.

Nolo: And the kids?

Me: Look Nolo, I wanted Ora and Tumelo to have a relationship with their father you know hence I always called him after our fights but now...

I shook my head.

Nolo: I understand.

Me: Can I have some of that vodka?

She laughed.



Nolo Forget it.

Me; Where's the little one?

Nolo: That naughty one.

We were talking about her youngest.

Me: Still have beef with your baby daddy?

Nolo; He's getting married that one.

Me: Eish

Nolo: no I'm cool. He can get married.

I laughed

Me: You sound bitter.

Nolo: I am because I gave those two men I have kids with my life.

Me: Don't feel bad

Nolo: well you'll say that coz you have all the luck.

I laughed

Me: no I Dont.

Nolo: Yes you do.

Me: You know your time will come right?

Nolo: When I'm 55?

Me: No.

Nolo: Then?

Me: They Dont happen at your pace.

Nolo: Well I guess so.

Me: Let's talk about something else.

Nolo: Good idea

We refrained from talking about Our problems and dived into family gossip. She left an hour later when the kids were ready to dine.

Ora: You late pops.

Gift: Apologies.

Noku: Where were you?

Gift: Out.

Noku: Where?

Me: Dad had meetings.

Tumelo: Why didnt you take me with?

Gift: You were with Mme Sophie Boyza.

Me: Can we all just pray?

We held hands and I blessed the food.

Thabsi: Pops?

Gift: I'm broke.

We laughed..even Tumelo understood what that meant.

Thabsi: I'm not about to ask for Money.

Gift: Then?

Thabsi: Some guy...

Gift: No.

Me: Gift.

Gift: No.

Me: just listen to the child.

Gift: okay talk

Thabsi; He asked me to accompany him to the matric dance.

Gift: Accompany him there and come back..

Me: That's not what she means. She means the guy wants her to be her date.

Gift: No.

Thabsi: But dad...

Tumelo: No!

Me: Hey keep quiet!

Tumelo: pops said No.

I gave her the "let me handle this" look. She and Noku went to wash the dishes and went to bed afterwards.

Me: You dont think you were a bit too hard on

her?

Gift: No.

Me: Gift...

Gift: who knows what they might get up to?

Me: Thabsi is a smart girl.

Gift: I know that.

Me: So?

Gift: Its this boy I don't trust.

Me: You don't even know the boy..just revisit this okay?

Gift: okay fine.

Me: thank you.

Gift: Here.

He passed me some documents.

Me: What's this?

I asked Scanning the documents..he just kept

quiet.

Me: Whoa! What? Proof of purchase. You bought Kananelo's company?

Gift: Its now yours. 60% is yours, the other 40% will be equally distributed between your siblings.

All the ifs

#31

Me: Gift!

I felt like I was spinning and sat down.

Me: What?

Gift: you have a company now.

Me: Why?

Gift: What do you mean why?

Me: I don't want Kananelo's company.

Gift: It's a gift

Me: You playing Dirty now aren't you?

Gift: Do you blame me?

I won't lie. I was angry and sort of turned on.

Me: Why?

Gift: you really going to ask me that?

Me: Tell me....

He turned his whole body to face me which meant he was paying attention.

Me: Did you really buy the company?

Gift: Yes

Me: Gift.

Gift: He signed it over to you.

Me: Forcefully?

He kept quiet

Me: Gift!

Gift: I gave him R50K

Me: What!?

Kananelo's company was worth millions. That much I knew

Me: What else did you do?

Gift: Nothing.

Me: Stop lying.

Gift: Nothing yet

Me: What do you Mean?

Gift: Nothing yet.

Me: Gift.

Gift: We should sleep.

Me: You are unbelievable do you know that?

Gift: No I'm not.

Me: Yes you are.

Gift: Let's not argue about this

Me: I'm not going to work in that company



though

Gift: I figured you won't. You'll find someone who'll run the company.

Me: Have you any idea that you just added more stress to my plate?

Gift: You only have to worry about yourself, me, the kids and the company.

Me: What about the...

Gift: Don't worry about Him.

Sighed

Me: I'll take your word for it.

Gift: Thank you.

We spoke till I fell asleep first yes and the next day was as crazy as all the other days.

Ora: When can I go back to school pops?

Gift: As soon as you okay.

Ora: But I'm fine

Gift: No not yet.

She pouted.

Me: Soon

Ora: okay

Me: now eat.

The others had left for school. The drivers had dropped them off at their schooled and Gift had assigned personal bodyguards. Rough right? He wasn't taking any chances. None at all. I had tried to fight it but gave up. He told me straight up that he was willing to compromise on a lot but not his kids safety. Thabsi didn't like it one bit because it limited her time with her friends and she couldn't even take the taxi home anymore.

"Moms, talk to your husband please"

She said to me. And I failed dismally. I understood where Gift came from though. If

Kananelo could do what he had done to his own children then he was going to do whatever to Gift's kids with ease

Gift: Are you fine?

Me: I think so.

Gift: Need the doctor?

I shook my head.

Me: Don't be extreme.

Gift: worried about her?

Ora had moved to the lounge to eat there.

Me: I'll never stop worrying.

Gift: Please.

Me: Okay.

Gift: I've got you.

Me: I don't like the sound of that.

He giggled.

Gift: why?

Me: Well probably because you play with fire.

Gift: No I don't.

Me: Really?

Gift: I have no idea what you mean by that.

Me: Playing dumb now?

Gift: No I'm not.you need to elaborate.

Me: I'm refuse to waste my breath.

Gift: On me?

I giggled.

Me: I didn't say that.

Gift: Then?

Me: it means nothing can stop you.

Gift: You'll get used to it.

Me: Really?

Gift: Yes.

I sighed.

Gift: A man needs to protect his family.

Me: That's true.

Gift: with all he has.

The tone he used scared me.

Gift: I'll be with my daughter

Me: okay.

I watched as he walked away and tidied up in the kitchen. I ran her bath when she was done eating she fell asleep after she took her medicine

"Open up"

It was my best friend.

Me: Okay.

I told the security to let her in and she complained the minutes she walked in.

Nombu: My goodness Gift! Is this a prison?

Gift: No.

Nombu: Then?

He giggled.

Gift: have fun ladies. I'm going to see mum baby

Me: Okay my love.

We kissed and he left.

Nombu: are you okay?

Me: Don't I look okay?

Nombu: No.

Me: This pregnancy is a bit hard on me

Nombu: I understand.Kananelo?

Me: His family wants me to take care of him.

Nombu: What? You not their bride anymore

Me: They said they don't acknowledge that.

Nombu: Does Gift know?

Me: no. I haven't had the chance to tell him yet

Nombu: Well aren't they mad...

My phone rang.

Me: girl.

Seipati: Hey Tshia.

Me: Arrived Well?

Seipati: Yes. I feel free now

Me: I hope you safe as well.

Seipati: I hope so too. How is he?

Me: I don't know.

Seipati: I shouldn't have asked you that.

Me: Its okay.

Seipati: Tshia, Please tell Gift I said thanks.

Me: For?

Seipati: All the money he transferred.

Me: All the money he transferred?

Seipati: Yes. He transferred everything

Kananelo had in his accounts to me.

All the ifs

#32

I was shocked. Maybe I needed another word to describe what I was feeling coz the word I used was an understatement.

Me: Oh I'll tell him

Seipati: let's keep in touch please.

Me: not a problem.

Seipati: Thanks Tshia. For being the person that you are

Me: It's Okay. Say hi to Rori for me.

Seipati: I will.

Me: Okay.



We said our goodbyes and hung up. I had to act as normal as possible otherwise, Detective Nombu was going to be on my case.

Nombu: was that Seipati?

Me: Yes. She says she's safe.

Nombu: Sthe mentioned that Kananelo wanted her present at the hospital but she didn't come.

Me: She needed to get away from him.

Nombu: Only you and I know that.

Me: You can say that again.

Nombu: I heard Kananelo sold his company. Sthe was mentioning It to Bongani.It's still unknown why he'd do that.

Me: He's always wanted to retire when he was 40 something..

Nombu: but immediately after he gets burnt.

Nah. Confidence is on a down low.

Me: Oh Nombu!

Nombu: You know I'm right.

Me: Should I get you something to eat?

I was changing the topic.

Nombu: Yes please.

Me: Okay

I made her something quick while she went on and on about how Moratua pissed her off.

Nombu: She's got an attitude.

She was clicking her tongue.

Me: They all do. But haven't you learnt to not take it to heart? They just obsessed about money and all the finer things in life.

Nombu: You think?

Me: I've accepted them.

Nombu: You hardly chill with them.

Me: More reason why I've accepted them..

Nombu: How do I deal with her?

Me: Just sit her down and talk to her.

Nombu: Just like that?

I nodded.

Me; That's what grown women do. You want to

beat her up?

She laughed.

Nombu: I'd get divorced

Me: Shame man.

Nombu: Sthe doesn't like physically fighting women..

Me: I don't like them too.

She rolled her eyes.

Me: Deal with it in a grown up way.. Nombu you are a wise woman. The peacemaker

Nombu: Even peacemakers get pissed.

Me: Well you know what, if I wasn't dealing with

Ora, I'd try to jump in.

Nombu: lies.

We both laughed

Nombu: You wouldn't.

Me; Okay true.

Nombu: I knew It.

Me: I don't like getting involved in things I wasn't a part of. You and Mora must just sort things out.

She sipped on her drink.. I wasn't worried coz I knew they were going to fix things anyway. The divas were always up to something anyway. Manicure, pedicure, massages, lunch, drinks, islands, shopping, makeup. Things I didn't have

time for coz I worked and besides I was a family woman..raising Tshepang made me that way. I'd rather spend time with my family than at spas and all they did.

Me: Okay?

Nombu: Okay. When will you know the gender?

Me: Why do you ask?

Nombu: I have to start planning the babyshower.

Me: Not this again

Nombu: Tshia. Its my money.

Me: Its my baby.

Nombu: Its my Godchild.

I sighed.

Me: I'll let You know.

Nombu: when's your next appointment?

Me: Why?

Nombu: I want to come with.

Me: No.

Nombu: Tshia...

Me: These things are for Gift and I.

Nombu: fine.

She had given up. Can't say I wasn't happy though.

Nombu: But you must tell me Tshia.

Me: Okay Nombu.

Nombu: Good.

Me: Okay ma'am.

I spent the afternoon with her. Ora was happy to see Aunty Nombu too. They were a house on Fire. She left 30 minutes before the kids came back.

Gift: I don't like that boy.

It was Gift and Thabsi. They were at it again.

Thabsi: But dad!

Gift: You not going to the matric dance with him.

Noku and Tumelo greeted me and went to find Mme Sophie.

Ora joined them.



Me: what now?

Thabsi: Dad won't let me Go to the matric dance.

Me: Babe?

Gift: I saw the boy.

Thabsi: There's nothing wrong with him

Gift: there's everything wrong with him.

Me: What now?

Thabsi: Dad met Aaron

Me: And?

Gift: He looks like a thug.

Thabsi and I looked at each other.

Gift: you'll go to your matric dance next year.

With a proper date

Thabsi: But I wanted to go to this one.

Gift: Forget It.

Thabsi: I can't wait to grow up.

Gift: Shame.

He wasn't even feeling bad for breaking his daughter's heart.

Me: Go get changed baby.

Thabsi: Okay moms.

She left us.

Me: Your word's final?

Gift: He looks like a thug baby.

Me: Then you should like him coz he's a mini you.

Gift: What do you mean?

Me: How did you transfer Kananelo's money from his personal accounts?

Gift: It was simple.

Me: Gift?

Gift: I just had to help Seipati. They are sorted down..education funds sorted, clothes, allowances And so on.

Me: Kananelo?

Gift: He has 50k to his name

Me; It wasn't suppose to get to this

Gift: Oh?

Me: burning him was enough. Gift stop please

Gift: Why?

Me: I need peace.

Gift: you'll have peace

Me: How? When you constantly plotting against each other?

Gift: He started this. I would have let it go but he involved my kids.

Me: Yes but...

My phone rang.

Me: Hello ma.

Kana's mum: Hello Tshia.

Me: Ma, how are you?

Kana's mum: not good at all. Kananelo's money has been stolen and his medical aid has been stopped too. It apparently doesn't appear in the systems anymore.

She sounded like she was crying.

Kana's mum: We've used his last 50k to settle other debts and not much of it is left. Can you help please?

All the ifs

#33

Gift's eyes were on me. I knew he couldn't hear who I was talking to.

Me: Can I call you back tomorrow?

Kana's mum: Okay Tshia.

Me: Thank you so much.

I hung up.

Gift: And?

Me: Some lady who sells material from Ghana. I wanted to make a dress out of one. she says she has new stock so wants to come by and show me.

Gift: Okay.

Not suspicious at all.

Me: You need to stop now

Gift: why?

Me: I'm serious Gift.

Gift: I know that.

Me: Good.

I moved away from him and went to the bathroom. I was conflicted. I felt sorry for his mother and him. Another part said he deserved all he had coming his way but really? Getting burnt yes. But being broke no. I didn't know what to do or to do.

Tumelo: Tshia!

He was shouting.

Tumelo: Tshiamo!

Me: I'm coming.

We was leaning against the wall.

Me: What did I do now?

Tumelo: The aunties are here.

Me: Oh?

Tumelo: And uncle Lesedi.

Me: Oh nice. I'm coming.

Tumelo: Okay.

He waited for me to go with him. He didn't understand "I'm coming"

Tumelo: The air in here is making your tummy bigger.

Me: Yes

Tumelo: Why?

Me: It increases every day.

Tumelo: Let it out.

Me: No.



Tumelo: Why?

Me: God will take it out

Tumelo: When?

Me: Soon.

Tumelo: you look fat Tshia.

I was offended. Really. I mean Tumelo just said whatever and moved on with Life. I followed him out and found my siblings with Gift. I greeted them.

Me: I'm broke guys.

They laughed

Lesedi: We not here for money.

Me: really?

Resego: We here to see you.

Me: Oh must be my lucky day.

Lesedi: well I'm here to see my niece.

Me: Right!

Lesedi: But you good sis?

Me: I am. Are you?

Lesedi: I'm fine.

Me: Tshepang go get you guys something to drink.

Tshepang: Wine anyone?

Gift: I don't want to witness a murder please

We all laughed.

Tshepang: yeah Good point. Juice.

Me: Smart girl.

Gift: I'll be outside

Me: You not joining us?

Gift: No.

Me: why not?

Gift: let me let the siblings bond.

Me: okay then.

I watched as he walked out and I sat with my sis and bro.

Me: Where's Bontle?

Resego: Netball practice.

Me: I told you to start bringing her with

Resego: But she doesn't care about us.

Me: You don't care about her.

Lesedi: That's not true. We have nothing in common.

I laughed

Me: Bontle is 12,

Lesedi: Exactly.

Me: I don't want her feeling left out

Resego: Let's wait till she turns 18

Me: Horrible!

They giggled and Tshepang came back with Juice.

Tshepang: Here you all go.

We thanked her.

Me: So why are you here?

They exchanged looks and giggled.

Me: And now?

Resego: We need your help.

Me: What help?

Resego: We want to go away.

Me: Are you guys aware that you all work now?

Lesedi: Yes.

Me: So?

Lesedi: Dad ntwana.

Me: Ntwana, dad knows you old enough now.

Tshepang: Dad still treats us like we 5

Me: You want me to talk to him?

Resego: Please

Me: Okay.

Lesedi: thanks home.

Me: Where to?

Tshepang: Durban.

I laughed

Me: Yho now I understand why.

Resego: You see?

Me: Well he knows what party animal you are so if he says no.

Tshepang: We won't do anything wrong.

Me: Are you going with your partners?

Tshepang: I got dumped so.

Me: Oh yes. Poor thing.

They giggled.

Tshepang: Not fair.

Me: You'll find the right one

Lesedi: Now relax.

Me: exactly take Palesa with.

Tshepang: Oh No. That show off lover.

We laughed about it and changed the topic. I loved having my siblings over coz they always managed to cheer me up and forget about the nonsense I kept dealing with. They left after we had ordered takeaways at around 20:00 they left. The next morning was as the usual, get the kids ready for school and look after Ora. I

wanted to go back to work. Nolo.called to say that she'd come over and she arrived an hour later

Me: Do you not work?

Nolo: I took the day off coz I'm tired

Me: I can relate.

Nolo: Where's Ora?

Me: She just went to bed a few minutes ago. Those meds get her down.

Nolo: And I'm sure you overdose her.

I giggled

Me: No. But I need a break as well.. The house frustrates her. She wants to go back to school.

Nolo: I don't blame her. But you look frustrated



as well.

Me: I am.

I took a deep breath.

Me: Kana's mum called. They need help with the hospital bill.

Nolo: Isn't Kana Rich?

Me: No. He's medical aid has some problems and he's gone broke..he sold his company at some stupid price.

She was shocked. I didn't want to go deep into it.

Nolo: So?

Me: I'm conflicted.

Nolo: so?

Me: I mean, Kananelo has hurt me a lot but I can't erase the ton of good he has done for me and Tshepang you know?

Nolo: Tshia?

Me: I'm going to help him Nolo.

All the ifs

#34

Nolo: Are you sure about this?

I nodded.

Me: I need to help him.

Nolo: need?

Me: okay want to help him.

Nolo: what about Gift?

Me: He doesnt have to know.

Nolo: Tshia.

Me: Nolo.

Nolo: This is not going to end well.

Me: This will be our secret.

Nolo: How will you do it?

Me: I'll just settle the debt without Kananelo knowing.

Nolo: how?

Me: I dont know.

Nolo: You have a good heart sis .

Me: I know right?

She sighed.

Nolo: You really take after your mum.

Me: Ne?

Nolo: Yes. You look past the wrong that has been done to you.

Me: I don't believe in revenge.

Nolo: Clearly.

Me: Want something to eat?

Nolo: That obvious?

Me: Yes.

She laughed.

Nolo: Whatever Tshia.

Me: what do you feel like eating?

Nolo: Something greasy

Me: Well okay. Burgers?

Nolo: With chips.

Me: such hard work.

Nolo: I'll help preggers.

Me: Oh great!

I got her the potatoes to peel while I fried the burgers.

Nolo: You never excited about your pregnancies.

Me: What do you mean cuz?

Nolo: It seems like it.

Me: I have no idea what you mean.

I was lying.

Nolo: Tshiamo!.

She snapped.

Nolo: You never happy when you pregnant.

Me: That's not true.

Nolo: It is.

Me: Maybe coz I've done this before

Nolo: But you doing it with the person you love now.

Me: True.

Nolo: Then?

Me: Maybe coz there's been a lot going on.

Nolo: Makes sense.

Me: you know.

Nolo: Gender?

Me: Maybe when we have the next ultrasound.

Nolo: good.

Me: Why?

She rolled her eyes.

Nolo: Baby shower.

Me: Oh my Goodness!

Nolo: What is it?

Me: You and Nombu are the same.

Nolo: Then let us be.

Me: no.

Nolo: No choice.

Me: Okay.

Nolo: Is that a yes?

Me: Well you can do whatever!

I wasn't willing to fight her too. Nombu was already planning it that I knew.

Nolo: Oh Amen!

Me: Whatever.

Nolo: When last did we go out?

Me: Oh Nolo. Before I became a wife.

Nolo: Your life went from boring to busy and busy

Me: Tell me about it. This is all Aunt Celia's fault.

Nolo: You are very right.

Me: I would have been married to Lungelo.

We laughed.



Nolo: You'd probably be a widow now.

Me: Hey! These soldiers hardly go to war.

Nolo: Oh yes. True.

I giggled.

Me: Stupid.

Nolo: I've always been a bit blonde.

Me: A bit?

Nolo: okay a lot.

Me: exactly!

Nolo: But do you think about it?

Me: About?

Nolo: How life would have ended up.

Me: Sometimes.

Nolo: Why?

Me: You know Nolo...

I looked at her.

Me: As cliché as it may sound, you might have a lot of money and a little happiness.

Nolo: And now?

Me: I mean despite the drama, I found happiness with Gift

Nolo: And with Kana?

Me: You know how rough it was there.

She sighed.

Nolo: You've been through a lot.

Me: since my mum died.

Nolo: You'll be fine.

Me: Yes. Now can we change the topic!

Nolo: Okay okay.

She had tears in her eyes.

Me: When are we going boyfriend hunting?

She laughed.

Nolo: I've given up.

Me: Still young.

Nolo: With two kids?

Me: Yes

Nolo: Oh No.

Me: You need to try again.

Nolo: I've given up.

Me: Cuz...

Nolo: No.let's change the topic.

And just like that We moved from it. My dad came to fetch his grandkids after they got back from school coz he missed them and I was happy coz it meant I wouldn't be dealing with Tumelo asking me about my belly and Thabiso fighting with her dad about her thug looking crush as always.

Gift: Some peace!

Me: you can say that again.

Gift: Had fun with Nolo?

Me: A lot.

Gift: Who did you two gossip about today?

I giggled and punched him on his arm.

Gift: you hit like a girl

Me: I could do better than this hey

Gift: Is that so?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Try me

Me: I would but I don't want to sleep in a cell.

He laughed and I decided to make the beautiful scene serious

Me: I need to tell you something.

Gift: Okay.

Me: Gift's mum called.

Gift: Okay...

Me: They need help with the hospital bill.

Gift: So where do you fit in?

Me: Gift, I'm going to help them. I mean, Its not fair that he has to go through this. You've taken everything from him.

Gift: Not fair? He tried to kill us all. He landed his own daughter in Hospital. Ora almlst died! Have you forgotten about all the other things he's done to you?

Me: No but..

Gift: make a choice. Its either you choose the Kunenes or the Tefos. You can't be a bride to both families and I don't recall signing up to part of a polyandrous marriage

All the ifs

#35

Me: Are you serious?

Gift: Does it look like I'm kidding?

Me: Gift don't be like this.

Gift: Tshiamo, I asked you to choose.

Me: I chose you I don't see what the fuss is about.

Gift: Fuss? Okay let's turn tables, let's say it was Thabsi's mum who was Kananelo. Would you let me help her?

I kept quiet.

Gift: my thoughts exactly.

Me: But he's broke.

Gift: I warned him before all of this happened. It's because of his wealth that he feels entitled

to everything and he thinks he owns everyone. I warned him, he didn't listen.

Me: I owe him

Gift: You don't owe him anything..a man's duty is to provide. He did what was expected of him. Case closed..I don't want to talk about this anymore. You said I should stop plotting against him, I did. Now stop talking about him in this house.

He got up from the couch and made his way to the garden. I sat there for about 5 minutes until I eventually dialled Kananelo's mother.

K's mum: Tshiamo

Me; Hello ma.

K's mum: How are you?

Me: I'm fine how are you ma?



K's mum: I'm okay.

Me: How's Kananelo doing?

K's mum; Better..he's getting discharged tomorrow.

Me: Oh that's great. Ma?

K's mum: Yes Tshia?

I sighed before I could say anything.

Me: Ma, I can't help.

K's mum: oh.

She sounded disappointed. I would be too, I guess she had a bit of hope that I'd be able to help.

Me: I'm sorry.

K's mum; Its okay.

Me: I'm really sorry..this might cause a lot of...

K's mum: Tension between you and your husband.

Me: yes ma.

K's mum: I'm sorry.

Me: me too.

K's mum; Thank you though

Me: Okay ma.

K's mum: Take care.

Me: You too.

K's mum: Bye Amo.

Me: Bye ma.

I slowly pressed the hang up option on my

screen and sighed. I felt like screaming coz I wasn't helping Kana but his mum. That woman had been very accommodating to me over the years I spent as her son's husband. I felt bad but again I had to be submissive. Hard. Difficult and sad. I went to find something to eat and about 20 minutes later, he came in to grab an energy drink.

Gift: Tshia.

I lifted my eyes.

Me: Hey.

Gift: I didn't mean to...

I shook my head and he kept quiet.

Me: It's okay

Gift: Is it?

Me: You made a point.

Gift: you don't owe him anything.

Me: I was helping his mum indirectly.. She sounded stranded.

He kept quiet.

Gift: They need to approach their bride now.

Me: Seipati?

Gift: She's loaded now isn't she?

Me: doesn't matter Gift..let's not talk about this anymore.

Gift: Okay.

Me: what do you want to eat?

Gift: Anything nice

Me: I'm serious.

Gift: Let's get something.

Me: I feel like Kota

Gift: Now that's my language.

I giggled.

Me; We remain ghetto at heart.

Gift; Don't you ever lose yourself.

Me: I don't plan on doing that.

Gift; That's it.

Me: walk?

Gift: You know the nice kotas are made on the other side right.

Me: You want us to drive to the other side of DK?

Gift: yes.

Me; Okay.

Gift: ready?

Me; it's only a Kota baby.

Gift: Okay let's go.

He took my hand and we locked up then left.

Me: When are your scary men going to leave?

He laughed.

Gift: when I'm certain you all safe

Me: We need our space.

Gift: they keep you safe.

Me: I'm safe.

Gift: no. How's this one doing?

He touched my belly.

Me: he's fine.

Gift; He?

Me: Well I think its a boy

Gift; Well I hope it is.. I can't be dealing with Thabsi, soon it will Nokuthula then Ora.

I giggled.

Me: You two still have bad blood?

Gift: she hates me.

Me: I would too.

Gift: I'm doing what's best for her.

Me: She thinks you don't trust her.

Gift: I don't trust that boy.

Me: She likes him.

Gift: she's 17. She's not suppose to like anyone that has a penis.

Me: then she has every right to hate you then.

Gift: No I'm an exception..family members are an exception. She's too young to date

Me: she said they Are friends.

Gift: we both know what that means.

Me: benefit of the doubt?

Gift: not taking chances.

Me: Thabsi is a smart girl. Even her mother agrees..

Gift: You spoke to Zodwa?



Me: well we chat on WhatsApp. She told me that Thabsi told her about her "thug" guy. She also thinks you being too hard on her.

Gift: oh? So you ganging up on me now?

Me: if you weren't so stuck up then we wouldn't have to.

His jaw dropped.

Gift: Stuck up?

Me: yes..acting like you were not a teen at some point in your life.

Gift: I was well behaved.

Me: yeah right.

Gift: I was.

Me: okay baby.

I dismissed him like that. We went to get our Kotas, went back to the house and spent quality time together. We had an Intruder though as you all know this but we paid no mind to him or her. The next day, Gift decided to stay with me. I was waiting for the weekend to come and go so I could go back to work. I was going to lose it.

Gift: should they?

Me: I think so.

Gift: okay.

He spoke into the intercom.

Gift: it's cool.

A few minutes later, there was a knock. He was

in a wheelchair. I wondered who had assisted him.

Kana: Hey guys.

Me: hey.

Gift: sho.

Me: Can we help you?

I was suddenly getting angry. Lord knows why.

Kana: I came to apologize and to wish you guys well.

Gift and I looked at each other.

Kana: Especially you Tshia. I lost a good wife. A

great wife and not a day passes by where I don't regret it. I tried to change you into something you not and that was wrong. I'm sorry for all the abuse I caused you and all the stupid things I've done. I wanted you back so badly that I didn't think of the consequences of my actions and for that I'm truly sorry..I hope one day, it may not be today or tomorrow but I really hope someday you'll find it in your heart to forgive me.

All the ifs

#36

He looked genuine..like the old Kana I knew but if I could trust what he was saying...I wasn't so sure.

Kana: That's all I came here to say.

Gift's eyes were on him. It was as if he was trying to read His mind.

Me: Get well soon.

That's all I managed to say.

Kana: Thanks.

Me: Bye.

He turned his wheelchair and he left. Gift closed the door behind him.

Me: Still on earth?

Gift: Yes I am.

Me: What is it?

Gift: Nothing.

Me: Gift?

Gift: Nothing baby.

Me: Okay.

Gift: Yes ma'am.

Me: He seemed genuine.

Gift: A lot.

Me: Believe him?

Gift: A bit.

Me: You don't sound so sure.

Gift: I think he's up to something.

Me: But you just said...never mind.

I could never win with him so I wasn't going to stress myself.

Me: My tuna sandwich please.

Gift: Oh yes.

His attention was suddenly back to me.

Me: Now please

Gift: Coming right up.

Me: good.

He went to quickly make me my sandwich and came to join Me on the couch.

Me: So I'm thinking of having the CEO interviews next week.

Gift: I thought you didn't want anything to do

with the company.

Me: Well, I changed my mind.

Gift: Ready?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Your old job?

Me: Going to quit.

Gift: Why don't you take over as CEO?

Me: Not now.

Gift: Why?

Me: I'm going to give birth soon so I'll get an acting CEO for now.

Gift: That makes sense.

Me: I know baby.

Gift: Going to turn into a full one workaholic now.



I laughed.

Me: And whose fault is that?

Gift: Mine.

Me: Exactly.

Gift: I'm not coma planing though.

Me: Oh?

Gift: Not at all. I love working women.

Me: Women?

Gift: No....

He laughed and shook his head.

Gift: You know what I mean.

Me: No I don't.

Gift: Baby?

Me: Explain.

I was being difficult.

Gift: I love a woman who works.

Me: who?

He smiled.

Gift: You.

Me: Is that so?

Gift: I do.

Me: Well I love men who can make tuna sandwiches too.

We laughed about it.

Gift: Do I qualify to be loved?

Me: Of course you do.

Gift: I love you.

Me: I love you too baby.

Gift: And I'm sorry that we not Happy as we should be.

Me: Life happens.

Gift: Is that all you'll say?

Me: what goes up must come down at some point.

Gift: Valid enough.

Me: It's a phase.

Gift: A tough one if you ask me.

Me: We are tougher than it is.

He smiled.

Gift: Why do you see good in everything?

Me: Coz I spent my youth years seeing bad in almost everything. I had a rough upbringing, I never had time to see good in anything besides Tshepang. And after I got married to Kananelo there was light but it was soon dark again when we had a fight about Ora but when she was born...

I smiled as I recalled the day I gave birth to my daughter.

Me: It was as if light had been restored in my life. She made me see life in another way, I can safely say she's my first love.

Gift: Look at you.

He was smiling as well.

Me: To think I almost lost her.

Gift: But you didn't.

Me: through God's grace yes.

Gift: don't worry.

Me: I shouldn't?

He stared deep into my eyes, the same way he did when I first slept with him when he had hosted that dinner party.

Me: You looked at me that way when you had me committing adultery.

He laughed.

Gift: No I wasn't.

Me: Yes you were.

Gift: Do you regret it?

Me: No.

Gift: I'm glad I spoke up that night.

Me: I felt bad.

Gift: Coz you were faithful?

Me: Very.

Gift: You made me miss important meetings when you just stormed in here and demanded sex.

I laughed.

Me: demanded?

Gift: Yes.

Me: Use the right term please.

Gift: That is the right term

Me: Yeah right. And what would that...

His phone rang.

Gift: Excuse me babe...

He answered it.

Gift: Yes Arnold...what?....when?....I'll be there soon.

He hung up.

Gift: Can I rush over to Arnold?

Me: well I guess you can.

Gift: I'll go get my car keys.

As soon as he got up, I did too, I wanted to snack on something. As I made my way to the kitchen, my phone went off and I checked the text that had come through.

Gift: Babe! Hello!

Me: Hey.

Gift: I've been asking you about my blue file.

Me: Oh. Near the landline

Gift: Thanks. Are you fine? You've been staring at your phone

Me: Kananelo asked if he could see the kids.



All the ifs

#37

Gift: Oh?

Me: Yes.

Gift: What do you think?

Me: He's still their father.

Gift: Talk to Sunshine and Boyza first

Me: You dont have a problem?

Gift: As long as you take those scary looking men with.

I laughed.

Gift: I don't want the kids to resent me for keeping them from their dad in future. My role

is to protect them from all evil and to be a father to them. You get me?

I nodded.

Gift: You'll make the decision.

Me: Okay baby

Gift: please rest

Me: I'm going out with Nombu.

Gift: Take one of those

Me: Oh no.

Gift: Tshia please.

Me: We can't breathe with him.around.

Gift: Exaggeration

Me: No it's not.

Gift: Baby.

Me: fine! You control freak!

He giggled

Gift: Im a protective freak. Difference

Me: Too overprotective if you ask me.

Gift: it's my job to protect you.

Me: I'll talk your funnly looking guy with me

Gift: thank you.

Me: Fine.

Gift: I love you.

Me: Whatever.

He chuckled.

Gift: Ouch.

Me: leave!

Gift: just like that?

Me: What did you expect?

Gift: A goodbye kiss

Me: Ask one of your guys to give you that.

He laughed.

Gift: Bye wife.

Me: Bye Husband.

He went to get his file and left. I dialled Nombu.

Me: Hey.

Nombu: Friend.

Me: What are you doing today?

Nombu: Housesitting.

Me: Let's lunch.

Nombu: Oh I'd love that.

Me: In an hour?

Nombu: Okay. Usual spot?

Me: yes

Nombu: Okay babe.

Me: don't be late.

Nombu: I won't be.

Me: good. Bye.

Nombu: Bye!

I hung up.and went to get ready and in an hour, I was out.

Nombu: Gift is overprotective!

Me: tell me about it.

I said Rolling my eyes.

Nombu: But it's cute.

Me: You think?

Nombu: Yes.

Me: It's annoying.

Nombu: He's just waiting for the storm to pass

Me: It has

Nombu: Just allow yourself to be pampered

Me: You call this pampering?

Nombu: yes. I'd kill to have a handsome man like that driving me around.

I shook my head as I giggled

Me: Handsome?

Nombu: He's handsome

Me: Okay.

Nombu: You don't think so?

Me: No. But if that's your cup of tea then have it.  
Sthe will kill you.

Nombu: Yes he will. Let me not.

I laughed

Me: I missed you.

Nombu: I missed you too.

Me: So I've got an idea.

Nombu: yes?

Me: How about, when the dust settles that is,

we go on vacation.

Nombu: Just the two of us?

Me: We can invite the ladies

Nombu: Really?

She looked shocked.

Me: And then?

Nombu: Did you just?

I smiled.

Me: I have nothing against them.

Nombu: Well they'll like that

Me: Did you and Mora make peace?

Nombu: She apologized



Me: That's good

Nombu: She really had no choice.

Me: Oh Nombu.

Nombu: Yes.

Me: Anyway I'm glad you all good

Nombu: You coming to the tea party?

Me: Amanda's tea party?

Nombu: Yes.

I signed.

Me: I don't like tea.

Nombu: Tshia!

Me: I'll come.

Nombu: I'll fetch you.

Me: What you don't trust me?

Nombu: You don't honor invites.

Me: I do.

Nombu: Mine only.

Me: okay true.

Nombu: I'll fetch you.

Me: Okay can we order?

Nombu: Yes.

We had lunch and I asked the scary looking guy to drive me to my dad's afterwards. Tumelo and Ora were very happy to see me though. I was too..no lies.

Me: Can I talk to you two?

Ora: We getting new clothes?

Me: No.

Tumelo: Toys?

Me: No come.

They sat next to me.

Me: Okay so you know daddy was in Hospital right?

I knew they knew who I was talking about

Ora: Is he fine?

A daughter's love!

Me: Yes. He wants to see you.

Ora: Tumelo do you want to see him?

Tumelo: Do you want to see him?

She slowly nodded.

Tumelo: Okay

Me: Tomorrow?

Ora: Okay.

I spent about an hour with my four kids and on my way home, I told Kana that we'd be coming through the next day. Told Gift about it and the next day, we were out. They looked chilled. Very chilled.

K's mum: How are you babies?

Tumi: We fine

He was Standing at the corner looking at his dad.

Kana: You've grown boy.

No response.

Kana: How's school?

Tumi: You pushed Ora away when we were at Uncle Sthe's and you hit mum

Silence.

Kana: I'm sorry.

Ora: What happened?

Kana: I got burnt.

Tumi: how?

Kana: My car got burnt and I was inside locked in.

They asked questions like they were over 18.

Kana: Princess.

Ora looked at him

Kana: Boy.

Tumi looked at him too.

Kana: I'm very sorry for all I've done to you. I'm very sorry. I'm sorry for hitting mum. It won't

happen again. I know I wasn't a good father to you and I'm not there for you.

I couldn't believe he was saying this to the kids.

Kana: But I'm really sorry. Boy, keep looking out for your sister and your mother okay? Please take care of them Tshia.

Me: why are you talking like this Kana?

Kana: I'm going to Start over. I'm going far away from this place.

All the ifs

#38

Me: Babies go play outside

K's mum: No come with me to the kitchen.

They left with their grandmother.

Me: What do you mean?

I was trying to process it.

Me: with what coz just the other day your mom was asking for my help.

Kana: I might be a lot of things Tshia but I'm not broke. I'm a smart man. I have investments in about 4 companies. I own 50% in another in Zambia

It clicked. I had once seen paper work at some point in our lives



Kana: mum was asking for help coz she thought I was broke.

Me: What gave her the impression that you were?

Kana: the fact that my medical aid stopped working and that my accounts had nothing

Me: oh.

Kana: your husband is vengeful.

Me: Do you blame him?

Kana: He's a better man than me.

Me: no doubt.

He smiled

Kana: I'm very sorry for everything I've put you through

Me: So am I.

Kana: I've always seen the chemistry you two have but I chose to ignore it.

Me: is that why you ran to Seipati?

He took a deep breath

Kana: I think I went to Seipati coz I wanted a puppet

Me: what about Rorisang and the one due in a few weeks?

Kana: I don't know

Me: You don't?

Kana: I don't know

Me: So you telling me you won't make an effort to find them?

Kana: the fact that they ran away should tell you something. I've put you both through a lot.

He really sounded genuine.

Me: You did

Kana: I'm sorry.

Me: Stop apologizing.

Kana: Sorry.

Me: so you relocating to Zambia?

Kana: Yes

Me: and there?

Kana: The doctors said I'll be fine. Just a few marks that will last forever but nothing major. I should start with my physiotherapy as soon as I get there

Me: So do you want a relationship with your kids?.

Kana: I would like that.

Me: and how are you going to go about establishing that?

Kana: I leave on Monday so I'd like to spend the rest of the days with them.

Me: The weekend?

Kana: Yes. Can you also let them accompany me to the airport?

Me: Okay

Kana: I'll talk to them.

I shook my head.

Me: I'll talk to them now.

Kana: Okay

Me: Kana no funny ideas.

Kana: Tshia, these are my kids. I wasn't trying to hurt them

Me: You tried to kidnap Tumelo.

He bowed his head.

Me: I'll be back

I went to the kitchen and they were happily chatting to their grandmother. She had made them their favorite, Chicken Mayo.

Me: Can I talk to them ma?

Mum: Privately?

Me: Preferably

Mum; Okay. I'll be back babies.

O&T: Okay Grandma.

She left us in the kitchen and I sat down on one of the chairs

Me: Babies!

Ora: Mummy.

Tumelo: Moms?

Me: So your dad wants you to sleep over this weekend.

I had to thread carefully around Tumelo. Ticking time bomb that one.

Ora: Okay

Me: Okay?

She nodded.

Ora: I missed Grandma.

Tumelo: Okay.

He was only agreeing coz his sister was.

Me: Okay then.

My phone rang.

Me: Excuse me kids.

I went outside to answer my phone.

Me: Babe?

Gift: Are you okay?

Me: I'm fine. Kananelo wants the kids to stay over for the weekend.

Gift: And are you okay with that?

Me: Send one of the nannies and an extra scary looking man.

Gift: I'm on it. And the kids?

Me: Ora agreed and You know Tumelo.

Gift: Whatever the sister wants?

Me: Yes

Gift: Okay then baby. Let me call the nanny and send them over.

Me: Tell her to pack enough. You can never be sure about this weather.

Gift: Okay then. See you when come back.

Me: Okay my love

I hung up and when I went back in, they were



with their grandma, I told her about their sleepover and that we were having a nanny over and an extra scary looking man. She understood. She had to. She was a mother too. I left as soon as Gift sent the two people over.

Me: Hey baby.

Gift: Hello my love

Me: Good?

Gift: I am. How are you two doing?

Me: We are fine

We was brushing my belly

Me: You like doing that don't you?

Gift: I find your belly cute.

Me: we have an appointment tomorrow.

Gift: well that's exciting.

He did look exciting.

Me: Not really but okay.

Gift: You just had to.

I laughed

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: Hungry?

Me: a lot.

Gift: Okay. Come with me. How are my kids doing? Will they be fine?

Me: Yes. They will be.

Gift: Okay good. Hilda will alert us if there's

anything wrong.

Me: Great.

We had a lovely time together and the next day, went for the appointment. Baby boy it was. He was very excited. Too excited! So excited that after we had brunch, we started shopping for his son. Okay...our son. The rest of the weekend was lovely and on Monday after work, I drove to the airport behind Kananelo's car, they kids were with him. They had, had a great weekend with him. When I told Gift that Kana had backup, he was just happy that his actions had completely changed Kana's mindset and childish behaviour.

Kana: Tshia please take care of them.

Me: I will Kana

Kana: Princess?

Ora: Dad?

Kana: I love you.

Ora: I love you too

Kana: Son. I love you.

Tumelo: I love you too dad

Kana: Take care of these two ladies okay?

He nodded and they hugged him.

Kana: I'll always love you.

He said looking at me.

Me: Thank you for everything you've done for me.

Kana: And thank you for being a part of my life.  
Thank you for the kids you've given me.

Me: Thank you for giving me your seeds.

We both giggled and I hugged him.

Kana: this is it.

Me: It is.

Kana: Goodbye Tshia.

Me: Goodbye Kana.

Kana: Goodbye my children.

They had tears in their eyes..it was an emotional moment for us because despite everything, we were once a very happy family of four and the memories we had had together were going to live with us till the last.

O&T: Goodbye dad.

All the ifs

#39

Me: Oh my God! Oh no! Gift!

Gift: I'm coming!

Me: You better hurry!

Gift: Babe I'm coming.

Me: Now!

It was months later! We had moved into a bigger house and I was ready to pop. Seipati had welcomed her child, Atlehang and Kananelo and I had agreed that she could live in our old house. He had started walking again and came

every month end to see his kids. His 4 kids.  
Zambia was good to him. Very good to him. He  
and Gift....well okay. It was just a "sho" situation.  
Thabsi was finally in matric and Gift had  
successfully kept her from the thug guy

Gift: What did I do now.

Me: Clean up.

Gift: But I'm not done working.

Me: You not suppose to work in here. You have  
an office for that.

Gift: But I wanted to spend time with you

Me: Gift .

My voice was very threatening.

Gift: I'll clean up.

Me: good

I sat down. My belly wasn't so big but I was ready to pop. It had been a long one. A very long journey. Felt like I was pregnant for 16 months.

Gift: Are you okay?

Me: Yes..

Gift: ready for the babyshower?

Me: More like pissed.

Gift: But why?

Me: so I have to sit there and guess gifts and everything else.

Gift: Well I've never been to a babyshower so I'm excited.

I rolled my eyes at him.



Gift: Don't do that.

Me: Baby clean up so we can go please.

Gift: fine.

He did what I told him to do and we left as soon as Nombu called us to Come. The shower was at Dad's.

Me: what? So many cars?

Gift: It's a party.

Me: It's suppose to be an intimate thing.

Gift: you think Nolo and Nombu know the meaning of that word?

Me: well clearly not.

Gift: come on my love.

He came to get my door and we walked in, they all shouted "welcome" and I won't lie I was pissed. I didn't like parties or whatever Nombu called them. Too Much work. The tent was very big.. Blue,yellow and white was the theme of the day.

Me: Oh God!

I said under my breath.

Gift: Look happy.

I giggled.

Me: Thanks Guys.

I finally spoke up

Nombu: pleasure. Over there mummy and daddy.

We had our main table. I didn't know half of the people there but the gift table was overflowing.

Gift: This should be fun.

Me: All of you guys look ridiculously stupid and excited.

I was referring to his boys. They were very excited.

Gift: we've never attended a babyshower before

Me: There's nothing special really.

Gift: You say this coz you've attended a lot of these things.

Me: Yes but..

We were interrupted.

Nombu: Over here please.

She was talking to us.

Gift: Sorry.

She took the mic and greeted everyone in the tent, asked the waitresses to bring the welcome drinks and snacks. She then asked my grandmother to open with a prayer and it began.

All the guys in there enjoyed the games more than us. All of them! It was their babyshower but it was fun.

Me: Thank you guys.

I hugged Nombu and Nolo when the games were over and everyone was dishing up.

Nombu: Had a good time?

Me: Yes but the gents...

We laughed.

Nolo: this was their babyshower.

Me: You can say that again.

Nolo: and you have great gifts.

Me: Yes. Now I have to see where I'll put them.

Nolo: You have enough room at your house.

Me: well There are 6 owners of that house

They laughed.

Nolo: I can imagine.

Me: But thank you so much guys

Nombu: Anything for you sis.

Me: Love you so much

Nolo: To think you didn't even want this.

She clicked her tongue and I giggled.

Me: Stop being dramatic. Im going to see dad.

Nolo: Okay then.

Nombu: Need help walking there?

Me: hey. I'm not as big as I was when I was pregnant with Tumelo..

Nombu: you were a whale 3 years ago.

Me: Okay I'll take no offence. Bye.

I went to find dad.

Dad: Hello pregnant one.

I giggled

Me: Hey daddy

Dad: You okay Lily?

Me: Im okay dad. Had fun?

I was teasing him.

Dad: The things you kids get up to

I laughed as he shook his head.

Me: not fun?

Dad: No.

Me: Oh loosen up dad

Dad: I'm loose. Take me back to the days of kofifi not these bomb music you listen to.

Me: Gqom. But we weren't listening to that.

Dad: that's what the rest of them listen to.

Me: We still have our good music intact.

Dad: Maybe. But tell me...



Me: yes dad?

Dad: You okay?

Me: I am dad. Why?

Dad: I worry about you. You've been through a lot.

Me: but I'm fine now

Dad: you sure?

I nodded

Me: Very.

Dad: That's good to hear

I spent some time with dad and went back to my guests. The "celebration" was great and after everyone left, that's when the real party owner decided to come. I was going crazy by

the time we entered the hospital and I spent about 3 hours or so in labour and when I finally pushed that little human out of my vagina, I was more than relieved.

Gift: Hey there.

Trust him to be the first to have his son in his arms.

Me: hey.

Gift: How are you?

Me: I'm fine. Bring bring.

He laughed.

Gift: You so rude.

Me: I pushed him out

Gift: I'm the reason he exists.

I giggled as he passed him to me. He was perfect. Very perfect. I played with his tiny hands and eventually looked at his father

Gift: Sphiwokuhle. That's what the grandmother named him.

All the ifs

#40

2 months later....

Gift: Please stop feeding this child.

Me: No.

Gift: We can't even carry him.

Me: that child needs to be healthy.

Gift: But he's heavy

Me: Gift!

Gift: okay I'm sorry.

Me: apologize to him.

Gift: he doesn't even understand what I said.

Me: Doesn't matter. Apologize.

He sighed.

Gift: Hade mfethu.

I punched him and laughed

Me: you are such an idiot

Gift: Want to come with us?

Me: No.

Gift: sure?

Me: yes.

Gift: you want to stay here with fat one?

Me: He's great company.

Gift: is that so?

Me: Yes.

Gift: okay. Boyza! Tinker! Sunshine!

He called them and they came running.

Gift: ready?

Ora: yes.

Tumelo: Let's go pops.

Gift: okay..off to the car.

He passed Tumelo the keys and my two daughters followed him out.

Gift: bye baby.

Me: Bye.

Gift: Love you

Me: Love you too.

We kissed

Gift: Sho fat one.

He said playing with his son's little hand.

Me: Leave!

Gift: bye.

Me: I hope some animal attacks you at the Zoo.

He laughed, kissed my forehead and made his way out of the nursery.. They were going to have a great time In Pretoria. I had decided to take my chubby little one to Nolo's. I missed her. I put him in his car seat and off we went.

Nolo: Welcome! Welcome.

She took him from me.

Nolo: He's so cute!

Me: You keep saying that.

Nolo: But he is.

Me: Thanks Nolo.

Nolo: You hungry?

Me: No.

Nolo: You still breastfeeding?

Me: hao Nolo.

Nolo: Stupid question?

Me: Duh!

Nolo: I'm going to make you food anyway.

She went to get her son's cot and put him in

Me; You kept all these?

Nolo: Yes

Me: oh well.

Nolo: You good?



I nodded.

Nolo: You look good.

Me: I'm happy.

Nolo: Well no doubt.

Me: how about you order pizza?

Nolo: No.

Me: why?

Nolo: you don't feel like Mme Doreen's  
Dagwoods

Me: Oh yes. When last did I have that?

Nolo: Exactly.

She dialled Mme Doreen and told her that she'd  
come fetch the dagwoods in 30.

Me: Is that how we operate now?

Nolo: Levels ngwana rakgadi.

I laughed.

Me: I miss this side.

Nolo; Well you decided to move to Florida Glen.

Me: Oh that place is amazing.

Nolo: And boring.

Me: No.

Nolo: Too quiet.

Me: Peaceful.

Nolo: You don't miss Soweto?

Me: I'm always here though.

Nolo: what do you mean?

Me: It means you all live this side so...

Nolo: Nothing special?

laughter again.

Me: No issues today please.

Nolo: I don't have issues.

Me: You do.

Nolo: no.

Me: Yes.

Nolo: Okay fine. alcohol nyana?

Me: No.

Nolo: why?

Me: Nolo are you drunk?

She rolled her eyes.

Nolo: no.

Me: then?

Nolo: nothing

Me: Okay so where's that guy you met at the babyshower?

Nolo: Steve?

Me: Yes.

Nolo: He's around.

Me: The white guy who loves the ghetto.

Nolo: He's terrible in bed.

I couldn't help but laugh

Me: that bad?

Nolo: Yho.

Me: Shame man.

Nolo: But he's loving though.

Me: obviously. I had the best white guy in bed.

Nolo: you've slept with a white guy?

Me: Yes. When I was still with Lungelo.

Nolo: Tshia?

Me: Yes?

Nolo: What do you mean?

Me: When I was still doing promos, a white Guy came in, Travis, came in store and asked for my number after the demo. We took it from there.

Nolo: What was his name?

Me: Greg.

Nolo: Tshia!

Me: I've lived my best life please.

She laughed

Nolo: So when you always said you had late night promos in Pta.

Me: he was doing demos on my body.

Nolo: Why didn't you tell me this?

Me; You didn't have to know..he was there at my wedding.

Nolo: Wedding.

Me: Yes. Not the arranged one.

Nolo: Sneaky little bitch.

I laughed.

Me: Go fetch our food please

In 15 minutes she was back and we had a great

time catching up. When I went back home, Gift was with Sthe.

Me: Hello gents.

Sthe: Hello mummy.

Gift: Hey baby.

Me: What Is it? How was the zoo? Where are the kids?

Gift: They at your dad's.

Me: Oh okay. And why do you two look so disheartened?

Sthe: want to sit?

Me: Okay.

I put the little one on the couch.

Sthe: umm...

They looked at each other then back at me.

Sthe: Kananelo has passed on

All the ifs

#40

2 months later....

Gift: Please stop feeding this child.

Me: No.

Gift: We can't even carry him.

Me: that child needs to be healthy.

Gift: But he's heavy



Me: Gift!

Gift: okay I'm sorry.

Me: apologize to him.

Gift: he doesn't even understand what I said.

Me: Doesn't matter. Apologize.

He sighed.

Gift: Hade mfethu.

I punched him and laughed

Me: you are such an idiot

Gift: Want to come with us?

Me: No.

Gift: sure?

Me: yes.

Gift: you want to stay here with fat one?

Me: He's great company.

Gift: is that so?

Me: Yes.

Gift: okay. Boyza! Tinker! Sunshine!

He called them and they came running.

Gift: ready?

Ora: yes.

Tumelo: Let's go pops.

Gift: okay..off to the car.

He passed Tumelo the keys and my two daughters followed him out.

Gift: bye baby.

Me: Bye.

Gift: Love you

Me: Love you too.

We kissed

Gift: Sho fat one.

He said playing with his son's little hand.

Me: Leave!

Gift: bye.

Me: I hope some animal attacks you at the Zoo.

He laughed, kissed my forehead and made his way out of the nursery.. They were going to have a great time In Pretoria. I had decided to take my chubby little one to Nolo's. I missed her. I put him in his car seat and off we went.

Nolo: Welcome! Welcome.

She took him from me.

Nolo: He's so cute!

Me: You keep saying that.

Nolo: But he is.

Me: Thanks Nolo.

Nolo: You hungry?

Me: No.

Nolo: You still breastfeeding?

Me: hao Nolo.

Nolo: Stupid question?

Me: Duh!

Nolo: I'm going to make you food anyway.

She went to get her son's cot and put him in

Me; You kept all these?

Nolo: Yes

Me: oh well.

Nolo: You good?

I nodded.

Nolo: You look good.

Me: I'm happy.

Nolo: Well no doubt.

Me: how about you order pizza?

Nolo: No.

Me: why?

Nolo: you don't feel like Mme Doreen's  
Dagwoods

Me: Oh yes. When last did I have that?

Nolo: Exactly.

She dialled Mme Doreen and told her that she'd  
come fetch the dagwoods in 30.

Me: Is that how we operate now?

Nolo: Levels ngwana rakgadi.

I laughed.

Me: I miss this side.

Nolo; Well you decided to move to Florida Glen.

Me: Oh that place is amazing.

Nolo: And boring.

Me: No.

Nolo: Too quiet.

Me: Peaceful.

Nolo: You don't miss Soweto?

Me: I'm always here though.

Nolo: what do you mean?

Me: It means you all live this side so...

Nolo: Nothing special?

laughter again.

Me: No issues today please.

Nolo: I don't have issues.

Me: You do.

Nolo: no.

Me: Yes.

Nolo: Okay fine. alcohol nyana?

Me: No.

Nolo: why?

Me: Nolo are you drunk?

She rolled her eyes.

Nolo: no.

Me: then?

Nolo: nothing

Me: Okay so where's that guy you met at the



babyshower?

Nolo: Steve?

Me: Yes.

Nolo: He's around.

Me: The white guy who loves the ghetto.

Nolo: He's terrible in bed.

I couldn't help but laugh

Me: that bad?

Nolo: Yho.

Me: Shame man.

Nolo: But he's loving though.

Me: obviously. I had the best white guy in bed.

Nolo: you've slept with a white guy?

Me: Yes. When I was still with Lungelo.

Nolo: Tshia?

Me: Yes?

Nolo: What do you mean?

Me: When I was still doing promos, a white Guy came in, Travis, came in store and asked for my number after the demo. We took it from there.

Nolo: What was his name?

Me: Greg.

Nolo: Tshia!

Me: I've lived my best life please.

She laughed

Nolo: So when you always said you had late night promos in Pta.

Me: he was doing demos on my body.

Nolo: Why didn't you tell me this?

Me; You didn't have to know..he was there at my wedding.

Nolo: Wedding.

Me: Yes. Not the arranged one.

Nolo: Sneaky little bitch.

I laughed.

Me: Go fetch our food please

In 15 minutes she was back and we had a great time catching up. When I went back home, Gift was with Sthe.

Me: Hello gents.

Sthe: Hello mummy.

Gift: Hey baby.

Me: What Is it? How was the zoo? Where are the kids?

Gift: They at your dad's.

Me: Oh okay. And why do you two look so disheartened?

Sthe: want to sit?

Me: Okay.

I put the little one on the couch.

Sthe: umm...

They looked at each other then back at me.

Sthe: Kananelo has passed on

All the ifs

#41

And as his body got lowered into the ground, I felt my tears hit the dress I was wearing. I was sitting there, bidding farewell to the one who made me, the one who gave me to kids and took me away from the aunt who had made me her slave. It was a silent cry but Seipati's wasn't. It was the cry that pierced through your heart. Ora was crying too in Gift's arms and Tumelo, I don't think he understood what was going on but he was seated down on the green carpet near his grandmother but you could tell he was sensing that something sad was happening. I watched as Gift passed Ora to Nombu and they went to start filling up the grave with soil. All his

friends and some of his cousins. When it was done, his uncle gave the vote of thanks and everyone started going back to the cars.

Gift: Want to go?

I wiped off my tears.

Me: Yes.

Gift: Sure?

I nodded.

Me: let's go

He took my hand and we went to the car. Ora

and Tumelo were sitting In the back quietly.

Gift: Sunshine?

Ora: Pops?

There was alot of sadness in her voice

Gift: are you okay?

She nodded.

Gift: Boyza?

Tumelo: I'm fine pops

They weren't but we just let it slide. When we got there, we had our own table set up for us.

Friends and family.

Nolo: Cuz?

Me: hey.

Nolo: You okay?

Me: Yes. I just want to go check on my little one.

Nolo: Oh he's fine with Gift's mum. You know they get along.

Me: okay

Nolo: You really fine?

Me: I will be.

Tshepang: Really sis?

She had cried the most. She had always had a special relationship with Kananelo. After all, he raised her. Tshepang was not an ungrateful child if anything, she didn't even meddle in our



problems. She was the "none of my business" person.

Me: yes.

Tshepang: I'm going to see Ora.

Me: Please.

She left us.

Nolo: I'm sorry.

Me: Nolo, its life.

I was just saying that coz wow.

Nolo: Life is really unpredictable right?

Me: I could barely recognize him in that coffin.

Nolo: It was a bad accident Tshia.

Me: Yes it was.

He got one on his way from the airport to his Apartment in North riding. He apparently had a meeting this side. Why he didn't Skype! Only God knows.

Me: He should have skyped.

Nolo: Maybe it was his time.

Me: his kids are still young Nolo.

Nolo: You can't question God's ways

Me: He's unfair

Nolo: But atleast Gift is here for them..

Me: what about Seipati's?

Nolo: Eish

Me: See?.

Nolo: Maybe She'll meet someone and be as lucky as you are.

I gave her that "really?" Look.

Nolo: Okay that's the dumbest thing I've ever said.

Me: Well atleast you know.

Nolo: but it's beyond your control..

Me: I wish it wasn't.

Nolo: I'm sorry.

Me: I don't think Tumelo understands what's going on.

Nolo: He's too young.

Me: But that one....

Nolo: Oh Tshia. They'll be fine.

Me: You think so?

Nolo: yes.

Me: Okay

Nolo: It gets better.

Me: does it? Really?

Nolo; Yes.

Me: I still can't get over my mother.

She kept quiet then a second later sighed.

Nolo: I still can't get over Rakgadi too

Me: You see?

Nolo: Yep.

We sat in silence for a while.

Me: Enough okay.

Nolo: Okay.

Me: You want to go get some wine?

Nolo: You drinking with me?

Me: No

Nolo: So you trying to get me drunk?

Me: Yes.

Nolo: Why?

Me: You always drinking wine on Saturdays

Nolo: Well I won't say no to 5litres of Robertson.

I giggled

Me: Come.

Nolo: Let's go..

Me: I need to get out of here. Even if it's just for 15 minutes.

Nolo: let's go

Me: let me go get the car keys since your car is parked in.

Nolo: Okay

I went to Gift

Me: I'm going to the liquor shop.

Gift: baby are you suppose To be drinking alcohol?

Me: its for Nolo.

Gift: Oh okay

Me: Car keys please

Gift: Here you go

Me: Thank you.

Gift: Okay my love.

Nolo and I made our way to the nearest liquor store

Nolo: Tshia, She said he's fine.

I had called my mother in law twice already

Me: Yes but I'm so used to being with him

Nolo: You going back to work soon you'll have to get used to it.

Me: Don't remind me

Nolo: You ready to take the big chair?

Me: Well I think so. I'm fully equipped and

besides I have Gift's help.

Nolo: makes life easier right?

Me: Alot. Now take and let's go.

Nolo: Fine

She settled for Ciders and we went back to Kana's. When I got there his mum called me to the side.

Me: Dave.

Dave: Hey how are you?

Me: Hanging in there.

Dave: Im sorry.

Me: life.

Dave: Tuesday okay?

Me: Oh okay.





On Tuesday we made our way to Kananelo's mum. Okuhle was with my mother in law. She was of great help.

Dave: Right. Shall we get started?

Seipati: Yes

Dave: Okay..

He started reading the will. Kana had left his mum a huge sum of money.

Dave: Seipati, the houses and cars are yours. The kids have their education fund and there's an amount you'll be getting every month for

groceries and so forth.

She looked pleased.

Dave: Tshiamo.

I looked at him.

Dave: 50% in the Zambia company is yours. Other investments in the other 3 companies are yours. Ora owns 60% in a company Kana had in Namibia and with Tumelo being his only son, He gets 75% of the shares he had in his company in Ghana and the 25% will be shared equally between Rorisang and Atlehang. The will cannot be contested.

All the ifs

#42

I couldn't believe my ears.

Me: Dave?

Dave: Tshia?

Me: Are you sure?.

Dave: Yes. Its here in black and white.

Seipati: you deserve it

Dave: She does

Me: Okay so listen...

Dave: Yes

Me: I want to sign over my Zambia shares to Rorisang and Atlehang.

Dave: You sure?

Me: Yes.

Dave: but you'll still be in control right?

Me: Until they are old enough yes.

Seipati: Tshia you want to do that?

Me: Seipati, I have enough

K's mum: really Tshia?

She looked shocked.

Me: I'm sure.

Dave: Want me to get started on the paperwork?

Me: Please.

Dave: Okay.

Me: Thank you. I really have to go now.

Seipati: Tshia?

Me: hey?

Seipati: Please look after the 25% as well.

Me: For the company in Ghana?

She nodded.

Me: Okay.

Seipati: Thank you.

Me: Its okay. Ma, I'll come see you later on in the week.

K's mum: Okay my child.

Me: Talk to you later okay?

Seipati: Okay. Actually let me walk you out.

Me: Okay

I hugged my mum in law.

Me: Thanks Dave.

Dave: Always a pleasure.

Seipati walked me out.

Seipati: You are a good person.

Me: I try.

Seipati: Give yourself some credit.

Me: The will was a bit unfair.

Seipati: he owes you.

Me: This is about his kids.

Seipati: But he made sure they have everything they need plus Gift transferred a lot of money.

Me: please use it wisely.

Seipati: I will.

Me: Let's keep in touch okay? Let's not keep

Kananelo's kids from their grandmother and from one another okay?

Seipati: Okay

I hugged her.

Me: bye Pati.

Seipati: Bye Tshia.

I got into my car and drove to Gift's office.

Gift: Its the yummy mummy.

Me: Hey baby.

Gift: hey love.

I kissed him.

Me: You okay?

Gift: Well now that you here yes.

I blushed.

Me: Had lunch?

Gift: Was about to go out and get some.

Me: Can I join?

Gift: No need to ask.

Me: let's Go.

Gift: Whose car?

Me: Yours.

Gift: okay

He grabbed his keys, told the lady at the



receptionist that he's out.

Gift: You going to have leaves for lunch?

Me: They aren't leaves.

Gift: Really?

Me: Yes.

Gift: Please order some meat.

Me: I'm trying to lose the baby fat.

Gift: What baby fat?

Me: You don't see any baby fat?

He shook his head and called the waitress.

Gift: Sweets, please change her order

Waitress: To what Sir?

Gift: Something with meat. What I ordered.

Waitress: Okay

Gift: Thank you.

Waitress: Okay.

I waited for her to leave and folded my arms.

Me: "sweets?"

Gift: I was must being friendly.

Me: You were just being Flirty.

Gift: You know I only have eyes for you.

Me: Okay.

Gift: So how did it go?

I knew what he was talking about.

Me: It went well.

I told him.

Gift: And Seipati is not mad?

Me: Nope. I'm signing over my shares in the Zambia company to her daughters

Gift: Where did I find you?

Me: You tell me.

He smiled.

Gift: You never cease to amaze me

Me: It's only fair.

Gift: Well true.

Me: exactly.

Gift: Good wife.

Me: I know right?



10 months later...

Nombu: Knock knock!

Me: oh hey there friend.

Nombu: How are you?

Me: Busy as you can see.

My desk was a mess. Running a company and overlooking everything else wasn't easy as Kana and Gift made it kook. But I was a strong girl and the company was doing great actually. I was always busy and every month end, was in Zambia, Ghana and Namibia. Busy life.

Nombu: Your life!

Me: Tell me about it.

Nombu: Want to go out for lunch?

Me: Babe I can't hey.

Nombu: Tshia...

The phone rang and I answered.

Me: Oh okay....I'll be down there in a few....bye.

I hung up.

Me: I have to run. I have to sit in on some presentation. Can I can you later?

Nombu: Okay then.

I went out with her and went to sit in on the presentation. The head of the team and I went happy with what they had worked on so we were forced to work and work with them till 20:30 and eventually went home. I was exhausted when I got home and my kids were asleep. I went to the shower and found Gift in the study.

Me: Hey.

Gift: Hey.

Me: Sorry I'm late. Work was hectic.

Gift: it's okay. Nothing major happened. Just the fact that you left before 5am and came back at 21:00. You just missed your son's first birthday and your daughter's sports day which she has been reminding you of but that's okay right?

All the ifs

#43

Me: I didn't forget Kuhle's birthday.

Gift: Is that so?

Me: I just couldn't make it home on time coz we had a lot to work through and you know how....

He was just looking at me

Me: I'm sorry

Gift: We said We'd never forget important stuff.  
We said kids first, work after.

Me: I know. I'm sorry.

Gift: You don't owe me an apology

I kept quiet.

Me: What did you guys have for dinner?

Gift: Your food's in the oven.

Me: Okay

I made My way to the kitchen and lost my appetite before I could even open the oven. The truth is, I missed Thabsi. With her being in Varsity and living at Res, if she was there I don't think such important things would have slipped my mind. She always emphasized such and I'm pretty sure she had made her way to Ora's sports day.

Thabsi: Moms.

Me: baby.



Thabsi: how are you?

Me: I'm okay .not sleeping yet?

Thabsi: getting coffee then I'm about to study.

Me: oh okay. I miss you kid

Thabsi: I miss you too mum. Didn't see you earlier on at Ora's school.

Me: I forgot about that.

Thabsi: Mum!

Me: I know baby

Thabsi: And Okuhle's birthday?

Me: come to the office after your last class tomorrow.

Thabsi: okay. I'll be there at at 13:30

Me: Okay baby. Love you

Thabsi: love you too mum.

I hung up and checked on the four which were sleeping peacefully and I went to bed. Gift was already in there.

Me: good night

Gift: Goodnight baby.

I turned and managed to sleep. The next morning, I made everyone breakfast

Tumelo: Morning moms.

Yes it had changed.

Me: Hello boy.

Phiwo: Tshimamo.

Me: Hello baby.

Ora: Mummy?

Me: Hey baby.

Ora: Where were you yesterday?

I paused and looked at Gift who had his head in his plate.

Me: I was at work.

Ora: why didn't you come watch me?

Me: I'm sorry baby

She looked at me with eyes that made me very guilty.

Ora: I won two gold medals.

Me: Oh hey that's nice! Well done.

Well atleast she high fived me back

Ora: thanks mummy.

Me: so what do you want little one?

Phiwo: Car.

Me: And you?

Ora: Anything

Me: Okay

Noku: What about us?

Me: us?

Noku: Tumelo and I.

Me: Well you two get nothing.

Noku: that's not fair.

Me: its very fair.

Tumelo; No.

Me: you not getting anything. Finish up so we can leave.

They did and went to wait for me in the car.

Me: still mad at me?

He shook his head

Me: Then?

Gift: Prioritize

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: Okay baby.

Me: Let's have dinner as a family later today. As Kuhle's birthday celebration

Gift: Sounds like a plan

Me: Okay then. Have a good day

Gift: have fun driving those ones to school..

Me: Don't remind me.

Gift: I love you.

Me: I love you too

We kissed and I went to join my little ones and drove them to school. It was as crazy Gift suggested it would be.

"Moms"

She was standing at the door.

Me: Hey baby!

I closed my laptop and hugged her.

Thabsi: I missed you so much.

Me: I missed you too baby. How's school?

Thabsi: its okay.

Me: How's school?

Thabsi: Moms though.

She sighed.

Thabsi: Tough.

Me: You need to soldier on

Thabsi: I am.

Me: good. We going out for Phiwo's birthday tonight.

Thabsi: Finally! I missed our family dinners.

Me: Is that so?

Thabsi: Yes moms.

Me: so after lunch, you need to uber back to your res, get your clothes for tomorrow and go home okay?

Thabsi: yes ma'am..

Me: Good..come on now.

We went out for lunch and had a very great catch up session. She did as I had told her to do and at 17:00, I was at home getting the kids ready for our outing. When I was done with them, I went to get ready. Gift was in a very chilled outfit, jeans, sneakers and a T-shirt.

Me: Looking good.



Gift: Thank you. You too wifey.

Me: Really?

Gift; Yes.

I was in a royal blue bodycon dress, I paired it up with grey sneakers and decided to style my braids in a bun.

Me: Let's go

Gift: Done?

Me: Yes

Gift: Okay then.

We stepped out!

Thabsi: It's the slay couple.

Gift and I giggled

Gift: Let's go

We got into our 7 seater car yep! And made our way to rge restaurant. We all just had the greatest time! Too great actually. It was refreshing being with my 5 children and husband.

Me: had fun?

Gift: mad fun.

We had just put the kids to bed.

Gift: Ready?

Me: Ready?

Gift: Yes

Me: For what now?

Gift: Your son's party

Me: didn't we say we'll have that in 2 weeks?

Gift: No. We agreed on this weekend. 3 days after his birthday. Lydia is busy with the preparations.

Me: Oh

Gift: What do you mean "oh?"

Me: I have to be in Namibia on Friday. Can we postpone the party?

Gift: We not postponing anything. The party will happen with or without you.

All the ifs

#44

Me: Gift

Gift: Tshiamo

Me: Please understand.

Gift: I refuse to. This is your son. Your son we talking about

Me: I know

Gift: so?

Me: I really can't cut myself Into two and...

Gift: With or without you.

He got out of the clothes he was in and made his way to our bathroom. He was out in 15 minutes and I went there after him. I found him sitting on the couch.

Gift: Want to listen?

Me: okay.

Gift: Please Sit.

I did as I was told.

Gift: we having this conversation again and I thought we were done and through with it.

Me: we are.

Gift: Clearly not.

I decided to keep quiet and listen.

Gift: I get that you are a career woman. I do. The three companies in Ghana, Zambia and Namibia have CEOs am I right?

Me: Yes but I still have to see what's going on. My kids are shareholders in those companies.

Gift: So you can't get them to email you reports?

Me: Gift..

Gift: Its a question. I mean you travel out every month end.

Me: You advised me to be hands on.

Gift: And I also advised you to prioritize.

I had no comeback for that

Gift: Did I not?

Me: You did

Gift: So?

Me: So eng?

Gift: So what's going in with you? Power and money are taking over you that you...

Me: No. Oh no. Don't pull that card on me..you

know I don't care about money. I grew up without money I won't let it change me now. I'm just securing a good future for the kids and I thought you'd understand this coz we agreed that we want our children to have great lives.

Gift: but we didnt agree on neglecting them.

Me: I really don't know now because to Begin with, I Was against you buying me Kananelo's company. I was also against us throwing Phiwo this Party. He can't even pronounce words correctly. You think he's going to remember this huge party we throwing him?

He was shocked. Okay maybe I shouldn't have.

Gift: Are you serious?

Me: I didn't mean it in a bad...

Gift: Wow Tshiamo. Wow.

Me: Baby...

Gift: Goodnight.

He got up from the couch and made his way to our bed.

Me: Gift.

Gift: It's all good babe.

Me: Gift please...

Gift: No. Forgive me for trying to always protect you. I did all that because I wanted to protect you from that animal you once called your husband.

He was not having this "don't speak ill of the dead" mindset. He called a spade a spade.



Gift: This is the thanks I get? You don't even want to throw your son. Your own son. One which you carried for 9 months a party? Are you serious?

Me: I shouldn't have said that.

Gift: Well you did. Now I know exactly how you feel.

Me: Gift....

Gift: Pack and make your way to Namibia.

I decided to give him his space. So I got dressed and got into bed, looked the other way and slept. The next day was the usual.

Gift: youu better stay away from boys.

Thabsi: Tell the boys to stay away from me.

Gift gave a very threatening look.

Thabsi: I'm kidding dad

Gift: You better be.

Tumelo: And read your books.

He was still daddy number 2.

Thabsi: Yes dad

Gift: Right all ready?

They all shouted "yes"

Gift: Say bye to mummy. All of you.

One by one they gave me kisses on my cheeks

and left. I tidied up before leaving for the office and when I got there, it was very hectic.

Me: Claud

Claudia: A Ms Lydia Moneri is here to see you.

Me: okay. Send her up please.

Claud: Okay T

Me: Thanks

I decided to clear my table as I waited for her to come up.

Me: Hey Lyd

Lyd: Hey Tshia. How are you?

Me: Busy

Lyd: I can see

Me: So Gift sent you to me?

Lyd: Yes. He said it would be best if I deal with you for last preps

Me: Well aren't you the party planner?

Lyd: I am but I obviously need us to finalize everything.

Me: Okay. Take a sit. Want a drink?

Lyd: Water please

I asked for some and we carried on.

Me: Well that sounds right.

Lyd: would you like to add anything else?

Me: No. I'm not good at organising kiddies parties. At organizing anything at all.

She giggled.

Lyd: But if you say you happy with this then

Me: We settled. Just the kiddies menu.

Something light. You'll bore these kids with Salads and rice and all of that. I think burgers. Cheese burgers would be nice

Lyd: Ah you read my mind. I was about to address the food

Me: Guessing we fine?

Lyd: Yes

Me: Okay see you on Saturday then.

\* \* \* \* \*

Saturday was a buzz, it was crazy. I felt like I was on steroids. I kept going from pillar to post.

Outfits, hair, demands and you know how it gets. This was obviously something big. 4 jumping castles. Swimming pools, play areas etc. Gift had gone all out for his son. I still thought it was useless. We could have at least bought Thabsi a second hand car with all the money that went towards a party for someone who couldn't even speak. Okay was trying to but you get the picture

Nombu: Looks good

Me: You think?

Nombu: Yes

Me: Okay. Let's go get ready

She had slept over so she could help me in the morning. We decided to get ready together which took us less than 25 minutes coz we had

guests to welcome and see if everything was going according to plan. I won't lie and say I wasn't happy when people started leaving at around 17:00 coz I was ecstatic and it was all thanks to the weather which had started changing. Even our friends had left

Gift: That went well.

Me: It did and I'm exhausted.

Gift: he's happy.

Me: He is.

Gift: So...

I was changing into tracksuits.

Me: Yes sir.

Gift: We going to some family thing tomorrow.

Me: Family thing?

Gift: Like an event for families and so forth.

Me: Oh no. My flight leaves in 2 hours actually 3

Gift: You still going to Namibia?

Me: Yeah. I was here for the party right?

Gift: Are you about to leave now? At night?

Me: Yes. I'm a great mother Gift if you don't see that then suit yourself. I'll be back on Wednesday

All the ifs

#45

I put on my sneakers and hoodie then took my bags.

Gift: I dare you to walk out of that door..



Me: okay.

I grabbed my laptop bag and made my way out. The kids had left with their grandmother so I wasn't worried. Besides I had had a word with her about my trip to Namibia as always.

Gift: Tshiamo!

I continued walking, grabbed the car keys and drove off to the airport. My flight left at 20:30 and when I got to the hotel, I just slept. The first thing I did the next day was call my kids

Me: Hello baby. You look so cute.

Phiwo: Hello Tshimamo.

Me; You going to church?

Phiwo: Yes. Where are you?

Me: I'm in Namibia baby. I'll back on Wednesday.

Phiwo: Okay.

Me: I love you.

Phiwo: I love you Tshimamo.

He ran off

Me: Are you babies Okay?

Noku: Yes mummy.. Are you fine?

Me: I am.. Going to church?

Ora: Yes and we are tired.

Me: You can't be

Thabsi: Dad wants to take us on some family thing

Me: Go on .

Thabsi: It won't be fun without you

Noku: When are you coming back ma?

Ora: She said Wednesday Thula.

Noku: Oh.

They looked disappointed.

Me: I'll come get you guys on Wednesday .

Ora: Wednesday?

Me: Yes

Ora: Tshia that's far..

Me: no it's not baby. I'll be back okay babies?

Noku: Okay Mum.

Me: Where's Tumelo?

Thabsi: he went out with Uncle Kev.

Me: Oh Okay and your Gran?

Ora: She's getting dressed.

Me: okay. Greet her for me and tell her I'll call her later okay? Have fun at church .m

They all said "thanks mum" at the same time

Me: I love you

N,O&T: We love you too mummy

I ended the video call and went to freshen up and had breakfast then started working. I decided to call Gift later on in the day

Gift: Babe?

Me: Hey.

Gift: How are you?

Me: I'm fine how are you?

Gift: Im fine. Arrived well?

Me: I did..how's the family thing going?

Gift: It didn't..

Me: What do you mean?

Gift: The kids said they won't go without you.

Me: I'm sorry.

Gift: Its okay

Me: Babe?

Gift: Love?

Me: I'm sorry

Gift: Sorry?

I took a deep breath.

Me: I should have communicated with you

Gift: You very sorry these days

Me: I know. I know. Its just that I'm under a lot of pressure these days and I'm just really trying to get out of this hectic mess as soon as I can. You know it gets super crazy midyear

Gift: that's what you should have explained I would have understood. I had to find out two hours before your departure that you heading to Namibia.

Me: I'm sorry

Gift: I miss you.

Me: I miss you too.

Gift: You really going to be back on Wednesday?

Me: Yes

Gift: That's far.

Me: now you sound like your kids

He laughed

Gift: No I don't

Me: You do

Gift: I just miss you that's all.

Me: Take the next flight out

Gift: you know that's not possible.

Me: Aw man.

Gift: I'll wait for you

Me: Let's take a shot left to that place you like  
in the Eastern Cape

Gift: that's actually a great idea.

Me: so?

Gift: I'll make bookings.

Me: Hope there are a few rooms available.

Gift: you do know who married to right?

I giggled.

Me: from Wednesday till Sunday?

Gift: Okay my love. Will you have enough clothes?

Me; I'll buy a few things here.

Gift: Deal. Let me get on it.

Me: Okay baby. I love you

Gift: I love you too my love.

I hung up and continued working.. I went to the offices the next day and worked, worked, worked for the next two days. I was more than happy to make my way to the airport and back home. I was very excited to see as I literally dragged my travelling bag behind me And ran



into his arms

Gift: Heeeeey teenager!

He picked me up as I giggled And kissed him

Gift: Missed me that much?

Me: You have no idea.

Gift: I missed you too. We need to pick up that bag you let fall.

Me: You probably should. What time does our flight leave?.

Gift: In one and a half hour.

Me: okay. Brunch?

Gift: Yes please

We made our way to have brunch.

Gift: how was Namibia?

Me: well Namibia was Namibia.

Gift: Hectic?

Me: Very.

Gift: but how's everything going?

Me: very well but baby let's not talk about work.

Gift: Fair enough.

Me: had fun without me?

Gift: I wish. Your kids turned their backs on me the minute you left

Me: No they didn't.

Gift: They did. "We not going without mum". Boyza was the only one who was ready.

Me: well obviously.

Gift: Phiwo is a softie.

Me: Phiwo is not a softie. He just loves me more.

Gift: yeah right.

Me: Don't be jealous.

Gift: I'm not

Me: Then?

Gift: I'm just stating my feelings.

Me: You stating your jealousy but it's all good

He laughed

Gift: I missed you.

Me: Well I missed you too Mr K.

Gift: Oh that's how we roll now?

Me: yes husband.

Gift: Well okay wife.

My phone rang.

Me: oh is that so?... Oh okay....bye.

I hung up

Gift: and now? Why do you suddenly look like the the world is on top of you when a minute ago you looked like you were on top of the world.

I cleared my throat.

Me: that was Claud. There's an emergency at work. She just asked me to come straight to the

office from the airport.

All the ifs

#46

He looked at me for some time and I studied his face for an answer.

Gift: So?

Me: can we postpone this?

Gift: Are you serious?

Me: Please baby

Gift: Tshia, you have employees.

Me: Claud wouldn't have called if it wasn't important .

Gift: oh?

Me: please baby .

Gift: Okay then.

Me: I promise we'll do this again.

Gift: go right ahead

Me: Thanks.

I kissed him and uberred to the office. It was indeed an emergency. The other building near the parking spots was on fire..

Me: is there anyone hurt?

Claud: Luckily no.

The firefighters had already put the fire out.

Me: what happened?

Hector: We have no idea.

Me: Hector you work there.

Hector: we think there was an electrical fault.

Me: really?

I couldn't believe it.

Hector: thats the only logical explanation.

Me: not logical to me at all because we have electricians coming here every second week to make sure that everything is... You know what! Claud, call it a day. They should be back on Monday.. Deadlines must be met though so they have to work from home. Whatever meeting they had scheduled for here tell them to take them elsewhere

Claud: Okay Ma'am

Me: Thanks babe.

I made my way to one of the firefighters.

FireF: Your building?

Me: Yes it is. How bad is it?

FireF: Not bad. Can be fixed in a couple of days. It was just a minor thing which could have turned into a major thing. You have excellent workers.

Me: I thought its really bad.

FireF: We suggest you call in electricians. Rewiring.

Me: Noted.

FireF: we all good though.

Me: Well thank you so Much.

FireF: Sure thing.



I watched as they finished and decided to go see my kids at My mother in law's. I missed Phiwo actually..these other ones I knew wouldn't have time for me.me

Phiwo: Tshimamo.

Me: Hello baby.

Phiwo: I missed you.

Me: I missed you too my angel. Did you eat?

He nodded.

Phiwo: Where were you?

Me: I was in Namibia.

Phiwo: You must take Me with/

Me: I will baby. Don't worry.

Phiwo: Can I have sweets?

Me: Sweets are bad for you. You don't want cheese curls?

Phiwo: Please.

Me: come.

I picked him up and we went to get him cheesecurls when we came back from the shops the other three were about to eat

Ora: You not suppose to eat cheese curls.

Tumelo: You must eat first

G's mum: Phiwo already ate.

Ora: when?

G's mum: Before your mother arrived

They kept quiet

Me: Exactly grown ups!

G's mum giggled.

G's mum: You can say that again. Come with me to the lounge.

I followed her to the lounge leaving Noku with her brother and sister. My little man kept his little hand in mind as we followed Gran. He wasn't staying behind with the three bosses

Me: They didn't give you any trouble?

G's mum: None. Aren't you and Gift suppose to

be in The Eastern Cape?

Me: Yes but there was an emergency at work

G's mum: Oh that's Bad. What happened?

Me: A floor was on fire.

G's mum: My God! Are the workers fine?

Me: Yes they are. It should be fixed in a few days.

G's mum: That's better.

Me: I'm just sad that I had to have Gift cancel this outing.

G's mum: It's beyond your control.

Me: Still ma.

G's mum: Tshia, you are a great mother and a wife to Gift. Yes you work hard but you should. I used to work 3 jobs. 3. Just to make sure my kids are well taken off. Aren't they well off today?

Me: Well today, I feel really bad

G's mum: Hey don't. You new to all of this. It will get easier.

I took a deep breath.

Me: It is very difficult although I've been doing this for only 9 months.

G's mum: And you still learning as well so give yourself a break.

Me: Thanks ma.

G's mum: Its a pleasure

Me: I'm glad I had this conversation with someone

G's mum: Feel free to come whenever.

Me: Thank you so much ma.

G's mum: You are my daughter now Tshia.

I felt lighter

Me: Can I take them with?

G's mum: Just a few more days with.

I giggled.

Me: Okay.

G's mum: It gets lonely when they are not here.

Me: All the noise and trouble they cause

G's mum: Its the beauty of being a  
grandmother..

Me: Oh no ma..then I don't want to be one.

She laughed

Me: You staying with Grandma okay?

Phiwo: Grandma will make Me eat porridge that has grass In it.

We laughed.

Me: Grass?

Phiwo: Yes

Me: No. You imagining things. Phiwo you need to eat Granny's porridge so you can grow and be a big boy like Tumelo okay?

Phiwo: Okay

Me: That's better

I chilled with my babies and their grandmother for an hour or so and ubered to the house.

Me: Nombu, there was an emergency. I couldn't tell you I'm back.

Nombu: You couldn't text?

Me: I was too worried to text.

Nombu: Okay where are you now?

Me: I'm on my way to the house.

Nombu: How was Namibia?

Me: It was okay. Let's have lunch tomorrow.

Nombu: I'd love that.

Me: But I'll have to start at the office first..

Nombu: Let's say around 14:00

Me: Lovely

Nombu: Tshia don't be late.

Me: Nombu I won't be.

Nombu: I don't trust you.



I giggled

Me: Bye

Nombu: Goodbye vele!

Me: Love you.

Nombu: Love you more.

I hung up and when I finally got home Gift was sitting in the garden drinking beers.

Me: Hey babe.

Gift: Hey love

Me: What do you want to eat?

Gift: did you sort out your emergency?

Me: a floor was on fire but it should be sorted by Monday .

Gift: oh that's good.

He pointed to the door And I followed his index  
finger.

Me: What's going on?

Gift: You leaving.

Me: What?

Gift: I've put with your nonsense for a while now.  
I'm done.

Me: Gift, I'm not leaving

Gift: You are. And For good this time.

All the ifs

#47

Me: Are you serious?

Gift: Yes

Me: But I handled it and we can...

Gift: I don't care Tshiamo.

Me: Please don't do this again.

Gift: Tshiamo.

Me: Gift please

Gift: Take your bags and leave

Me: Please

Gift: Take your fuckin bags and leave!

He had snapped and I had grown fear in just an instant.

Me: Can I at least take the kids with?

Gift: You can take Phiwo with. He still needs

you.

Me: The other four need me as well.

Gift: No. They are fine at my mum's

Me: You can't make that decision

Gift: Tshiamo.

Me: I'm going to take them please

Gift: They are fine at mum's!

Me: Okay.

I wasn't gong to argue with him coz I had a lump in my throat. One which I was trying to swallow so hard. I went inside to pack Phiwo's things and went out again.

Me: Please

Gift: Leave Tshia.

Me: We can work it out it doesn't have to be this way baby please.

Gift: Tshiamo I won't ask you to leave again.

I nodded and tried to grab my bags at once. I got the car from the garage and drove to my mother's house. As soon as I parked outside I just cried. I cried for about an hour and eventually went inside.

Nolo: my goodness!

Me: Hi Nolo.

Nolo: Are you okay?

I shook my head and tried to hold back my tears

Me: Where are the kids?

Nolo: At dad's. What's wrong?

Me: Gift..he...He kicked me out.

Nolo: What? Why?

Me: I was a bad wife to him Cuz.

Nolo: Oh No Tshia don't say that.

She got up to make me a cup of warm water with sugar. It managed to calm me down.

Nolo: Okay talk to me.

Me: We were suppose to go to E.C for "us' time and Claud called to tell me that there's an emergency at work. The building was on fire

Nolo: Oh my God. Did anyone get hurt?

Me: Luckily no

A sigh of relief from her.

Nolo: That's better.

Me: When I got back Gift had packed my things.

Nolo: He's overreacting. You had to be there. It is your company and shouldn't he understand this coz he also runs companies?

I shook my head.

Me: maybe I pushed him to this. I first forgot about ORA's sports day and Phiwo's first birthday. I almost postponed his party maybe I'm too much.

Nolo: Well I've missed a lot of Sabelo's sports days.

I giggled.

Nolo: You are human as well Tshia. He's suppose to help you. Not push you away. You first had to deal with Kananelo, dealt with giving birth and soon after had the responsibility of companies. Companies you didn't even ask for but because you trying to make sure your children have a great future you working hard. There's nothing wrong with that.

Me: Really?

Nolo: maybe you are a bad wife maybe but you not a bad mother..look at how close you and Thabsie are. One would swear she's your biological daughter. Noku adores you. Every time she enters a room, she asks where you are. And then there's Phiwo who never wants to leave your side.



I smiled.

Me: Tumelo doesn't care about me

Nolo: Oh he does. He's always offering you food.  
He cares

Me: And then Ora? She doesn't seem like she cares as well.

Nolo: Ora doesn't give a damn about anything that isn't sports. She only gives a damn about her aunt Bontle coz they like the same things.

I sighed

Me: I guess you right.

Nolo: Don't worry. I'm sure Gift will come around.

Me: You think?

She nodded

Nolo: He loves you.

Me: And I love him too

Nolo: Love always conquers.

Me: Right?

I wiped the tears off my face.

Nolo: Of course. That's better

Me: Thanks cuz.

Nolo: Anytime.

Me: Should I call him?

Nolo: Let him cool down.

Me: Okay.

Nolo: Go wash your face

Me: Right. Please help me get my bags

Nolo: Okay.

We went to the car to get my bags and I hit the shower. I called Thabsie to check up on her and lastly called Noku to check on them.

Me: Going to work tomorrow?

Nolo: No you?

Me: Well I have to see if everything's going well in that company.

Nolo: What caused the fire?

Me: Some wiring problem apparently.

Nolo: That's bad.

Me: I know right? I mean we have electricians come in to check every second week. I fail to

understand how they missed what they missed

Nolo: Mistakes happen.

Me: Now this mistake has caused me my marriage

Nolo: Your marriage will soon be back on track. You and Gift will be annoying us with Selfies and late night dates and blah blah blah.

I laughed

Me: You are so jealous.

Nolo: Oh no. I've made peace with the fact that I'm bad at love.

Me: Oh not this again! I'm ordering meat from those boys near Mme Rose's house. Is that fine?

Nolo: Chicken dust?

Me: I haven't had some in ages.

Nolo: Me too. I'll make chips in the mean time.

The rest of the night was fun. Nolo always knew how to make me feel better. Always! The next day, I had to go see how everything was going and I was reassured that everything would be fixed in 2 days and that by Monday will be business as usual. I was happy with that. I met up with Nombu at 14:00 as I had promised her and she looked different.

Me: Oh my God,! Nombu!

Nombu: What Is it?

Me: Are you pregnant?

Nombu: Yes!

Me: Why?

Nombu: what do you mean?

Me: Nombu didn't you say you and Sthe are done having kids?

Nombu: Tshia, I was born to be a mother okay?

I laughed

Me: You can't be serious.

Nombu: I am. And you are the Godmother

Me: Okay fine. Even though I don't know what Godmothers do but okay. I'm Happy for you. Genuinely Happy. If pregnancy makes you glow like this then you should keep popping more babies

She laughed

Nombu: Thanks. Now let's eat.

Lunch was fun too. I loved catching up with my best friend. When I got home Gift's car was parked outside.

Me: Hey.

Gift: Hey.

Me: Is Nolo not here? Why are you standing outside?

Gift: there's no one here

Me: Oh okay come inside

He followed me to the door and I unlocked, let him walk in first.

Me: Drink?

Gift: I'm not staying. Here

I opened the envelope.

Me: Divorce papers?

Gift: You get custody of the kids. What's yours is yours. What's mine is mine..I've opened educational accounts for the kids that shouldn't be a problem. I'll keep maintaining my 5 kids. Its not a problem. I'm pretty sure they'll choose to live with you over me anytime so I've bought you guys a house. I'll give you your own allowance as I always have. Nothing's going to change. I just need the kids to come over every weekend and school holidays as well. This includes public holidays.

Me: Gift...

Gift: Tshia, don't make this more difficult than it already is. Please sign those papers



All the ifs

#48

Me: Baby please don't this. Gift I need you.

Gift: Tshia please sign.

Me: Please

Gift: I have a meeting to get to. Sign the papers please

Me: I can't.

Gift: I'll come back tomorrow for those.

I watched as he left the house and I fell against the wall and cried. I was in pain so much pain. I was losing the man I loved. The man who I had had an instant connection with. The man who made me. Fixed me up and made me whole again but yet he was breaking me. I cried and

cried and cried and decided to dust myself up. I was going to fight to save us. I wasn't going to let something so small come between us. Gift was mine. He had always been mine.

Nolo: You are crying again!

Me: Gift wants to divorce me.

Nolo: What?

Me: I won't let him.

Nolo: What do you mean?

Me: Nolo I love that man! I love that man so much. I'm not going to let him slip away from me.

Nolo: I didn't think it would get to this.

Me: I'll find a way.

Nolo: Are you going to sign the papers?

Me: NO!

Nolo: Don't shout geez!

I calmed myself down.

Me: I'm sorry.

Nolo: Calm down.

Me; I'm calm.

Nolo: good..now leave this until tomorrow okay?

Me: Okay.

Nolo: When did Gift say he'll be back?

Me: Tomorrow.

Nolo: That's good. You still have a chance to fix this.

Me: Okay.

I took a deep breath in then out.

Me: You're right.

Nolo: Now relax.

Me: I am relaxed. I'm going to see the kids.

Nolo: Face.

Me: Right.

I downed a bottle of water as I made my way to the bathroom and I was as fresh as ever.

Me: I'm out.

Nolo: Come back with Phiwo.

Me: I'll try.

Nolo: Okay.

Me: Bye Cuz

Nolo: Bye.

I was confident again that I was going to change Gift's mind about the divorce but at the back of my mind....I was afraid of what was going to happen..I had faith. A lot of it yes but one could never be sure. It was like gambling you could never be sure of the outcome. I was welcomed warmly by my little one. And the other not so little ones.

Tumelo: I won a medal for best soccer player!

Me: you go boy! By the time you get to primary you'll be a prof

Tumelo: I'm the next Messi.

Me: Of course you are.

Tumelo: Are you hungry?

I giggled as I recalled what Nolo had said about

him.

Me: No baby.

Tumelo: Peanut butter sandwich?

Me: Okay.

Tumelo: Coming.

Me: Okay love.

He walked off.

Me: and how was school girls?

Ora: It was fine.

Me: And you? Why the long face?

Noku: I had a fight with Jabulile.

Me: Why now?

Noku: I don't know.

Me: Stop lying.

Noku: She likes my crush.

Me: You are too young to have crushes

Noku: Ma!

Me: No I'm serious. We said no boys till varsity.

Noku: But I'm a teen now.

Me: Exactly! You not an adult. What do you know about.. Ora please give us space.

Ora: Okay Moms

I wasn't going to ask Phiwo to leave coz he was clinging on to me.

Me: Baby what do you know about relationships?

Noku: I like him.

Me: You still young.

Noku: But I'm 14

Me: Noku don't argue with me. I've lived longer than you have

She kept quiet.

Me: I know what's best for you. Leave these boys alone and focus on your schoolwork. I always told Thabsie this and she listened. Don't you want to be like her? Don't you want to be at varsity as well?

Noku: I do.

Me: So leave boys alone. You'll have enough time to date when you older. And besides you dad will kill you. You know right?

She laughed.



Noku: I forgot about him.

Me: and I'm reminding you about him. You and Jabu are good friends. Don't let a guy Come between you. Tell her I said this okay?

Noku: Okay moms.

Me: Good. Its time for me to check your homework. Let's go.

Noku: Eish.

Me: Let's go!

I picked Phiwo and we followed Noku to the house. I checked their books and helped her out with an assignment she had. After that Noku made sure that they all the took their bath while I spoke to my mother in law.

G's mum: You look troubled.

Me: I'm fine ma.

G's mum: Really Tshia? Are you and Gift fine?

I nodded

Me: We'll be fine ma.

G's mum: so it means you not fine.

Me: Every couple goes through a rough patch.

G's mum: Will you two be fine?

Me: Okay ma...can I be honest with you?

G's mum: Please.

Me: Gift asked me to move out.

G's mum; What?

Me: He's really fed up. He even served me with Divorce papers this afternoon.

G's mum: What! Tshia is it that bad? Let me talk to....

Me: No no no no ma please don't. Can I just talk to him first?

G's mum: Okay. But you must tell me if all fails.

Me: Okay ma.

G's mum: Taking Phiwo with?

Me: Nolo would hate Me if I didn't.

G's mum: Okay then.

I went to make sure they were all in their PJs. Phiwo was very excited to leave with me but fell asleep 20 minutes after playing with Nolo. The next day, I went to get the other three and took them to school. I also had a few meetings I had to attend to And a brainstorming session I had with my marketing team. When I got home at around 17:30, Gift was playing soccer with My

boys(Nolo's sons) and My little one. Nolo had picked him up from my in law's coz she was never enough of him.

Me: Hey babies.

They greeted me back as they ran to him.

Me: Hey baby.

Gift: Hello my love.

Me: can we go inside?

Gift: Sure

We left the boys outside and Went in. Nolo was in the kitchen making sandwiches for the kids

Gift: can I have the papers now?

Me: Can we find a way to work this out?

Gift: I'm tired of talking Tshia. I've had enough. I'm done. I'm always reminding you to be a wife and a mother. Look Tshia I tried

I could feel the tears In my eyes

Me: Baby please. I need you Gift

There was a crack in my voice. Even I could feel it too. The corner of my eye caught Nolo and I knew she was as hurt as I was coz as soon as I looked up at her, her eyes were filled with tears as well. She just shook her head at me

Gift: Tshia, sign

Me: Please

Gift: Tshiamo!

His voice was sharp and he quickly cleared his throat.

Gift: Please sign the papers.

He was suddenly calm. Nolo walked to the stand where I had put the papers and she grabbed a pen from my bag. She came to sit next to me and put the papers on my Lap

Nolo: Do it Cuz. You can't force someone to be with you.

Me: I can't Nolo.

My cheeks were wet.

Nolo: It gets better with time.

I looked at her

Nolo: You have me.

I nodded as I turned my head to the papers and as I put my signature on the dotted line of each page, I felt my heart break into pieces...it was over!

All the ifs

#49



A year later, I had moved in a new house. Thabsie had moved out of res to come live with us because she thought I'd need the help even though I had hired a full time nanny but I appreciated her thoughtfulness. I had healed. Well I was still healing. My counsellor had told me that the first step to healing would be to accept the situation And I had accepted that my marriage was over. We spoke yes but it was only about the kids. Only! I had gotten a grip and I was happy coz it meant I had more time to spend with my kids. We loved going on vacation yes just the six of us and Nolo and her babies would join us when they could. Nombu had been blessed with a daughter and my sister Tshepang was expecting. Yep! I wasn't mad though. She was grown and the guy had paid lobola for her so I was happy. Resego was still dating that guy! Yeah that one! One of the



brothers and Lesedi well he was goal driven like I was. I had taken him under my wing and I loved it. The kids had had a hard time adjusting to the divorce but they managed to pull through.

Me; Let's go! Let's go!

"Coming"

Ora shouted.

Me: 3 more minutes or else you'll all have to walk to school.

They all ran in at the same time besides Thabsie who had a 11:30 lecture.

Me: Let's go. Ready?

"Yes ma'am"

Me: excellent. Off to the car..

I followed them out and got into the car after I checked if they were seated well.

Me: let's go

Noku: Moms

Me: Baby?

Noku: can we eat out tonight?

Me: You don't feel like a home cooked meal?

Noku: No..

Me: Well spring has sprung and the nights are

getting Warmer so I guess we can start going out now.

Tumelo and Ora shouted "yay" at the same time. They loved going out at night.

Tumelo: Can Pops come?

Me: Whatever you kids decide.

Tumelo: Okay. Noku call him.

Noku: Okay

She took my phone and dialled Gift. He was connected to the car.

Gift: love.

I was still "love" for some weird reason.

Noku: Its Me!

Gift: hey Tinker.

Noku: hello dad

Gift: Is your mum okay?

Noku: She's fine .

Gift: Oh okay. So you miss me?

Noku: No.

Gift: Ouch.

Noku: You want to join us for dinner today?

Gift: Where?

Noku: We still going to decide. I'll ask mum to send you An SMS.

Gift: Okay Tinker. No problem.

Tumelo: Pops!

Gift; Boyza!

Tumelo loved cutting people off whenever there was Gift involved. In phone calls specifically.

Tumelo: How are you pops?

Gift: I'm fine Boyza. Going to school?

Tumelo: Yes pops.

Gift: where is Ora?

Tumelo: She's here.

Ora: Hello pops

Gift: hello sunshine! I'll see you all later okay?

They all said "okay dad" at the same time

Gift: Love you.

" love you too pops "

And Noku hung up

Me: Happy?

"Yes" they all shouted

Phiwo was unbothered. He hardly paid attention to Gift anyway. He was that son. That one who only cared about his father for 4 minutes and would find his way back into my arms again. I figured it was because he was still young and that with time it would change. I drove them all to school and headed to the office.

"That chair suits you"

Me: My goodness! Hey!

I got up to hug her.

Seipati: Hey Tshia..

Me: This is such a pleasant surprise

Seipati had decided to go back home to Mahikeng after the will was read. Her younger sister had been living in the house, taking care of it and so forth

Seipati: You look so pretty..

Me: Really?

Seipati: Yes. I'd never lie to you

Me; You look pretty too. Come on.

She followed me to the couch I had in my office

Me: Would you Like something to drink?

Seipati: I'm fine

Me: So you back for good?

She took a deep breath.

Seipati: I'm ready to live in Jo'burg again

Me: You've been gone for 2 years.

Seipati; I know right? But that's not what I'm here for. I'm here to tell you that I'm getting married.

Me: Oh wow.



She passed me an invite.

Me: This is so nice. But this is not An invite....

"Charles and Seipati would like you to be part of their bridal party... "

Me: I'd love to..

Seipati; Thank you.

Me: You two look good together

I was this because the background was a picture of them. They looked like they were happily in love

Seipati: So how's Gift doing? The kids?

Me: Gift and I got a divorce.

Seipati: What?

Me: Life happens

Seipati: I'm so sorry to hear that .

Me: No don't be. Its okay. Marriage is not for me.

Seipati: You'll find someone. Tshia you are still young

Me: You call being 31 young?

She laughed.

Seipati: Of course.

Me: I'm married to my career and that's okay. I realized that men don't like that so I'm done with them.

Seipati: So you choosing work?

Me: over men anytime yes! It keeps me sane..

Seipati: It will all work out in the end you'll see

Me: Yeah right. Let's go out for lunch.

Seipati: Well okay. I can brief you on what I want

.

Me: Let's go

Lunch was good with her. She had solid ideas of what she wanted and she was a girl in love. After work, I went to get the kids and when we got home, we all got ready for dinner. Thabsie had 2 tests in one week so she couldn't join us. The kids were very happy to see their dad. After we all ate, they decided to head to the play area.

Gift: you looking good

Me: Thanks .

Gift: heard you owning the business awards this year

Me: I try. Nothing beats hard work

Gift: I'm proud of you .

Me: Thank you .

Gift: Tshia?

Me: hey.

Gift: I met someone

For some strange reason that really cut deep.  
Very deep .

Me: oh?

Gift: Yes

Me: That's....

I swallowed hard.

Me: that's nice

He passed me some card

Gift: her name is Ntombi.

I opened the card in front of me

Gift: we getting married.

All the ifs

#50...Adiós

Me: oh.

Gift: The wedding is in two weeks.

Me: oh okay.

Gift: are you fine?

Me: I am

Gift: You sure?

Me: I'll avail myself.

Gift: I'd appreciate your presence. I'd like you to meet her first. Before the wedding that is.

Me: Ummm....

I was getting a headache.

Me: What about the kids?

Gift: Noku made it clear that she doesn't want to meet another.

Me: And Thabsie?

Gift: She brushed me off and told me she's not interested.

My girls were down for me. Loyal kids I was raising.

Me: Sorry. I'll try and talk to...

He shook his head.

Me: Sure?

Gift: if they can just come to the wedding.

Me: I'll talk to them

Gift: Thanks love.

Me: Maybe you need to stop calling me "love"

since you have a new love.

Gift: I'm sorry.

Me: I have an opening tomorrow after I'm going to be busy until the day of your wedding.

Gift: Lunch?

Me: Sure.

Gift: Okay then. Your favorite restaurant?

Me: Okay. 12:30

Gift: Okay

Me: So can I ask?

Gift: Yes.

Me: Did you meet her before or after our divorce?  
Please be honest.

Gift: after. I met her 7 months ago.

Me: Oh. And you ready to marry her?

Gift: I love her.



Deeper cut!

Me: That's nice.

Gift: Tshia?

Me: Gift, I hope you don't expect me to be happy about all of this.

He looked at Me and paused a bit.

Me: But I've accepted the situation

Gift: That's all I ever ask.

Me: Okay

Gift: Are we cool?

Me: Yeah. Good luck though.

Gift: thank you.

Me: And don't worry. As crazy as I am, I won't do anything funny.

Gift: I wasn't worried

Me: You have a worried look on your face though

I drank up

Gift: You into wine now? You've been drinking a lot of wine since we got here. I think that's your 5th glass now

Me: I work better when I'm tipsy.

Gift: Tshia that's not healthy

Me: it works for me.

Gift: oh okay

Me: Don't look so worried. I'm not an alcoholic

Gift: Well I should be.

I gave him that "don't annoy me" look and he quickly backed off. We called the kids back for dessert and left when we were all done. When we got home, they went straight to bed and Thabsie was still up. On a study break.

Me: Your food baby

Thabsie: Thanks ma.

Me: Have a chance to chat a bit?

Thabsie: for you anytime.

Me: Your Dad's getting married

Thabsie: he told me.

Me: And apparently you don't want to meet his soon to be bride?

She sighed.

Thabsie: so I've been counting the women I've met before you and they are exactly 10. I'm done really. Dad thinks its okay to bring women in and out of our lives. I mean really moms, we've never been close to our moms you know so when you came in there was a sense of Stability. Dad can enjoy his life with his new bride. I'll pass.

Me: But you know at some point you need to meet her.

Thabsie: Okay.

Me: Is that a "yes"?

Thabsie: He must not Expect us to have some sort of relationship with her

Me: so I'm meeting her tomorrow..how about we just make this a dinner thing?

Thabsie: Okay moms. I know you won't let this

go.

Me: Your dad and I are over. You all need to accept that.

Thabsie: well we have. But dad needed to slow down a bit. Its like he can't live without a woman. He's not being a great role model to the boys if you ask me.

I kept quiet.

Me: I'll tell him you agreed.

Thabsie: Okay ma..goodnight.

She was dismissing me and I decided to just go take a shower and go to bed. The next was chaos as always and I knocked off early to prepare dinner for Gift and his Fiancée. I also got the kids ready.

Me: Your dad's here.

I wasn't worried about first two kids coz in all honesty, they weren't Gift's. I could control them but it was Noku and Thabsie that had me worried. A lot.

Noku: Oh dear!

We waited for them to walk in.. She was in high waist jeans, vans and a nice body suit. It had a bit of lace.. She did look older than me though maybe 2 or 3 years older but she was beautiful.

Thabsie: Here you go again!

They walked in.

Gift: Hey kids. Hey love.

"Hi pops"

They all said. Phiwo was next to me. With no care in the world.

Gift: This is Ntombi, my wife to be.

Ntombi: Hey kids. You must be....

She got them right and they didn't care.

Ntombi: Tshia.

Me: Ntombi.

Ntombi: Nice to meet you.

Me: Nice to meet you too. We can take our seats.

We did.

Ntombi: Thabsie how's Varsity?

Thabsie: Fine.

Ntombi: Im sure you enjoy all the parties

Thabsie: No. I spend most of the time with my siblings and mother. Or studying, I dont have time for parties

Noku: Do you have kids?

Ntombi: Yes. 3

Noku: So you told them you found them a new dad?

Ntombi: Yes they've met him. They like him.



Thabsie: I hope he told you that we not exactly looking for a new mother. Let's go kids. We'll eat outside.

Gift: Thabsile!

The others followed her out...



We all got ready for his big day, I watched as he watched his new bride walk in. He had the biggest smile on my face, the same one he had when I walked down with him. Nombu squeezed my hand to make sure I was fine while Nolo put her hand on my thigh probably as a sign of comfort. I listened as the priest spoke, listened as they exchanged vows, watched as he put her ring on her finger,

watched as she put his. I watched as they shared a kiss in front of everyone and the room and only then did it hit me that my marriage to Gift was over. I had to ask Thabsie and her crew to be part of the photos and they agreed although it was hell getting through to them. I sat through reception as I kept downing glasses of wine down my throat and went out when they called them up for their first dance.

Nombu: Are you okay?

I wiped the tears off my face.

Me: I am.

Nombu: This must be hard on you.

Me: It is but I should have been a better wife I guess. He deserves better Nombu.

Nombu: Don't beat yourself up.

Me: You know maybe if I had prayed more, if I had prioritized better, if I had been a present wife, if I had done my wifely duties, if I had been a Proverbs 31 woman, if I had needed Gift the same way he needed me, Then maybe I wouldn't be in all of this but you know... All the ifs in the world won't bring him back again.

The End