

Prologue

I sit in my office and swivel my chair biting the butt of my pen. I have reports to go through on my table, but I just can't bring myself to deal with any of them. I'm the mother of all procrastinators. I'm bored. I need a challenge in my life. You know when everything goes according to plan, the education, the career, the house and the car well except of course my weight and good dick. That never goes according to plan. I hate gym and I love food. I just feel that my monotonous life is weighing me down. My friend thinks I'm broody. Every time I speak about feeling stagnant and bored. She always hints at me getting married. Why do married people always fucking think that we all want to get married and breed. That's not me. I don't see myself responsible for another human being. Let alone a man constantly by my side. I would kill him then kill myself. That brings me to Sakhile, the dude won't give up. He keeps inviting me to meet his mother. I keep telling him I have no interest in meeting his mother. Pearl tells me he is a catch. Born to money and made his own. He is always there for me when I need him, even though that happens rarely. He demands

more than I can give him. Borderline needy if you ask me. My office phone rings interrupting my thoughts.

“Zizo, good day!” My tone contradicts my bored state.

“You sound happy, must be a good day.” His deep drawl comes through and I imagine him relaxed back in his office chair. Wearing his tailor-made suit and swinging his Italian shoe fitted foot. His dress sense is always immaculate. His beard kept neat and closely shaven. He probably takes more care of his beard than he does his business. Maybe I’m exaggerating. He has the same beard as Ricky Rick. Small mercies that he doesn’t walk around with a brush, maybe he does I just haven’t been paying attention.

“Sakhi, how are you?” my tone always comes out low and raspy whenever I speak to a man. Any man. When you don’t know me, you might mistake me for a flirt. Maybe I am a natural flirt.

“I’m well thank you and, how are you?” always polite and proper.

“I’m good.” There is a pause. He always expects me to elaborate but I’m not one for polite pleasantries.

“May I have an honour of your presence this afternoon for lunch.”

“Unfortunately, I can’t I’m in meetings all day.”

“Your PA led me to believe that you were open. That’s unfortunate. Dinner then.” I can’t really get out of this one especially since he has caught me on my meeting lie. I grind my teeth. I really wanted some alone time with my toy this evening.

“That will be perfect then, where do I meet you?”

“I’ll send a driver to pick you up.”

“I am capable of driving myself Sakhi.”

“Please indulge me this once sweetheart,” I cringe at the endearment. “I have plans for you, let’s not ruin them mh. Wear something appropriate.”

“Don’t I always?” he never approves of my outfits and I don’t dress for his approval unfortunately.

“You know what, I’ll send you a little something over lunch, make use of it, do you promise?”

“How can I if I don’t know what I’m promising?” I hear his sigh over the phone.

“Indulge me, please.”

“Alright, I promise to use whatever you are sending.”

“That’s my girl, see you tonight then.” There is excitement in his tone that I can’t mirror. He hangs up

before I can even respond. The man is big on giving gifts. I put my foot down when he bought me a car. Some people might be excited about such but not me. I believe I can get my own. Pearl says I'm full of pride and not good for a man's ego. Unfortunately, that isn't my job to nurse anyone's ego but my own. Sakhi has been very patient with me. We met three years ago, and he has declared his love and intentions for me on a couple of occasions. I was never able to return those words and he took the rejection like a trooper that he is. He even told me that he didn't mind waiting. I never gave him hope that things would change. I keep telling him, I don't do love. No, I don't come from a broken family. My parents are happy and still together 33 years later. They had me immediately they got married and my younger brother, Nkanyezi, followed 3 years later. We were raised in a loving environment and my father doted on me but still taught me to be strong and believe in my own capabilities. I don't need a man to validate me. I think Sakhi wants me to be the damsel in distress, to be needy and crave his attention. Unfortunately, I don't. I see him when I see him, and I don't really care where he is half the time. I will call him on occasion when I need a human touch. I'm still waiting for that explosive orgasm the

books I read talk about when I have sex with him. He tries, I won't take that away from him. He wants to attend to my own needs first and denies himself until he feels I'm satisfied but I never get there with him hence I end up faking the explosive end then get rid of him as soon as his done so that I can self-service. My blue rabbit never disappoints. Its not just with him, with everyone. That mind-blowing orgasm from penetration that people talk about has always been elusive for me. Men have tried and used their sexual prowess, but no one has ever been successful. Some have called me names because their ego had been bruised, I had them out of my life so fast they never knew what hit them. So, I wait for no man, I get myself there.

I work until I'm interrupted by my PA, Mel, peeking her head through. She is still young at 24, seeing life through the rose-tinted glasses. She is on that positive tip, if fate allows shit. Her bright smile can be quiet exhausting but it's good for business. She carries herself with no self-awareness of her beauty which boggles me half the time. People with her looks, like to make it known and felt sometime. No, I'm not an ugly duckling. I might have my

fathers looks but I'm on the beautiful side. She is very thorough at her job so I really can't fault her on that.

"Hey boss. Did you agree to lunch with Mr G?" that's another thing about her, she thinks we are friends just because I try my damdest to be polite. She never seems to take my scolding seriously. Annoying really.

"None of your business." I don't even look at her.

"Well you have a delivery; it might have to do with your date. You want me to sign for it?" she continues unfazed by my dismissive tone.

"That's your job."

"Okeydoki," she walks away with a spring in her step. A few minutes later she walks back in carrying a garment protector with a designer logo on the side and a box of shoes. My heart sinks because I already know it's a dress from Sakhi. He is very predictable really. "Look at this Zee, it must have cost a fortune." She bubbles up in excitement you'd swear it was hers. She hooks it on the coat hanger and unzips the bag, then she gasps. "Oh my! Look at this!" she turns to look at me with glee.

“You like it, you can have it.” Her face falls, its almost comical to watch the change.

“No Zee, this is for you. Won’t you at least try it on?” she looks at me pleadingly. I roll my eyes and she smiles.

“Fine, lock the door.” She sprints to the door. I take out the dress and appraise it a bit. Definitely not my style but it’s beautiful and expensive, I don’t do cheap. I take off my high waist pants and leave the body suit on as I try the dress on. Its slithers effortlessly over my body and fits like a glove, it’s a body-hugging mermaid evening dress. Then I wonder where he plans to take me for dinner in such a formal dress. The dress is grey with silver diamantes in parts. It would be perfect for miss SA. My ass is out there in all its glory and my D-cup size breast are accommodated nicely. The inner corset of the dress flattens my tummy, you would swear I had a six pack. I’m fortunate that I don’t have kids therefore my stomach has remained intact. I wish I could say the same about my ass and breasts. The stretch marks that go across the sides of my thighs make me want to scream at times. It’s worse because they developed when I was still eleven

and skinny. My mom used to say it was nature's way of telling me I was gaining weight. I would be excited then because I was really skinny and wanted to gain the weight. Which is the reason why I stuffed my face half the time. My appetite has been generous since then.

"This was made for you Zee, look at yourself." I have a long mirror in my office. Don't ask me why, okay, I like to talk to myself before meetings. Sort of hype myself up. I walk over and inspect. He definitely has my size to the T but not my taste. My phone rings. Mel quickly picks up and hands it over.

"Do you like the dress?" he asks before I can say anything further than the greeting.

"Not my style but it's lovely."

"Great, I knew you would like it. The car will pick you up at 7pm." He hangs up. I frown as I look at my phone. How does he always seem to hear only what he wants to? He didn't even ask about the shoes. I turn to find Mel with

metallic grey heels in her stretched hand. Grey on grey, I palm my face in frustration. Who does that? I won't be wearing those ever.

“Have the shoes or give them away I don't care.” My tone doesn't leave any room for discussion. She puts them back in the box.

“Thank you.” She says walking towards the door with the box. “Let me get back to work.” Her look says I am an entitled spoilt brat, maybe I am.

Chapter 1

“Luthi!”

“Luthi!” The scream pierced my sleepy brain. I tried to ignore it, but she started to pull the blankets. I could feel my sore body slowly being dragged off the bed, but my eyes were still heavy. Then the thud coupled with a painful impact on the floor had me awake.

“Yo, dude, chill, what’s up with you?” I rubbed the side of my head trying to sit up. God, I had a splitting headache! Memories of last night were foggy but I knew I had more than a few Cîroc.

“What’s up with me? Really Luthi? You’ve been sleeping the whole day! Look at this place, it’s a mess.” She wildly waved her hands. Your parents are on the way. Get your ass up!” she nudged me on the side of my ribs just for effect. The mention of my parents had me awake and sober. I got up from the floor and threw the blanket on the bed. Then the sight of her cute ass sashaying towards the bathroom got my attention down South. “Nah, baby that ain’t right? Why aren’t you dressed?” The mismatching panties and a bra she had on didn’t count. “Come here.” I took three strides towards her and held her from behind before she could close the bathroom door in my face. I pushed her curly hair on the side and nuzzled the side of her neck. She was stiff as a board in my arms and I knew why? I came back home this morning probably reeking of alcohol and other things.

My battery had died before midnight and I bet my ass on it, she had called me a million times afterwards.

“Luthi , let go off me! You stink!” she tried to wiggle herself out of my hold, but I held tight. My groin was up against her toosh and it felt good.

“Come on baby. Why all the aggression?” she pushed me off with all her strength and I staggered backwards, and my grip loosened. She turned around and her eyes an image of a spitting dragon.

“Why the aggression? You are unbelievable! I called you half the night and your stupid phone was off. You came home reeking of shebeen and cheap whores and now you act as if nothing is wrong!” What she lacked in height she made up with her fire, she is a firecracker. Her wildness turned me on, but I didn’t want to mention that for fear of being castrated.

“Babe, I’m sorry. You know how the boys are. We went club hopping and before I knew it was morning. As for

cheap whore, you know very well girls always throw themselves at me. I'd never do you like that you are my Smurfette." I saw the corner of her lip twitch, her pet name always got to her and my baby face, icing on the cake. She never stayed mad for long she didn't have it in her. I loved that about her.

"You have to do better than this Luthi. I need a grown man not to be babysitting one. We've been through this before. How do you go party during the week! Ai its exhausting!" she turned around and opened the shower taps then proceeded to strip naked. My brain didn't process anything afterwards except her delectable body in front of me. Her body tiny yet proportionally packed in on the right places. Bubbly butt, perky breasts, flat tummy with a belly ring that drives insane, oh the gods window between those thighs is a staring in my daydreams. Once in the shower she began to sensually lather the shower gel as if for my benefit. I couldn't help but to strip and follow her in. She couldn't sulk for long and within minutes of me using my persuasive charm, she was singing a different tune. I might annoy her from time to time, but my dick made her sing and worshipped the ground I walked on. I even forgot that she had

mentioned my parents were on the way. I heard the doorbell of my apartment ring as I furiously thrust, with her bent over and hands balancing on the wall. It was messy, slippery and oh so yummy! The doorbell stopped and my phone began the incessant ringing. I wasn't going to open that door until we were both satisfied. I knew my parents didn't come bearing gifts and I needed a clear head and that meant empty balls. As for Kamo, I always made sure my woman was satisfied and I could tell by her increasing moans that she was close.

"Fuck, Luthi. Your parents are here." Her breath was ragged as she spoke. I pulled out completely and she let out a cry of protest. "Don't stop!" I couldn't help but grin at her desperation. I had her where I wanted. She begged me continuously not to stop until her body was shuddering uncontrollable and only then did I let go. Both our phones were ringing as we quickly rinsed off and got out of the shower.

"Am I forgiven." I asked before I went to open the door. She rolled her eyes.

“Go open the door you idiot. You know I can never stay mad at you, not after that.” A rosy hue covered her cheeks and spread across her chest until the dip between her breasts. There was a hard knock at the door. I tightened the towel around my waist and went to open before my dad kicked the door down. The moment the door opened, my father and mother stood there glaring at me.

“You have no manners Luthi! Go put some damn clothes on!” My mother shrieked. I opened the door wide and allowed them through.

“Hello mama. Tata.” His face was tight, and his jaw was working full time. I could feel the angry heat permeating off him. I must have really screwed up this time. I closed the door and followed them into the living room. They knew their way around the place, they owned it. “Can I offer you something to drink?” I asked the moment they sat down while kicking a pair of underwear under the sofa and not before my mother saw it and her face lifted in disgust.

“You can start by putting some clothes on like your mother asked.” If his lips could get any tighter it would be concrete. I excused myself and went to the room to find a panicking Kamo. She was forever scared of my parents.

“What are they saying? Do they know I’m here?” she was sitting on the bed, frantically biting on her non-existent nails.

“Probably, since they tried calling both our phones. Relax, my folks love you. They think I’m the one who isn’t good enough for you.” I tried to reassure her as I wore my sweatpants and a tee shirt. I was right though. Kamo is the only good deed my parents approved of. She came from a family with a similar background as mine. They were all in the same social circles. We grew up knowing each other but only started dating in University. Our parents were elated at the news of the relationship. They didn’t know about her ratchet side and her mind-numbing blow job skills. They didn’t need to of course. To them she was an angel that I didn’t deserve and

needed to do right by. They were right and I planned to do right by her, just that life got in the way.

‘They don’t know I live here right? Gosh! I don’t want to go out there!’ she hugged her knees to her chest.

“My mom will think you are being rude if you don’t. Give me a few minutes and then come rescue me. I think I’m in for a chewing.” I left the room and went to join the iceberg. I sat on the reclining chair that I used when I played my PlayStation and it was always on the relaxed setting. It didn’t allow me any position but to slouch. My father’s nostrils flared as he sat forward and balanced his elbows on his knees.

‘Luthi, indoda ayenzi kanje. Uzokhula nini?’ I wasn’t about to respond until he was specific. “You don’t sleep at home! You are drunk half the time. When will you start working?” just as I was about to remind him of my job he raised his hand like a traffic officer controlling traffic at a busy intersection and that stopped me in my tracks. “A proper job! You refuse to come work for me so

that you can end up being a bum! I didn't send you to expensive schools to keep sponging off me!' I could see my mother echoed the same sentiments judging by the nodding of her head.

'Tata, I do work. It might not be much to you but to me it's a job. At least I'm doing something to raise funds for my company since you refuse to fund me.'" I wondered if they realised how hard it was to find a good paying job in SA. I doubt they did, they were raised with a whole set of silver cutlery.

'You call what you do a job? Awunantloni yazi kwedini! Why can't you be like your brother!'"

"There we go again. I'm not like him and I'll never be, deal with it. Jesus fucking Christ must I always hear this!' I didn't know when my mother got to her feet, but I felt my cheek sting as my headache returned and with her huffing before me. I scrambled to my feet and kept my distance before another one followed as the murderous look in her eyes indicated. A wave of regret washed over

me. I shouldn't have sworn but these two drove me up the wall at times.

“You will respect your father and I, Luthi! I didn't raise you to be a disrespectful brat!”

“Uxolo mama,” I rubbed my cheek. “I didn't mean to.” I felt 10 years old at that moment.

“What is it that we are failing at my son? Tell us. At 22 what more do you need from your mother and I. we sent you to school, best schools? Paid for your tertiary education. Paid for this place and yet you repay us with insolence!”

“Molweni tata no mama!” I exhaled a sigh of relief at Kamo's perfect timing. My mother's body visible relaxed and I saw a smile break on my father's face.

“Awu, ulapha na nontombi. How are you, baby,” my mother asked as she pulled her in for a hug then passed her over to my father who did the same.

“I’m okay mama, thank you for asking. Can I offer you anything to drink?” Kamo rubbed her hands on her jeans as she looked from my mother to father.

“Tea will be lovely sisi, thank you.” I looked at my mother with surprise because she didn’t seem as eager when I offered. Kamo disappeared into the kitchen leaving us in awkward silence. We were all seated now listening to the clanking of cups and the hum of the boiling kettle and microwave.

“Let me go help,” I quickly stood and rushed to the kitchen.

“Nice save baby.” I whispered the moment I entered the kitchen. “Did you call my parents and tell them I was out?” I asked helping her set the serving tray.

“Of course not! I spoke to my mom; she probably told your mom.” I groaned.

“Why would you tell your moms though? You want her to hate me?”

“Not my problem.” She took the tray to the living room while I followed with a ceramic milk jug with hot milk. We placed everything on the coffee table and Kamo started serving then she sat on the arm rest next to me. I only had a two-seater couch and my recliner.

“Kamo, will you excuse us for a moment. We have things to discuss with this one.” My father sweet tone didn’t fool me. Kamo didn’t waste time, she scrambled to her feet and quickly disappeared to the bedroom. I took a deep breath and braced myself.

“Son, you need to do better. Time doesn’t wait for no one and if you continue to squander your opportunities,

destroying your life in the process, we will have no choice but to cut you off, not just financially but from your trust fund as well.” He spoke quietly and measured. I knew it wasn’t a threat but a promise.

“Mama!” I looked pleadingly at my mother. The idea of being broke, freaked me out. I was banking on my trust fund pay-out in two years to inject much needed capital into my business. Yes, I wanted to be my own man, but that money was left for me by my grandfather. I wasn’t one to kick the gift horse in the nose. My brother had his when he came of age and as much as he still ran the family business, he made great investments with it.

“Haana Luthi, I’m with your father on this one!” she gingerly placed her cup on the table.

“You have one month to clean your act up and show us progress or else you are out!” He got on his feet while buttoning his jacket. “Let’s go sweetie.” He took my mom’s hand and led her towards the exit. My parents still looked young and acted that way, both in their early

fifties. They married at a very young age when my brother was conceived. They been married for as long as I can remember and still seemed to be head over heels in love, it was sickening to watch. They closed the door without a backward glance. I felt drained and my headache was back in full force. I prayed it wasn't another migraine. I suffered from those since high school. I felt a cool hand palming my cheek.

“Are you okay?”

“Ja, besides being cut-off, I'm super!” I gave her a fake smile and she crunched her nose.

“I'm sure they didn't mean it. Your parents love you. They want what's best for you, maybe you should indulge them a little.” Her placating tone grinded on my nerves.

“I need to get ready for work.” I got up and went to change, I felt her muted footsteps following me. it was one of those moments I needed to be alone.

“You promise to behave tonight, right? No partying until sunrise?”

“I can’t promise that babe. It’s a Friday and you know work can go until early hours of the morning.” I wore my uniform and then my biking gear over it and packed a change of clothes.

“Why are you packing a change of clothes? I thought you’d come straight home.” She frowned.

“Just in case babe. How about I order an Uber for you after work that way you can join me?” she perked up and I averted an argument I wasn’t in the mood for. I gave her a quick kiss.

“I love you, Smurfette.”

“I love you Luthi.” I took the keys to my bike and left.

(I'm full of it, I know 😁 . Tomorrow's insert will only be posted when I receive 300 shares. Let's get to it. It's my prerogative to post whenever but our schedule remains)

Chapter 2

I get home, switch on the light in the kitchen, take off my shoes by the door, throw my handbag and keys on the kitchen counter, then I head to the fridge and take out my half-finished bottle of wine from the previous night. I pour myself a glass and head to the lounge throwing myself on the one-seater that faces the balcony. My apartment is in an upmarket area an investment that I owed to myself. It's costing me a fortune but I'm not complaining. The interior is contemporary and spatial grounded in sleek and clean lines. I don't like clutter. Everything must have a purpose and have its space. The different shades of grey and gold dominate my living room and bedroom with splashes of colour here and there. The kitchen is mostly crispy white cabinets with silver and grey countertops. It may seem like no one lives in it which maybe accurate. I'm not much of a cook, but I do warm my prepacked meals in there occasionally. I am frequent customer at Uber eats. The bathroom and even

the one guestroom are both kept to the whole minimalist concept and feel.

I take a sip of my wine and savour it with my head thrown back against my seat. The seat is uncomfortable though, but it does make the place look great. Most of my living area furniture has a purpose none of which is to help you relax your body. Your mind maybe because the visual is amazing. I don't care, I spend half of my time in the bedroom. My bed is comfortable and my reading chair and couch in the room are comfortable. I don't care about anything else. I sit long enough to finish my glass of wine and I go for another one. As soon as I relax again my phone beeps signalling an incoming message. I know before I open that its Sakhi. He is the one that sends text messages. I open the message and read.

(The driver will be there in 30 min)

Fuck! I forgot the clothes in my car and I'm not about to go down there to fetch them. Well, my dresses will do. I lazily walk to my bedroom a glass in hand and my body

already feels warm. This is some strong wine. I suddenly regret agreeing to this date. I go through my walk-in closet and look for something to wear. My default outfit hangs glaringly in my face, challenging my loyalty. I succumb to the pressure and pick the black dress. Its short, provocative and hugs my body like it was sewn on me. Best part, it will annoy Sakhi. A smile creeps in at the thought. One of my pleasurable things. I lay the dress on the bed and go look for suitable shoes. Every pair has its cubicle in my shoe closet. I can easily find whatever I'm looking for even though I have pairs of shoes. A girl can never have enough shoes. I decide on the black high heel with silver spikes on the heel that threaten your life should they ever be used as a weapon. I take a quick shower and wear minimal make up. With the outfit I chose, I don't want to look like a cheap prostitute. Once dressed I stand in front of my full-size mirror, turn this way and that. Yep, I now look like a well-paid prostitute, awesome!

“You can do this Zizo. He is a good guy. Maybe give him a chance, mh! What could go wrong? The guy is loaded, handsome and a good size dick. But it doesn't get you there. What if it's a myth, no one can really get anyone

there. Use toys, you'll be fine. Give him a change." I nod my head in agreement and wave my mirror's image goodbye. It has been a great talk. Just as I finish with my pep talk, my phone rings. The driver tells me he has arrived and asks if I need assistance with anything. I decline the offer. Take my black clutch bag and lock up. Even the elevator has mirrors and I watch myself all the way to the ground floor. The moment I step out the apartment the driver is respectfully waiting by the entrance. I thank god he isn't wearing a suit.

"Good evening Miss Mabhanga." He slightly bows his head as he greets. I wonder if he has military training, the guy is so disciplined and well mannered.

"Evening Walter." He leads me to the sleek black car across the road. You'd swear he was transporting a minister. He opens the door at the back for me to get in. We drive in silence and I decide to be busy on my phone. He never attempts to make any small talk with me. he does what he is paid to do. I appreciate that about him. I must admit I am a bit curious to where we are going but I guess I'll find out soon enough. He parks in front of a very

popular restaurant amongst the upper class. I hear reservations needs to be done months in advance and its not just anyone who has the privileged of dining there. They are very particular and picky with their customers. I never bothered to book. The moment the car is parked a doorman is already opening my door and gives me his gloved hand to help me out. I don't argue, for once, I place my hand in his and he helps me through the door. Once I'm through a white lady with perfect teeth and a well-rehearsed smile welcomes me and offers to walk me to my table. The place is beautiful I must admit. The low hanging lightning is designed to create an intimate setting is very appealing to me. Its dominated by the dark wood and all shades of earthy tones from their table settings to the wall art. Its elegant yet homely and welcoming. The lady sashays her small butt and leads me to a table in a quieter corner as soon as she steps aside seemingly to hand me over. My heart leaps to my throat and not in a good way. Sakhi is on his feet thanking whoever the lady is that has brought me to their table. I say 'their' because there is a lovely couple sitting at the table looking at me as if they have just seen an alien. Sakhi seems a bit uncomfortable himself and it serves

him right. Why didn't he warn me that he was bringing friends along?

"Hey Zizo, you look..." he is struggling to find his words and seems very flustered and that's a new one I must admit. Sakhi is always in control.

"She looks beautiful honey." The lady sitting at the table sweetly says. Her smile is too big and bright, I know a fake smile when I see one. I give those on daily basis.

"Yes, she is. Zizo these are my parents, Mom, Dad, this is my girlfriend Zizo." Two things are strangling me right now. Firstly, Mom and dad. Secondly, girlfriend. We will deal with the later some other time. Mom looks maybe a few years older than me and dad looks like the type I'd like to fuck. He is damn sexy and oh boy is he sexy! Why is he ambushing me with his parents? He always gave an impression that it was only the mother in the picture. Well he hardly spoke about them except that he always said he wanted me to meet her. What makes things worse is that the mother looks really good. Either its

great genes or she frequents the gym. Either way she really makes me look like fat albert next to her. They are both on their feet and I plaster my own smile on my face and stretch out my hand in greeting. The handshakes are quick and soon Sakhi is opening a chair for me while his father does the same for the mother.

“My son tells me you run an ad agency!’ the father doesn’t waste time.

“Yes, I do.” My smile is faltering a bit. He doesn’t seem to be impressed but I suddenly realise I don’t give a fuck. I feel Sakhi’s arm go around my waist as he pulls me against him. I fight the urge to pull away. What the fuck is going on? Just then a waitress comes to take my order. I don’t dilly dally; I order a bottle of wine. The parents fail to disguise their shock. Too bad. I’m not their child. It doesn’t take long before the lovely waitress returns with my one. I go hard on my first sip. I need something stronger. We carry on for a while with small talk as they attempt to find out about me, my parents, kids if any, where I grew up. You know that usual sizing up to see if you are a suitable makoti sort. Dinner is a tight affair. I

did say I'm not one for small talks. Eventually I fall silent and enjoy my meal with the wine while they engage in small talk about business. It occurs to me that I don't know much about Sakhi nor about his business. The four-course meal is taking for ever but eventually dinner is over and all disasters seem to have been averted until the mother invites me to a family lunch at their home in two weeks. I have no choice but to be polite and accept. After the invite I excuse myself and go to the ladies. I'm annoyed right now. How am I cornered into meeting the family? The unanswered question has me wanting to scream profanities. I can't wait for us to be alone so that I can unleash my wrath on that idiot. An impact and a dash on something very cold flooding my chest gets me out of thoughts and catapults my anger into another level.

"What the fuck!" we both say at the same time. My assailant is standing there with his angry eyes almost bulging out as he accusingly stares at me. Why the fuck is he angry? I'm the one dripping sweat in the middle of a passage. The tray is on the floor with the jug in pieces.

“Fuck lady, why don’t you watch where you are going?” Unbelievable. I’m speechless. I can feel the coldness of what ever he spilled on me seeping under my bra and into my panties. I’m still in shock probably because my mouth is moving but nothing is coming out. Then he suddenly launches into my chest and starts patting me dry with a towel. I’m not sure if he realises that he is literally fondling my breast in full view of everyone. My nipples tighten and a strange tingle zap down south. It must be the cold. I come out of my stupor and land a hot klap on his face. How dare he? He seems to be surprised by that and stops in his tracks. He then realises where his hand is and quickly moves it as if being scalded.

“What is going on here?” the tight question comes from behind him and I can see him tightly close his eyes briefly.

“This idiot just poured a whole glass of ice water on my chest!” I launch my accusations immediately. I hate incompetent people. The person who seems like a manager looks at my assailant in anger.

“Gabada, what the hell is wrong with you?”

“The bitch bumped into me!” I’m not sure who gasps the loudest me or the manager.

“That’s it. I’ve had enough of your insolent behaviour. This is a final straw! How dare you insult the client. Apologise this once and then pack your things. You are fired!” I’m not sure I would apologise after being fired but I stand and wait for it. This boy smirks and moves closer to me cups both my breast and pinch my nipples.

“I’m sorry!” I’m incensed I launch at him with my raised hand. He catches it mid-air. “Sorry mami, I thought from your earlier reaction you needed more.” His smirks turn into a grin.

“Let go of me!” he does. “How dare you? Do you know who I am?”

“Apologies mam for this, please do forgive his atrocious behaviour. We will make sure that security escorts him out of the establishment.” I see him throw the towel on the floor and walks away. “Accept our apologies and as a token of apology, your dinner for you and companions will be on the house.” I nod my head distractedly.

“Excuse me.” I leave the baffled manager and run towards the direction the brat went. I still needed to give him a piece of my mind for the familiar way he handled me. I can’t see him anywhere. I realise I still need to pee, so I give up the chase and go to the bathroom. Once done with my business I try and use the hand drier to dry my dress but unless I strip it off it won’t work. I’m not about to strip in a public toilet so I give up. I’m mortified as I walk back to my table. My nipples have been standing to attention since the incident and there is nothing I can do. I can still feel the imprint of his hands on my breast. I feel branded. Sakhi gets on his feet as I approach. His eyes widen as he looks at me.

“What happened? I was about to go look for you?”

“An incompetent waiter happened.” I mumble taking my seat.

“Oh dear, your dress is ruined.” The mother says. Sakhi quickly takes off his jacket and drapes it on my shoulder. I pull it tighter against my chest. I’m worried by how my body just reacted to a stranger’s touch, a boy at that. What is wrong with me?

“Sakhi, it’s late. Let me take your mother home. It’s been a pleasure meeting you Zizo.” The father says getting on his feet and his wife does the same. As Sakhi stands I have no choice but to. He hugs them and I’m not sure if the same is expected of me, but the mother solves my dilemma by stretching her perfectly manicured hand towards me.

“It was lovely meeting you dear.” She says.

“Likewise, mam.” The father quickly shakes my hand and then takes his wife's hand as they walk off. I throw myself in my chair in relief.

“What the fuck was that?” he cringes.

“Zizo, come on. If I had told you that we were meeting my parents would you have agreed to come?” his earnest and apologetic look gets to me.

“Of course not. But a little warning would’ve been appreciated.” His eyes widen as if to say ‘really’. “I know I wouldn’t have come still. I don’t understand why I needed to meet you parents Sakhi. He takes my hand in his and my small hand is dwarfed by his big one.

“Zizo, I know for some reason you don’t want to accept that I love you. I know you love me too and I’ll not force you to admit that. I am a patient man.” I’m deeply frowning right now.

“Sakhi, don’t mistake my kindness for love. Just because we sleep together, doesn’t mean I love you. I feel like you

are setting yourself up for disappointment if you expect anything more of me.”

“Why are you still with me then? It’s been two years, if you don’t love me, why? I know it’s not my money?” I wreck my brain for an answer, and it doesn’t come.

“You are going to be disappointed Sakhi.” He pulls me towards him, and our faces are inches apart.

“I’ll take that chance.” His breath fans my face as my earlier rubdown with the waitress flashes in my mind. The same reaction is back, and it intensifies when Sakhi's lips capture mine. I don’t question the weird reaction instead I reciprocate the kiss that quickly becomes heated. We pull away and I can see Sakhi is surprised by my reaction. “Let’s get out of here.” I only nod my head. I’m suddenly eager to get home with him. There is a fire burning within and I need him to put it out. We quickly leave the restaurant and my hand is firmly held in his as he leads me to the car. The driver is waiting outside. He doesn’t wait for him to open. Once the car starts moving,

we are all over each other with our lips locked. This is an interesting development. I am straddling his lap and I can feel the growing bulge against my mound. I feel things are about to get out of hand and I'm sure Walter can see us on his review mirror. I slow things down and move back to my sit. He takes my hand in his and keeps it in his grasp until we get to my place. We quickly scramble out of the car and almost run into the apartment.

Once inside clothes start flying everywhere. I'm needy. Once we are both completely naked, he picks me up and walks to the bedroom. He lays me down on the bed and starts planting kisses everywhere. I don't want his sensual loving right now. I want it hard and fast.

"Sakhi, condom." He looks up from my chest a frown marring his face. When he sees that I'm serious as a heart attack , he reaches to the side drawer where I keep them and takes one out. When he is done putting it on, I'm already on my knees. I push him back and have him lie on his back as I straddle him. I sit on him until he is buried deep. Then I start riding him like a woman possessed.

“Easy, baby,” he says between his greeted teeth. I can barely hear him. This is it. This could be that elusive moment. I can feel it building. The boy’s smirk works itself into my mind and my eyes fly open and I watch Sakhi with his head thrown backwards and eyes tightly shut, he is barely holding on I can see.

“I’m almost there.” I say incoherently. His fingers dig into my thighs and he starts meeting my thrusts with his. I’m on the verge and I’m elated. I hear his loud groan at the same time he holds me still. I can’t move an inch and I know I’ll be bruised from this grip. A loud protest escapes my lips. I was so close. His body jerks until he is completely spent and losses his grip. A wave of disappointment washes over me as I dismount him. I lie next to him and bury my hands between my thigh and I furiously rub chasing my own orgasm.

“Let me do that,” he says getting up. The feeling is completely gone, and I can’t get it back. I’m angry. I push myself off the bed and stomp towards the bathroom.

“Don’t bother Sakhi. You need to go. I have an early morning tomorrow.”

“It’s a Saturday.” I can tell he is still trying to recover from his climax.

“I know but I have clients to meet. You’ll see yourself out.” I close the bathroom door behind me and get under the shower. What the fuck just happened?

Chapter 3

This shit is fucked up! Those were my thoughts as I walked back into the change room. I had been fired just like that. I must admit, I wasn’t surprised. The manager of the place is an ass and I couldn’t see myself working there for long either. What surprised me was my reaction to the lady. I had suddenly developed an urge to push all her buttons. Her uppity attitude had grated on my balls. I couldn’t help myself. An atrocious way to behave and inexcusable but I still did it and got satisfaction from her reaction. Maybe it was time I went and humbled myself

and worked for my father. The thought had my stomach-turning in knots. I wouldn't survive his gloating and at the fact that he would have succeeded in roping me in. There must be another way. Just as I was taking my soaked T-shirt off, Natasha a colleague, well ex colleague, came in. she must have followed me. Everyone was busy in the restaurant and they were short staffed. People didn't stay long in that place.

“I hear you just been fired.” She walked up to me and stood before me, too close. I was in the men's changing room, so her visit was intentional. I rummaged through my backpack looking for another t-shirt and I could feel her eyes on me the entire time.

“News travel fast around here.” I felt her cool hand run through my back, breaking my body into goose bumps and I got up from my bag with a t-shirt in hand.

“I actually watched the whole exchange from across the room. What got into you?” her hand laid on the side of my waist as nonchalantly looked at her. She is short and

only came up to my chest. Her brow knitted in a frown as she looked up at me. She is of mixed race possible white and Asian and she is gorgeous. Her long black hair was tied in a loose bun revealing her long neck.

“It must have been a show for you then. Why are you here Nat?” She rapidly blinked.

“I wanted to see if you were okay.” She placed her palms on my chest and slid them up until her hands were wrapped around my neck. Warmth rushed through me at the touch and I smiled inwardly. Her body moved closer to mine and her tongue snacked out to wet her pouty lips, my whole body tightened. I threw the t-shirt I held and placed my hand on her ass and moved her body against mine. She licked her lips again.

“I’m not okay. What are you going to do about it?” I felt myself growing hard and I made sure she felt it too. Her eyes slightly grew wide. I liked her coy attitude. Hiding behind the innocent façade.

“This.” She went on her toes while pulling my head down and kissed me. I reciprocated the kiss. I always knew she wanted me but never acted on it. We flirted and teased each other from time to time but nothing ever came off it, besides I am a perpetual flirt. Right then though I said screw it, she offered herself and I wasn’t about to turn down the offer. As the kiss became heated, I easily dealt with her clothes and left her completely naked before me. She wasn’t idle either as she quickly dealt with my jeans and underwear. ‘The door?’ she whispered.

“Leave it.” The idea of being caught was exciting. I sat on the bench while she stood between my legs. “Are you sure you want this?” She responded by taking my tool in her hand and began stroking me. I put my hand in my backpack and blindly looked for condoms. I never left home without. I found one and gave it to her then I watched as her tiny hands shook while she put it on. She didn’t waste time; she lifted her legs to straddle me and sank into me in one swift move. We both let out satisfied groans. She rode me like a stallion until we were both moaning our release in each other’s lips.

“Even better than I imagined,” she whispered when she finally managed to calm her breathing.

“I always aim to please. You know where to find me when you need more.” Her flushed face broke into a wide grin.

“I’m not stupid Luthi, you have a live-in girlfriend and I know the deal with you. Even though I enjoyed myself, immensely, I’m not applying for a heartbreak.” I smiled. If all girls were like this, life would be so much fun.

“Just saying.” I winked at her then lifted her off me. I disposed of the condom and started getting dressed. Once we were both dressed, we left the change room. In the passage I gave her a quick kiss and walked away. She had helped me lessen the aggression; I still needed a drink. A message came through while I walked towards my bike. It was a friend of mine telling me that they were in a club and invited me over. Perfect plan I thought. I quickly sent a message to Kamo telling I would be delayed at work then switched my phone off and drove

to the club. I found my two friends, Tino and Ashlyn, in the VIP section already surrounded by girls. I met the two in our first year at university. Tino studied Commercial Law and was currently an intern in his fathers' firm. Ashlyn was still studying to be a doctor; he also had an option of working in his fathers' practice when he is done with his studies. They thought I was being a stupid fool for not working for my father. They didn't know how controlling the man could be. Loving yes, good father absolutely but he thought things should go his way, always. I've watched him mould my brother and making a mini version of him. To a point that I think my brother struggles to assert his will. I loved my father, but I wanted to live life on my own terms.

"Whatsup!" I greeted once I got to their table and sat on the empty seat. The table was already filled with different bottles of alcohol and a hubbly. I also knew that Tino's hubbly' were potent.

"Awe, Luthi. You are early today," Tino said shaking my hand. He had a chick sitting on his lap wearing close to nothing. I shook Ashlyn's hand as well who had two girls

sitting on either side of him. People named us players throughout University, I didn't know why I was attached to such a stigma. I was always with Kamo. Okay maybe a few hooks up now and again but I wasn't as bad as those two were. They were always with different women every weekend. Tino coloured, tall and handsome and he knew it. Ashlyn, Indian, originally from Durban. Shorter than the both of us with his spiked hair, but don't let the height fool you, he was as full of himself as Tino and I. We did everything together except for work and fucking.

"I got fired!" I said taking a bottle of whiskey on the table, poured myself a shot and downed it in one go. Had my senses fired up and blood feeling warmer. Just what I needed. The two didn't seem surprised. They never understood why I worked at a restaurant, a job that was beneath me. Part of me working there had to do with the fact that I needed to connect with regular people. I sometimes felt like my life was in a bubble and I needed to understand and empathise with the struggle of our people. My brother and I grew up sheltered and with money that we didn't even know what to do with. Everything was done for us and we didn't know any other way. All that was expected from us was to do well with

everything that we did, education and sports. We excelled at it as our parents beamed with pride and paraded us for all to see. Some people termed us spoilt and entitled, they could be right. I needed more though, there must be more to life than how I lived, I just didn't know how so I looked for jobs in the lowliest places. Even then I couldn't relate to their daily struggles, shelter, transport and all day today expenses but I listened and soaked myself in their lives and stories. I was hoping that one day I could be the difference but right at that moment I needed to be fucked, drunk that is.

"It's about damn time my outie, you were fucken wasting your time in that shit hole!" Ashlyn said pulling at the hubbly. It amused me that he'd refer to the most expensive restaurant in town as a shit hole. But I understood his meaning. Places like that didn't treat their staff with the same respect they afforded their customers. It was truly a shit hole in that kitchen.

"Time you got a decent job, bruh. Stop wasting your time with whatever it is that you are into. Its not worth it."

Tino said not even looking at me but at the barely there cleavage of the girl on his lap.

“I hear you.” I took a swig of my drink and sat back staring at the two girls sitting opposite me. They were both looking at me expectantly, my boys had promised that the two would be waiting. I winked and nodded my head and they giggled. Too easy. I gestured with my head for them to move closer and they eagerly responded. The night moved fast with the drinks and dancing we didn't need anything else.

I woke up to a sound of clanking bottles. I tried to open my eyes, but my eyelids were heavy, and my head was throbbing. I tried to move my body, but it felt numb. A jolt of panic went through me, thinking I was in an accident. I forced my eyes to open and was blinded by the sun filtering through the windows. Relief washed over me. I looked down to find the two chicks from last night sprawled half naked over me. I looked to my left and it was the same thing with a passed-out Ashlyn, Tino had his girl sleeping on his chest while straddling him. I squinted to try and find the source of all the commotion

and I saw two cleaners picking up bottles and throwing them into the black plastic bag.

“Hey, hey, hey.” I slightly shook the girls and they began to rouse. “You need to get up.” My gruff tone had everyone else waking up.

“Yoh, what’s the time.” Tino asked as he stretched himself the lady on his lap nearly fell off.

“I don’t know but its morning and we need to vie.” I got up and checked my groin area, my jeans were still intact. I hated the moments of uncertainty as I was a stickler for protection. I love fucking just like everybody else, but I was very particular about who and how I did it. I took out my phone from my back pocket and switched it on. Messages came flooding. All from Kamo. Fucking shit. “Ja, gents. I’m out.” I staggered towards the exit. Everyone else followed. We put the girls in an uber and went our separate ways. The hum of my motorcycle caused havoc in my head, I wanted to scream. The only good thing was that it helped me get home quicker.

“Its fucking 10 am Luthi.” She screamed the moment I walked through the door. It felt like she was pounding my head with a hammer.

“No now Kamo!’ I could barely see as I walked past her. I needed a shower maybe it would help clear the haze and calm my pounding head. I could hear her rushed footsteps as she followed me. I quickly got into the bathroom and locked. I stood under the steam until the water became cold. It still didn’t help. I took two headache tablets and wrapped the towel around my waist. When I got in the bedroom, she had the contents of my backpack thrown on the bed and the opened box of condoms in her hand waving it at me.

“Condoms Luthi? What are you doing with condoms? You are fucking someone else, aren’t you?” I really wanted to create a good excuse, but I felt dizzy and nauseous.

“Those are Tino’s. I was with them last night.” I walked towards the window and closed the blinds making the room dark.

“Doesn’t Tino have his own bag?” I didn’t have the patience for the spitting dragon.

“Baby call Tino and ask him yourself. Right now, my head is merciless. Please.” I opened the bed cover and covered my head. I heard her bang the door closed, and I breathed a sigh of relief. I listened to my thudding head until I drifted off to sleep.

When I woke up the house was quiet, and my headache was nothing but a dull pain. I wore my sweatpants and padded to the kitchen. I took a bottle of coke and tipped my head back and drank.

“Mama taught us to use a glass.” I nearly choked on the cold drink.

“Fuck man, I didn’t see you there.” My brother was relaxed on the couch with his feet crossed on the table.

“I could tell. How is your head?” I walked over to him and we fist bumped.

“Its better. How did you know about my headache and how long have you been here?”

“Since morning. I got here just before Kamo left. She said to tell you she is visiting his mom.” I sat on my recliner and noticed that its position had changed only then did I notice that the house was super clean.

“You cleaned.” It was a statement.

“And you are a slob.”

“Did mom and dad send you?”

“Do I need a reason to visit my little brother?” I raised my eyebrows. “Okay fine, mom told me about their visit yesterday. What’s happening?” God, I hated his calm and unfazed demeanour. He always seemed like he had life figured out while some of us were still swimming.

‘I got fired at my last job. Dad has threatened to cut me off, even from my trust fund. Can he do that?’ My brother sighed and rubbed his head roughly. It was always weird to see the unruly side of his hair, but I thought the look made him human and approachable.

“He can try and can certainly frustrate you with lawyers that you can’t afford. Why do you refuse to come work for him? You’d essentially be helping me in a way. The business is our legacy Luthi, no matter how you feel about it. You can’t run away from it forever.” I could try.

“Ah bruh. I don’t know how you handle dad. I just need him to see and acknowledge that I’m my own man.”

“Do you see me as his minion?”

“I didn’t mean that. With you its always been different. You don’t seem suffocated by them. Mom adores you. You are the perfect son.” He sat up and balanced his elbows on his knees as his frown deepened.

“That’s not true and you know it. Our parents love us equally. You might be a bit of a challenge for them, but they don’t love you any less.” I shrugged my shoulders. He never understood my struggle.

“I just want to do my own thing man.”

“How can I help?”

“I’ll let you know.” I needed cash but my pride wouldn’t allow me to ask him. I still believed that I could make it on my own.

“Just so you know, I’ve got you. Alright?’ He has always had my back. I suppose at first, he had no choice. I came as a surprise baby. At thirteen, he probably thought he

would be an only child until I came and blew that theory. 'Okay let me go. I have work to do. Call me, alright. Go see a doctor for those headaches.'" I nodded my head and we both got on our feet and quickly hugged each other. After he left, I called Kamo and it went to voicemail. I sent her a message apologising about last night or this morning.

I was starving and couldn't cook to save my life, so I ordered food. . While I waited, I went through my phone and looking through some job's sites. Maybe I should just take my family up on their offer. I was running out of excuses. I saw a few jobs that piqued my interest. The kind that didn't tie me down to office hours and I sent my application through. Just as I was about to log off one advert for a driver at an add agency captured my interest. They needed someone with matric, licence and at least two years driving experience. I ticked all the boxes. I sent through my application just as the door bell rang possibly indicating a delivery of my food.

(Thank to those who share the page and mentions. The page is growing because of you. Much appreciated 🙏)

Chapter 4

It's a Saturday afternoon, still in my office. I only came for one client, but I ended up going through reports that ignored during the week. I don't really have anything to do when I get home besides binging on Netflix and popcorn. Maybe I should go home and watch this much talked about show *When They See Us*. Everyone says it's a tearjerker, not for me, my tear gland probably dried while I was still in the womb.

My phone rings and it's an unfamiliar number. I reluctantly answer, I don't want business calls currently, I'm ready to go home.

"Zizo good day"

"Good day mam, I have a delivery for you downstairs."
My hackles go up. I'm alone in the bloody building. Okay except for the security downstairs.

"Are you sure it's for me?"

“Are you Zizomila Mabhanga?” bloody hell. They didn’t need to use my whole fucking name.

‘I’ll be right down.’ I take my phone and lock the office, for some reason, I’m always paranoid about being alone in the building. I find the delivery man standing by the security guy with a picnic basket in his hand and a bunch of flowers. I sign and take everything up to the office. Once there I look for a place to put the flowers. Mel usually does all this. I don’t know where the vase is. What do I do with flowers? Maybe I should take a pic and post on Instagram. My body repels that thought with a shudder, why do people do that? Don’t get me started on the food posts. I decide to place the bunch on the coffee table and open the picnic basket. A card falls out. Pristine handwriting.

‘I thought you could use some lunch. I would’ve brought it myself, but I didn’t want to intrude. It’s a peace offering for last night. Love Sakhile.’ An involuntary smile creeps in as I look at the contents of the basket. All my faves, hot wings, riblets, kebabs, assorted cheese, with

sauces and a bottle of wine, and a slice of cheesecake. They are all compartmentalized and in small portions. I swoon at the sight. I sit on the carpet and start eating. The different flavors bursts through and explode in my mouth, I'm in heaven. There is only one thing left and it's the cheesecake. I'm debating whether to continue or save it for later. My stomach decides for me, I'm too full to stomach anything. I pour myself a half glass of wine and wash down everything. I will not be going back to work after this. I pick up my phone and call Sakhi.

"Hi Zizo." His lazy baritone vibrates through my ear.

"Hi Sakhi." The huskiness again, I clear my throat.

"Thank you for the picnic basket. I loved it."

"I'm glad." There is an awkward pause. "Are you still at the office?"

"Yes, but I'm finishing up."

“Good, you need to rest. You work too hard.”

“Says the pot to a kettle.” He chuckles and then another silence. “Would you like to come over for dinner?” where the hell did that come from? There is a long pause on the other side. “Sakhi?”

“Yeah.” He clears his throat. “Yes. I’d love to.”

“Okay. See you at seven.” I quickly hang up. I frown and look in my mirror. What’s happening girl? No wonder the man is shocked you never invited him for anything. Why are you inviting him? Maybe to thank him for a thoughtful gesture? He has given you gifts before. But not food. Mhm, keep telling yourself that. Oh, piss off! I walk away from the unruly mirror and pack up my stuff. On my way home I realise that I invited a man for dinner, and I might need to cook. I suddenly need to impress him. I decide to detour and go to Woolworths. Once there I google simple recipes. Grilled chicken and a side salad seem easy enough. Its about time my oven was

initiated. I get all the ingredients and some. I am a shopaholic, whenever I start, I can't seem to stop. I push the loaded trolley out of the shop with things I'll probably never use again.

When I get home, I immediately regret the impromptu grocery shopping when I must make several trips to my car and now the staff is all over my kitchen counters. I'm too full to do anything so I decide to go take a nap. I'm woken up by a ringing phone. The room is dark, and I jump to my feet. By the time I grab my phone it has stopped ringing and then the doorbell rings. Its ten minutes past seven. My word, dinner is still in the plastic shopping bags. I immediately walk to the door and buzz him in then run to the kitchen. Prep time for the full chicken might be a lot so I abort the grilled chicken and decide to make pasta. Creamy chicken pasta seems to be easier. There is a knock on the door, and I go open. I'm temporarily speechless. His hair isn't neatly combed, it looks like it was messed up on purpose. He is wearing slim fitting faded jeans, grey short sleeved t-shirt also slightly showing his impressive physique and sneakers. They might be crispy white but sneakers, nonetheless. Who is this rugged hunk?

“Sakhi!’ it comes out as a rushed breath and he raises his bushy eyebrows.

“Yes?’

“Oh. Oh. Eeh. Come in.” I open the door wide and he walks through. He looks around the place as if he hadn’t seen it before.

“You went grocery shopping.”

“Yeah.”

“Need help with anything?” I wildly shake my head.

“No, I’m good. Do you need anything? Wine, juice, coffee?’ Did I buy coffee?

“A glass of wine will be fine, thank you.”

“Okay, go sit that side.” I physically usher him towards the lounge. Once I given him his glass of wine, I quickly check the recipe and start cooking.

“Do you mind if I switch on the TV?” He shouts from the lounge. Why is he even asking?

“Go ahead.” I hear the news channel come on. Why am I not surprised?

It only takes me twenty minutes to prepare and I’m happy with my end product, thanks to the already prepared sauce I had bought earlier. This cooking thing might not be bad after all. I dish up for him and myself and go place them in the dining room table. After the cutlery and the rest of the wine with glasses is set on the table, I call him. He switches off the TV and comes to sit on the dining room.

“This looks good.” He says looking into his plate.

“Thank you. Bon Appetit.” I watch him take the first bite then there is slight flicker of emotion I can’t explain on his face. “How is it?” he nods his head and gives me a thumbs up. I exhale. Then eagerly take a bite. Then I splutter all over the table. I look up at him to find him still trying to chew the first bite. “Goodness Sakhi spit it out!” I throw my napkin at him. His eyes are full of laughter. Its not funny to me, I am mortified. The pasta is uncooked and the sauce tastes like sour cream while the pieces of chicken breasts are rubbery. He finally swallows and I want to die right then.

“It’s not bad Zizo.” As he is about to go for another scoop. I jump and take away the plate. I’ll not have him poison himself.

“It’s terrible and you know it. I’m sorry. I’ll order something. What do you feel like having?” he holds my hand still as I’m about to take his plate.

“How about we clean this up and I cook something for us.”

“No, I invited you. It will take an hour maximum for the food to get here.”

“I don’t mind cooking Zizo.” I stare at him for a second then nod my head. True to his word he helps me clean up and pack the groceries as he does that, he decides on what to make. “We need fresh herbs, do you have?” I look at him like he has grown horns. I told him we should order.

“I have spices, and some dry herbs I just bought and will probably never use.” I show him to the cabinet.

“Maybe, I should come here more often so that I can cook for you. It’s a crime to waste all this food.” He takes out the spices and I watch his back muscles work as he lifts his arms to reach the top shelf. His t-shirt rides high revealing his lower back. The man has a great body. Why

haven't I noticed that? I refill my glass and watch as he cooks.

"Don't push it Sakhi." He chuckles.

"Why are you so scared of commitment?" His is using all the green herbs spicing the chicken. Its going to be one of those bland meals.

"I'm not. I just don't believe that in the times we live in people can be faithful to one person."

"I can."

"You are one in a million, the stories I hear from couples are enough to make me not want to go that route."

"Your parents seem solid."

“They are a different generation. I don’t think I can be faithful to one person.” His head jerks up but his expressionless. I could kick myself. I’m suddenly riddled with regret and I question that feeling too.

“Are you telling me there is someone else?” he looks down on the chicken.

“No, well except for my blue rabbit.”

“Aah, that!” he is finally done prepping the chicken then he puts it in the oven. He seems to be at ease in the kitchen, more relaxed.

“Do you cook a lot?” He smiles.

“Yeah. I love cooking. It relaxes my mind.”

“Really, you need a better hobby.” He shrugs his shoulders and rummages through the fridge for all salad ingredients. He has two potatoes in a foil ready for the

oven. What ever he does and prepares he cleans after himself. I thought I was neat, his is more like an obsession. We speak about general things until he announces with flourish that dinner is ready. I'm on my third glass and I feel nice and mellow. We sit in the dining room again but this time the meal is edible, no, its scrumptious. How does he make such a simple meal taste this good? I'm chewing the bones to the marrow and he is watching me to something akin to horror on his face.

"There is more chicken."

"I enjoy chewing my bones, but I'll have another piece." He gets up and goes to get me two extra pieces. He is mistaken if he thinks they will derail me from chewing my bones. We eat our dinner over a pleasant conversation which continues longer after we are done. I'm on my fourth glass of wine and I'm lit and horny. He is suddenly very appealing and sexy. The way he throws his head back when he laughs. The way his eyes dance with mischief as he stares me. The way his slightly thick and wide lips work as he chews. He perfect beard suits him

and add to his manly appeal. Then I suddenly realise he enjoys teasing me and most of the time I always take them as jabs. He has a dry sense of humor and I have been missing it.

“Why are you looking at me like that?” He asks his forehead folding into deep lines. He does that a lot.

“You seem different tonight.” I lick the rim of my glass. My one foot in the chair I’m sitting on and my arms balanced on it.

“And you are cute when you’re drunk.” He smirks as he stands and begins to clean up the table. I dramatically groan and roll my eyes. I stagger a bit as I stand on my feet.

“You are such a bore Sakhi.” I follow him to the kitchen with my hips swinging from side to side. “This is a clear come on and you blatantly refuse? I know when I’m drunk and right now, I’m not. I can handle my alcohol.” He is busy clearing the sink while I wave my half-filled glass in the air.

“Maybe I should go before we both say things will regret.” He is wiping his hands and moves towards me.

“Maybe you should, that way I can have the fun I deserve with my rabbit.” He slight pulls me closer and softly kisses me on my temple. I lean forward for more. he pulls away.

“Have fun, I’ll call you?” I’m perplexed.

“What was the point of this dinner if its not for us to end up shagging like rabbits?” I ask just before he reaches the door.

“Your lovely company and to get to know each other.” My head rears backwards.

“I don’t do love Sakhi.”

“So, you keep saying. Unfortunately for you, I do, and my love is patient.” With that he walks out leaving me confused in the middle of my kitchen. I decide not to dwell on any thing I’m feeling. I go for a quick shower and pass out the moment I hit the pillow. The following day I decide to put that moment of weakness that occurred the previous night behind me. I don’t reconcile the needy person I was to an extent of cooking. I scoff at the memory. I decide to call my friend Pearl. I haven’t seen her in a while. She can’t see me. She is away to visit her in-laws. So, I decide to visit my parents. I find my mom on her knees, buried under a huge sun hat tending to her flowers. It’s her Sunday routine and she doesn’t like to be disturbed. I don’t go to her I go in the house instead and there is no one in. The house is clean with the breeze flowing through from all the opened windows. I search the whole house and there is no sign of my father. I spot him sitting under the tree in our backyard. That huge tree has been around probably as long as I have been around. I run towards him and he stands when he sees me. I lung into his open arms and feel their familiar warmth and comfort. I am home.

“How are you daddy?” We pull apart and I take a seat next to his.

“I’m fine nontombi? How are you?”

“I’m fine daddy. Just missing you. This place is too quiet. I can see mama still loves her garden.”

“Some things never change.” He says looking in the distance. “That’s why I need grandbabies to keep me busy.” He looks back at me.

“You have Nkanyezi for that.” My brother already has a child with one on the way.

“His family is in Cape Town.”

“Yho hayike daddy, you’ll wait for them to come for the holidays.”

“Why must you take yourself out of this equation?”

“Daddy, I am still a child myself, I can’t bring another one.” He shakes his head.

“You know, I raised you to be strong and independent so that no man will ever take advantage of you. No man is an island Zizomila. We all need someone to love and that doesn’t take away your strength or independence.”

“Men in our times are threatened by strong women, daddy.”

“Do you even allow them to show you differently?”

“Hayi, daddy. I’m not here for a love sermon. Let me go disturb mama instead. I love you.” I quickly walk away not missing his soft chuckle.

I spend the whole day with them enjoying mama’s cooking. She seems to pick up where her husband left off

only, she is not as subtle as him. She reminds me of my age and vehemently tells me that my biological clock is ticking. I'm even tempted to throw in Sakhi's name just to placate them, but I know that will definitely backfire. When I finally leave, I'm loaded with Tupperware containers of food to probably last me a week. Blessings of going home. Once at my place, I prepare outfits for the week ahead with shoes and bags that I'll use. I decide on dresses for the week. I love my dresses they always border on being slutty, but I try and tone it down for work, well as much as my body would allow. Just as I'm about to fall asleep a message comes through.

'Are you still mad at me?' Oh Sakhi. I contemplate ignoring and against my better judgement I reply.

'No, why should I be?'

'I may have insulted you when I left last night. I feel bad.'
Now I feel bad.

'No, you weren't. I was a bit intoxicated.'

‘So, can I come over?’ My eyes roll. Not a chance!

‘Right now? Its late Sakhi and I’m already in bed.’

‘But your light is still on.’

‘Are you outside?’

‘Yes, now can I please come up. Just a chat, nothing else.’
I take a deep breath and reply with a yes. Within a few minutes he is inside the bedroom and taking his sneakers off then he gets on the bed behind me and pulls me to him with his clothes still on.

“I thought you came to chat.”

“Goodnight Zizo.” Is he drunk? This is a shocker! He tightens his arms around me and I then I hear his light snoring. He is drunk.

(Thank you for the shares. They motivate me 🍷)

Chapter 5

By Tuesday I couldn't take it anymore. I was bored at home with nothing to do but to think of my father's impending threat. I had spent Sunday getting drunk with my brother. For the first time in my life I was able to see him vulnerable, it was funny yet heart-breaking. With all his money and his looks, he couldn't get a girl he loved. I advised him to ditch the bitch and move on. From what he told me, I didn't think she was worth it, I don't care how beautiful she is.

Kamo hadn't been returning my call as well so my brother and I had that to mope about as well. While I waited to hear from the places, I had applied into I decided to drive over to her mom's place. Three days without sex was a bit much and I needed to make sure if she was in or out. I found myself parked in front of her house and I buzzed the intercom by her gate with no response. Fortunately for me the gardener was in and

knew me, so he opened for me. After the pleasantries he told me that Kamo was home and fortunately for me both the parents were at work. I knocked on her front door and she opened still in her onesie. I could see by the widening of her eyes that she was surprised to see me.

“What are you doing here?” her nostrils flared as she folded her arms in her chest making it clear that I wasn’t welcome. Her light skin glowed as the sun hit her face. The white in her eyes was crystal clear while the black was pitch black and it became bright in the sunlight. Everything about her was in proportion to her tiny frame.

“Ha Smurfette, you won’t even let me in?” Her eyes flashed with anger.

“I don’t have time for your bullshit Luthi, what do you want?” she barred the entrance with her body. I almost laughed at that, almost. I wasn’t ready to have my head chopped off.

“I miss you.” She glared at me. “I’m sorry baby. I’ll do better. I know I fucked up on Friday. I don’t deserve you.” I tried and dished out my most remorseful face I could master.

“I’m not your toy to be used as you please Luthi. I have feelings that matter, and I will not have you take me for granted. I deserve better than that.”

“I know baby. I’ve been an ass to you, but I swear I would never intentionally hurt you. You matter to me Smurfette. Its always me and you against the world baby.” She held her arms and rubbed vigorously as if she was suddenly attacked by a gust of cold wind.

“Are you cheating on me?” she squinted her eyes at me as if she could see into my soul.

“Never, I may be a lot of things Kamo but I’m not a cheater.” My voice came out steady and assuring. She blinked twice and gestured with her head for me to follow her as she walked back into the house. I let out

breath I didn't even realise I was holding. I watched as her tiny waist swayed from side to side. Her thick onesie did nothing to shield her body from my wondering eye. I knew from memory what laid underneath and it was creamy perfection. I felt myself tighten at the thought and inwardly berated myself. I didn't want her to think I was sex starved. my coming over to her house had to be of purest intentions. She led me to the lounge, and I sat next to her on the couch.

"You hurt me Luthi and if you do that again I will leave you." She warned.

"I would never do anything to make me lose you, Smurfette. We are a team." I placed my hand behind her neck and slightly pulled her closer she didn't resist. I knew then that I was in as I pulled her towards me with more determination as our lips collided. I kissed her like I was a man who had been starved of water in the desert. She responded in kind as I felt her hands around my shoulders. I picked her up and placed her on my lap as she sat straddling me, her heated core nestled against my hardened core and I felt heat spread throughout my

body. Her tongue was insistent against mine, then I pulled away.

“Let’s go home.” My voice came out deep and thick with need. She blinked at me, her eyes bright with need and her face flushed. Then she quickly snaked out her tongue and moistened her lips. My body further tightened, and I questioned my sanity for halting things.

“I’m home Luthi.” She cleared her throat. “I don’t think this living together thing is ideal. We are both too young to put such pressure on the relationship.” It was my turn to blink.

“What do you mean? I thought we were cool.”

“We are, I just don’t think its wise for us to be a live-in couple. I’ll visit you but I won’t be staying with you. That is final, its either that or we completely break up.” I shrugged my shoulders.

“I suppose we can start to properly date then. When can I have you over at the flat?” she cupped my face and smiled.

“You have to court me first.” I frowned. ‘Court’ which century were we in?

“What do you mean court you?” she caressed my jaw and slightly pulled at my ears, while I slowly responded by leaning towards her soft touch.

“Take me out on dates, do fun things outside of the bedroom as we get to know each other. Let’s wait for at least six weeks to have sex.” I felt my eyes going out of their sockets. Six weeks! Was she mad?

“Six weeks! Without sex Kamo! That’s torture.” I was battling with three days.

“Unfortunately, that’s what we have. You have to prove yourself Luthi maybe you’ll stop taking me for granted.” I

didn't know who had been coaching her, but she seemed to have everything worked out.

“We've been fucking like monkeys for the past four years and now you want to halt things. That's punishment.” I even sounded whiney in my own ears. She shrugged her shoulder and got off my lap.

“Maybe that's where we went wrong. You got in with me way too easy, you do not appreciate me. This will be good for both of us. You'll see.”

“What am I going to do with this for six weeks?” I gestured at the bugle behind my zipper.

“Are we only about sex Luthi?” she raised her one eyebrow challenging me. I felt myself walking into a trap and I decided to fold.

“I'm sorry baby, its just that I'm thinking with my small head. I'll do whatever you need from me, okay.” She

nodded her head. I stood and pulled her in my arms for a hug while she wrapped her arms around my waist. We stood like that for a few seconds then we pulled apart. “I have to go. I’ll call you.” She nodded her head once more and walked me to the door. My mind kept thinking about her over the roar of my bike as I navigated the busy streets towards home. I wasn’t ready to lose her, I must admit. She is one person that got me, she might be a little nag when she needed attention but deep down, I knew I needed her as much as she did me, a thought I refused to entertain. I didn’t like to be forced or manipulated into situations. I was too young for that shit. Life had to be lived. The moment I got home, a private number came through. It was one of the places I had applied into over the weekend. They asked me to come for an interview the following day. It was strange how quick they responded but I didn’t question my luck.

During the week sucked because the two idiotic friends were always busy, and I was left with nothing to do but mop around the house until I decided to open a bottle of whiskey and start drinking. When I scrolled through my phone, I was tempted to call one of my chicks but decided against. I sat on the couch with the bottle

watching soccer highlights and the next thing I woke up the following day. I had thirty minutes to get to my interview. I only let the water splash me awake for a few seconds before I was out of the shower. I didn't think they needed a suit for a driver's position, so I wore my jeans and a t-shirt. They were wrinkled but I didn't have time to iron. I drove my bike like a man possessed and only made it with only two minutes to get to the office. By the time reception directed me towards the right office I was already five minutes late. There wasn't anyone waiting outside the door, so I knocked and a timid come in came through from the other side. I found an old lady maybe in her mid-thirties or late thirties, sitting behind her desk. She seemed uninterested and my confidence waivered a bit. I had banked on charming my way into the position, but her pasture screamed 'back off I belong to a man'.

"Take a sit." She didn't even look at me. I pulled out the chair and sat with my helmet on the lap. "Did you bring your drivers licence?" she asked. She still didn't look at me, just paging through what seemed to be my online application.

“Yes mam, I did.” I took it out of my wallet and placed it before her. She picked it up and only then did she look at me.

“You’ve had it since you were eighteen?”

“Yes mam.”

“Have you been driving that long?”

“I probably started driving from when I was ten, mam.”
Let’s just say I was a thorn in my brothers’ backside until he decided to teach me to drive and whenever I went with hm he would let me drive albeit against my father’s wishes. She asked me a couple of questions about who I was, why I wanted to be a driver with my qualifications and if I drank. She told me that they conducted impromptu alcohol testing with their drivers from time to time.

“Well, you are certainly not an ideal candidate. Unfortunately, not many people responded to our advert and we need a driver immediately, so you are hired. You’ll be on a three-month probation. Sign these forms.” She handed me a three-page form, nothing complicated about it, just a straightforward contract between myself and ZM Ad Agency. “Once you are done, bring them to me. It shouldn’t take long. There is an empty desk down the hall, the PA isn’t in today.” I took the papers and left her office. I noticed that only four offices had doors and blinds closed the rest of the floor was an open plan with stylish and colourful cubicles. The space looked fresh and inviting. I found the empty desk that she had told me about. I sat and filled in the forms and when I was done, I returned them to her.

“Go down to the reception area and ask for the delivery van keys with the orders that need to go out today. You’ll be reporting to Mike, however he is not in today. You’ll probably meet him tomorrow.” With that I was dismissed and went to the reception to do as directed. The lady gave me the keys and a pile of deliveries to take to different companies. I knew then I was screwed when I found myself stuck on the Gillooy’s interchange wishing I

had been on my bike. I only managed to deliver two parcels of the twelve I was supposed to because people had already knocked off. I returned to work everyone else was gone except for the security guard that apparently kept watch over night. He told me if I needed to be successful in my driving career, I needed to outsmart the traffic and use back routes instead of freeways, and to begin my deliveries earlier. It felt like an advice and a rebuke at the same time. I didn't care. I was exhausted with a blinding headache and just wanted to get home. Once home, I took two headache tablets and crawled under my covers.

I woke up at the sound of my alarm and at least had a decent amount of time to prepare. I was confident going into work that I would be able to beat the traffic for my deliveries. I got alarmed when I saw the panicked way the reception lady looked at me. I still gifted her with my best smile and she nervously told me that the boss wanted to see me at 5th floor. Apparently, I had delivered to the wrong place yesterday and they missed a deadline because one of the deliveries I didn't manage to deliver. Was it possible to be fired within 24 hours of getting a job? Those were the thoughts swirling through

my head while watching the elevator numbers getting closer to the 5th.

There were quiet a few offices on the floor, some with open doors and they all seemed to be big offices. I assumed that it was an executive floor. The one I was directed to though was closed. I knocked once and opened the door. I found the lady who interviewed me in there with a beautiful coloured lady standing by her, both looking constipated. Then another lady with a big ass was standing on the balcony, with her back to me, phone in hand and seemingly barking orders.

“Hello ladies, I was told the boss needed to see me.” My interviewer threw daggers at me while the beautiful one blushed and then quickly looked away. Just then the lady walked back in and her eyes widened the same time mine did. I was double screwed.

“You!” the word came out as an insult and I flinched.
“You hired this arrogant imbecile to be our driver!”

Chapter 6

I don't believe my eyes right now. The idiot from the other day at the restaurant is the reason one of my clients is threatening to take his business elsewhere. The designs he had asked for were not what we had discussed only to realise that he received a wrong package. Already three of my clients were complaining that they never received theirs. I thought Rachel could handle hiring a driver in Mike's absence, but I guess I was wrong because she not only hired a wrong person but an arrogant one at that. I can see he is as much surprised as I am to see me.

"Rachel?" I turn to her and find her ready to pee her long frumpy dress and that irritates me further. My mother knows her older sister, they are in the same society. She begged me to hire Rachel claiming she needed a job after she had been retrenched from her company. She wasn't the kind I went for in my company. I needed confident employees. People I didn't need to babysit or hold their hands. She needed both. Mike dealt with her timid self most of the time until now. Mike was still off sick, and I had to deal with this myself.

“I’m sorry Zizo, you were clear that you wanted a driver as soon as Yesterday and most people that had come through were worse than him. He was our best option.” She quickly explains

“Then fire him and get me someone competent.” I see his mouth starting to open and I give him a withering look and he looks away. He should be very scared. I don’t fuck with my business.

“We can’t really do that, he signed a contract and we have to give him sufficient warning before we can terminate him even within the probation period.” Rachel says this and I can see her forehead breaking in to sweat.

“How many warnings before you can get rid of him?”

“Three.” She squeaks.

“This is your first warning.” I turn and point at him. I’m not sure if it’s grimace or a smirk on his face but whatever it is, it pisses me off. “Prepare the paperwork Rachel. You two get out. Wena stay.” I direct to him. Rachel and Mel quickly walk out closing the door behind them. He is still standing with his helmet in hand. I let him stand and sit on chair then look through his CV. His qualifications are impressive and his academic record even more impressive. His surname catches my eye but it’s a familiar surname so I shrug it off.

“ Luthi? Is it just Luthi?”

“Yes. Listen...” I put my hand up and cut him off.

“You are here to listen to me, boy.” He blinks. “What do you want from my company?”

“A job?”

“With your qualifications, you can get a job anywhere. What exactly do you hope to get from being a driver here? Are you spying for another agency?” his eyes widen as his frown deepens.

“Me! No! I needed an easy job, and this was it. I don’t even know you or your company.” I stare at him for a few seconds.

“That stunt you pulled at the restaurant; don’t think we are friends. You pull that stunt again, I’ll have your ass thrown in jail.”

“I was being stupid. I’m not usually like that. I wanted to...”

“Save it. Now get out.” He is still standing. Get out! Now!” he walks backwards towards the exit.

“I guess I’ll be seeing you.” He says when he reaches the door and I glare at him. He gifts me with a wide smile and

leaves closing the door behind him. What the fuck! I feel cold and hot at the same time. It can't be menopause I'm way too young. It must be the irritation at the incompetence of the lot. I take another look at his CV. A degree in Computer Science passed with distinction. A whole lot of extracurricular activities. What the hell is he doing here? Why was he working as a dishwasher at a restaurant? He is an enigma of sort, very young too. Too young to be manhandling women in public! My phone rings.

"Zizo good day!" I throw the CV to the side.

"You sound happy this morning." Its Sakhi. I haven't seen him since Sunday, because he left my place while I was asleep. He hasn't spoken to me in two days and I just realise I have been feeling his absence. What is going on with me?

"Not really. I just dealt with a situation that I would have rather avoided. How are you? I haven't heard from you in

a while.” I want to kick myself right now. Why would I say that?

“Is that your way of saying you miss me?”

“No Sakhi, it’s just an observation.”

“Alright. The reason I called was to invite you out for lunch.”

“I’m busy, I have damage control to do. Rain check?” I really am busy, I’m not blowing him off.

“I understand. How about dinner at my place, you’ve never been to my place.” I think about it for a second. Its always been a rule that I have not to visit a man’s place. I always feel like they take it to mean more than what it is. I find it easier when they visit me then I can chase them out when we are done.

“How about you come over to my place?” I hear his sigh through the phone. I am a trip, I know.

“Sure, I’ll bring the food.” He says.

“I’ll cook. Don’t worry about it.” There is that person I don’t recognise, again.

“I insist Zizo.”

“Okay. You can bring dinner. Don’t forget wine too.” He says his goodbye and hangs up. I try and put the events of the morning at the back of my head and begin to concentrate on work. I work through lunch, in and out of meetings. Before I know, its time to knock off. I pack up and take the elevator downstairs. The whole building is quiet which could only mean I’m the last to leave. On the way down the lift opens on 3rd floor and a tired looking driver walks through looking at his phone. He turns around as he is about to press a button on the lift he realises that its already done. He turns to look at me. His

face is very expressive. I can see his eyes widen in surprise.

“Oh, I didn’t see you. Hello boss.” He says the boss like a caress. His eyes blood shot red and he looks haggard.

“You seemed preoccupied.” My eyes gesture with a quick look on the phone still in his hand. He puts it in his pocket. “Problems?”

“Nothing I can’t handle.” We both look up as the elevator pings open. He steps aside for me to pass. My whole-body tingles as my arm brushes against him. I ignore and purposefully walk out towards the exit. “Thanks for not firing me today.” His voice carries through the empty reception area.

“For not firing you yet! Two strikes remaining!” I can feel his eyes boring into me, but I don’t turn. I exit the building and walk towards my car. Its almost 6pm when I get home and I didn’t even feel the drive home even the traffic. My mind was preoccupied by his rugged looks

with his big eyes that always carry an air of mischief. It annoys me to no end that my mind even allows him an audience. I get home and decides to soak in a bath as I still have an hour before Sakhi arrives. Sakhi, I close my eyes and lean against a bathtub, savouring the sip of my wine as the warm bath water soothes my tired body. There is something about him that is endearing to me. I'm beginning to think my selfishness is to the extreme. The thought of Sakhi not being around doesn't sit well with me. Is it a habit or something more? But then again, I don't see him as anything more than what he is. I would say we always have great conversations. He is well learned and well-travelled, he is more or a listener than a talker, but I always feel his attentiveness to my needs. Does he need to be anything else though? Am I giving him false hope? Maybe I should just let him go. He probably deserves more. He is not getting younger. Isn't that his choice though? Agh dammit enough already! I get off the bath before my mind drives me to a loony bin.

I take care in choosing a dress, I decide on the black of the shoulder dress, slim fitting and comes above the knee. I love dresses, I think they bring out the sexy in me. I tussle my curly planted weave and leave it loose,

cascading down my back. The doorbell rings as soon as I finish applying my red lipstick. I know without checking the time that it's Sakhi. Always punctual. I go barefoot to open for him. I find him by the door already waiting with an expectant smile. I have to look up because he is too tall especially when I'm not wearing heels. He looks dapper in his three-piece, dark blue, slim fit suit. His broad chest and shoulders carried with poise and grace. He has boxes of takeaway in his hand. I open the door wide to let him in. He gifts me with his perfect smile and that imbecile from the office flashes through my mind. I visibly shake the unwanted image away.

"Hey, Sakhi. You are right on time. Do come in." my voice comes out rushed and breathy. His smile broadens as he walks in. His hair is neatly combed today so is his beard. He is back to his usual pristine self. He places the boxes on the kitchen counter and hands me another paper bag with my favourite bottle of wine.

"You look beautiful." He says looking at my face.

“I’m glad you approve.” My sarcasm comes through. He always has something to say about my outfits or if he doesn’t say it, he’d seem uncomfortable.

“What does that mean?” he frowns loosening his tie.

“Forget I said anything. Do you want a glass of this?” I point at the wine in my hand.

“No, I’ll have water. I’m flying out this evening so I can’t stay long.” A wave of disappointment washes over me.

“How long do you have?”

“An hour, then I have to go. I just needed to see you before I leave because I’ll be gone for two weeks.”

“Oh, lets eat then. I wouldn’t want you to be late.” I place the wine bottle on the counter and look for plates. He leans against the fridge with his foot crossed over the other, arms folded and watches me with his head tilted to the side. I’m annoyed suddenly. I’m not sure why? I

look through the boxes and has all my favourites and my annoyance melts away. The food is from one of my favourite restaurants, Chorizo pasta with olives and another box has pork chops, cooked just the way I like the. He has side vegetables too. I really don't care for those.

"So much food for two people!" I exclaim and he pushes himself off the fridge and walks towards me.

"I wasn't sure what you felt like and I didn't ask." He grabs my arms and stalls my movements as he turns me to him then he cups my face. "What's wrong Zizo?" The seriousness in his tone brings my eyes to his. His dark orbs search mine as he waits for an answer.

"Nothing." I shrug my shoulders and try to move away. He grabs me by my shoulder and holds me still.

"You seem annoyed, do you not want me here?"

“I really don’t care Sakhile! Weather you here or not!” I lose it. His eyes widen and he slowly let’s go of my shoulder. “I’m sorry, I don’t know what came over me. Please stay.” He is still frowning but he nods his head.

“I think we can eat from here.” He says when he sees my intention to move to the dining room. He pulls out two highchairs and waits for me to sit. His manners do irk me sometime. I just want him to be ruffled at times and not seem to have it all together all the damn time. I take a bit bite of my pasta and my taste buds sing. We eat in silence for a while with only a sound of cutlery against our plates. “How is business.” He asks.

“It’s good.” I mumble with food in my mouth. I continue to eat and when I’m done with the pasta, I move to the pork chops. I realise then that I hadn’t eaten anything since a smoothie for breakfast. When I look up to reach for my glass of wine, I find him looking at me with amusement on his face. “What?”

“You love your food, don’t you?” I push the box of pork chops away when I realise, I’ve just been stuffing my face like a pig. I grab a serviette and wipe my mouth and hands.

“I do. You know this. What else are you going to observe that I should probably go to gym?”

“No...”

“I don’t have the luxury of time for gym as you do Sakhi. I’m happy with my body as is!” he raises his hands in surrender.

“I never said you weren’t. I just made an honest observation. I’m sorry if I offended you. You should know by now that I enjoy your appetite for food. There is nothing wrong with it.” He looks at his watch. “Time to go.” He bends and kisses me on the cheek, grabs his car keys and heads for the door.

“Have a safe trip.” I say. He nods his head and walks out. I immediately clean up the kitchen and head to bed. I’m restless and even my toys aren’t bringing me any joy. In fact, I’m in a mood for hard core fucking to take away the urge. My life is so miserable, I don’t even have a booty call. I toss and turn until I eventually fall asleep. My dreams range from Sakhi to the imbecile in all sorts of illicit situations. It’s amazing how I’ve studied his CV, but I can’t seem to remember his name.

I get to work before anyone else does and my body feels tired. Just as I settle in. The imbecile walks in pushing a cart and earphones in his ears. He still hasn’t looked up as he walks through. It gives me a chance to observe his tall frame uninterrupted. The slim fit faded blue or black jeans are clearly his thing together with the animated t-shirts and combat boots. His fade is always intentionally unkept. He does seem to shave frequently but obviously has a lot of hair or the stubble on his jaw is intentional. I can see by the definition on his arms that he frequents the gym. The magnificence of youth.

“Do you like what you see?” He drawls and my inner thighs clench as my eyes snap to his. There is only my desk between the two of us. I sit up and clear my throat.

“You are here early.” My voice is huskier than I’d like it to be. I feel my neck getting heated and then the heat spreads through my body. I may need to adjust my air-conditioning. The fucker looks edible.

“Ja, I figured I need to start my deliveries early, that way I don’t get on your wrong side.” He winks. “Any packages you’d like me to deliver?”

“No. Nothing.”

“Alright. Have good day then mami.” Mami! He turns around and heads for the door. I watch him unashamedly. His butt, mh, if only I could just grab. Those strong thighs, I could just imagine them against mine as he vigorously thrusts into my core. The sound of the door closing brings me to my senses. I clearly need help. He is a child for Christ’s sake!

“What has you all bothered?” I look up and find Mel with a pile of files in her hands.

“Other than the fact Rachel hired an idiot, I’m good.”

“He is a cute idiot though. If he wasn’t so young.” She makes a growling sound as she dumps the files at my desk. I give her a dismissive look and she leaves my office. The day goes like a blur as I juggle meetings and brainstorming sessions with creatives. It’s a busy season for me and I’m not complaining. We are a small agency competing with advertising giants. I can’t afford to be seen as a weak woman. Once again, I finish my work late and I find the idiot by the reception this time on his way out. He waists for me by the door holding it open. I mumble my thanks and walk through.

“If you knock off this late why don’t you use the undercover parking? Isn’t safer than to park on the streets?” I didn’t realise he was following me.

“I find it safer to be out here where the security can see me than being down there by myself.”

“It makes sense. You do look like you can take care of yourself though, if your slap is anything to go by.” I reach my car and open my boot and dump my bags in. “Nice wheels.” I give him a fake smile and get into the car. He waits until I drive off before he gets on his motorcycle. He lives on the edge this one. I see him on the review mirror until we reach the nearest traffic lights, he takes a right turn and I take the left. This becomes our unplanned routine. We both get to work early and knock off late. Sometimes we will engage in small talks some days we don't, especially on days his eyes are bloodshot. It's those days I always wonder if he is high on drugs. I'm too busy at work that I always miss Sakhi's calls. He does send me morning messages to update me about his daily schedule.

Its been two weeks since Sakhi went on business. It's a Friday and my friend Pearl has a visa for the evening, so we plan on hitting the clubs. We always club hop until we find a vibe and then we settle. Sometimes we don't find anything suitable to us, but we never stop trying. Holding

on to our youth I suppose. She gets an uber from her house and comes by my place to pick me up. We first go for dinner as per norm.

“How have you been?” It’s been a minute since we’ve seen each other.” She asks once we are settled in the restaurant.

“I’m good. Business is driving me up the wall but I’m hanging in there. How are you or rather how does it feel being a housewife?” She never returned to work after her second maternity leave. Her baby is almost two years.

“I’m bored as fuck. I can’t be a housewife anymore. I need to do something else other than baby language. Maybe you can hook me up with a job.” She looks at me expectantly.

“I have nothing at the moment, but I’ll keep you in mind.” I doubt I’ll find anything suitable for her. She is a qualified accountant and I like my current one.

“Maybe Sakhi can hook me up.” I know this is networking, but it could be a complication.

“I’ll give you his numbers you can speak to him.”

“Hau choma. I hardly speak to the guy. Put in a good word for me. You know I’m good for it.” I grunt.

“Okay, fine. When he comes back.” She punches the air.

We enjoy our food over a few bottles of wine. It’s almost 11pm when we head to the pub not so far from where we are. The place is not jammed packed and we easily find our way in. We even manage to find an empty space to seat. It’s a small round table with two couches around it. Pearl goes to the bar to get us drinks. I scroll through my phone as I wait.

“Yo, Boss! Is that you?” Dread settles in at the sound of that voice. I don’t need to look up to know who it is, but I

do anyway. He is wearing torn or ripped jeans this time and an OVO hoodie. He is with a tall coloured guy with a girl in his arm, short Indian guy with spiked hair and two girls in his arms. Oh, and he also holding a girl's hand. They all seem to be more or less the same age. They look like perfection in their tiny dresses and perfectly made up faces. "Are you with someone? Do you mind if we join you?" Just as I'm about to decline.

"We don't mind at all! Excuse me!" Pearl happily says from behind them followed by a waiter with our drinks.

"Great thanks. Yo gents, this is my boss, Ms Mabhanga. You don't mind if I call you Zizo for the day, right?" I mind but I just shake my head. "These two are my buddies, Tino and Ashlyn." They both nod their heads. "These are the girls." He throws himself next to me and the girl is with him is forced to squeeze herself on the other side of him. "I don't really know their names." He leans in and whispers against my ear. His breath brands me and Goosebumps break throughout my body. I reach for my gin and tonic and take a huge sip. It should calm my misbehaving body. Everyone else settles around and the

drinks they ordered come and fill the table. “What are you drinking?” he has to lean in and whisper in my ear for me to hear him which increases my body temperature every time he does.

“Gin and tonic?” I do the same.

“So, you are the GT girl, huh.” I nod my head. “You look great by the way. I like your hair this way.” Every time he leans in and his breath fans the side of my neck, my pussy dances. This is going to be a long night. My whole body is getting warmer. It could be his presence or the alcohol at this point I can’t be too sure. The girl he is with moves over to the other girls after a while. I guess she feels like a third wheel. Luthi and I, yes, I finally memorised his name, are properly cosied up having an intense conversation about nothing. I can’t stop looking at his lips as he speaks. He has kissable sexy lips. His tongue seems like it does the job very well. I wonder if he could give me the big O. My clit flutters and I cross my thighs and squeeze. He bites his bottom lip and I shift uncomfortable.

“Come let’s go dance!” Pearl pulls me out of my lust filled trance as she physically drags me towards the dance floor. My panties are damp. “Jesus Zizo, what’s with you and that boy? You are almost fucking in the middle of the club!” she says the moment we join the people dancing.

“I was not!” she rolls her eyes.

“Doesn’t he look familiar to you?” I shake my head and look back at where they are sitting. He is having an animated conversation with his boys. “They are probably congratulating him on acquiring a sugar mommy!” Pearl says flippantly. Is he? Possible. For fuck’s sakes he is only a boy, it’s obvious he is gloating. After a few songs we go back to our table. I suddenly feel like going home.

“Are you good?” he leans in and whispers in my ear.

“I’m kind of tired. Way pass my bedtime.” He looks at his watch and frowns.

“It’s only 1 am. Stay a bit longer. We ordered some food and more drinks, on me.” Oh well, how can I say no to free food and drinks? “Relax a bit mami. Let me show you how to have fun.”

“Okay, I’ll stay.” Wouldn’t hurt, right?

Mohale is reading my published book Unspoken Truth. Available at all major book stores, Loot and Takealot. You can also DM for your signed copy. Don't miss out.

Chapter 7

(Short insert) 

At three am we were being chased out of the pub. I wished we had been in a club because the fun was getting started. I had Zizo practically sitting on my lap with her hands freely getting acquainted with my body. The chick I came with had all but abandoned ship and

hung with her friends. She didn't seem to mind; she was having free drinks after all, which is why she probably agreed to out with a person she hardly knew.

“Where can we go after this?” My boss purred tracing her delicate fingers on the side of my cheek. Her soft body felt warm against mine. She was soft in so many places I wanted to lay on her and see if she was as fluffy as I imagined. I had my hand wedged and locked between her creamy generous thighs. I had been struggling with an erection since we arrived at the pub. There was something alluring about her. She is beautiful that isn't arguable. A bit on the thick side but her glowing skin and curvaceous figure made up for it. I was conflicted between her ass and her boobs. I had an urge to bury my face in both.

“We can continue this at my place. I have weed. Do you smoke” I asked grabbing her by the back of her neck and bringing her closer. Her bright eyes dropped to my lips and her pink tongue came out to moisten her own. The stirring between my loins intensified and became uncomfortable.

“I used to. When I was in Uni.” Her voice was huskier and my skin tingles as my blood heated and pooled in one direction.

“Well, what do you say?” I prompted. I was so close I could see the pores on her fresh face.

“What else you’ve got at your place?”

“This.” I took her hand and made her palm my d*ck. Her eyes snapped from my lips where they seemed to be glued on and were locked on mine. I saw them darken with lust. Her palm traced the imprint of my d*ck and I saw her neck muscles work as she swallowed. I felt myself grow harder under her scrutiny.

“Is this all you?” she purred once more.

“You can put your hand in and feel if you don’t believe me.” My anticipation grew as I waited to see if she would

take me up on my challenge. She moved closer and discreetly looked around. We were nicely positioned in a corner and my boys were busy having their own animated conversation with the girls. No one paid attention to us. She popped my buttons open. My tummy clenched in anticipation, she put her hand inside my undies and my breath hitched in my throat as she made contact. She made a choking sound and began to stroke me. Her face was inches from mine and her breath fanned my face. My nerves felt like they were electrified. I watched her as she concentrated on the job at hand. Her lips were slightly parted with a crease on her forehead. I held her hand to still her movement because what she was doing to me threatened to undo me. Her eyes snapped to mine as if coming out of a trance. I almost laughed at her pink glow spreading over her cheeks down to her neck. She slowly let go and I quickly fixed my pants.

“Well, settle the bill then and let’s get out of here. I could use a joint.” I signalled for our waiter to come over, he had been hovering around to remind us that it was time to cash up. Once we settled our bill, we all agreed to go back to my place. We ordered an Uber van. The only

issue was that there were eight of us and fortunately the guy that came through we were acquainted with him. I went inside followed by Zizo.

“Come sit on me mami, so we can make space for everyone.” I said already pulling her on my lap. She didn’t resist as she moved her leg over straddling my hips. Her crotch met my semi hardon and I hardened instantly. We both moaned.

“Behave you two.” Her friend slurred sitting next to us while Zizo giggled and buried her head on the side of my neck. I placed my hands on her ass and pulled her closer, if that was even possible. She lightly humped her hips with her arms wrapped around my neck, the friction was maddening. She was torturing me and the idea of her doing that with people around us drove me insane.

“You are sooo hard!” she whispered against my ear and my body tingled.

“You are so hot!” I whispered right back. Her breathing became laboured and I feared she might climax from humping me. “You have to stop.”

“I can’t seem to stop. It feels good.” She nibbled my ear and I was only holding on by a thread of sanity. Fortunately for me the car came to a halt and someone announced our arrival. Once we were out of the car, I tried to pull my hoodie down so I could hide the visible bulge. She giggled at my efforts. I pulled her by the hand and had everyone follow us into the building. I stayed in a duplex complex and I had the unit on the ground. I opened the door and allowed everyone in, I then realised how much of a mess the place was. The kitchen had unwashed dishes from the past week probably. When we moved to the lounge my clothes were strewn all over. I moved quickly and picked them up and bundled them in my hands.

“Make yourselves at home ladies.” I was suddenly feeling nervous and embarrassed by the state of my apartment. It didn’t seem to matter though as they all flocked towards my alcohol cabinet. I quickly dashed to my room

to put the clothes in the washing basket. I cringed at the sight that met me. The room was filthy. I heard the door close as I picked some clothes from the floor. I turned to find Zizo leaning heavily against the closed door.

“So, this is where you are hiding.” She said in her sweet husky tone and my body broke into goose bumps. I threw the clothes I had in my hand back on the floor and walked towards her.

“You really do not want to be here alone with me Boss. You are honestly tempting fate.”

“Well, I’m here. So, what are you going to do about it big boy?” she bit her lower lip and I twitched in my pants. I cupped her boobs through her dress and mirrored the same move from the restaurant. She rested her head against the door and her eyes fluttered closed. I gently moved my hands on the sides of her breast and squeezed them together. She let out a soft moan. My one hand travelled slowly up her chest over her collarbone until I cupped her chin tracing her lips with my thumb. She

slightly parted her lips and then her pink tongue came out and she sucked on my thumb. I felt the movement down south. I reciprocated by pinching her hardened nipple. Her legs parted as her breathing escalated. I took out my thumb from her mouth and placed it at the apex of her thighs. The heat that permeated from her core was scotching. I slowly moved closer until I met with her damp panties. They were not just damp they were drenched. My entire body had all but hardened and strung tight with need, I was ready. My fingers tentatively touched her mound and she let out a half moan half cry and her head fell forward. I snaked my fingers under her undies, and I was met by a slick and wet surface. She put her hands on my shoulders and rested her head on my chest as I flickered her hardened nub. Her breath came out in little pants as my fingers rubbed between her wet folds. She was so close I could tell by the way she whimpered when I slowed down and moaned harder when I rubbed harder.

“Don’t stop.” She was incoherent as she pleaded. I ignored my painful bulge and played her like a violin. I felt her body go rigid and her fingers dug dip on my back. Then I felt warm fluid gush out of her. She let out a

strangled drawn out moan and I felt myself jerk painfully inside my pants a couple of times. She lost her balance as her whole body swayed. I helped her walk towards the bed and gently pushed her down. She lay sprawled on her back with her legs wide open and looked back at me in awe. Her harsh breathing the only sound in the room. I needed to find condoms because I was about to nut in my pants. There was a knock on the door. I didn't want anyone seeing her like that and she didn't seem bothered by the position she was in. I dashed to the door and slightly opened.

“Hook up CD's man!” I could kill Tino right now.

“Why don't you carry your own condoms man!”

“I have no time for this Luthi, come on bruh!” As if I had the time. I went and rummaged through my backpack and found a box. There were two condoms inside and I took one for myself and gave Tino the other one. I made sure to lock my door. When I went back to my guest, she was slightly snoring, and I wanted to die.

“Fuck! Zizo, mami!” I gently slapped her face and she was out. I still had a painful erection in my hand, and I knew I was going to have a case of blue balls. “fuck!” I silently swore. I could go and find the chick from earlier, out there, but she wouldn’t be Zizo. I opted for a shower and a few strokes while imagining her creamy thighs, gave me the temporal relief. I went back into the bedroom and helped her to get under the covers. I searched for my phone and it was almost 5 am and the moment it switched on a few messages and missed calls notifications came through. Kamo. I thought our courting phase meant no midnight calls from her. I made a mental note to call her and take her out in the afternoon. I turned to watch the beauty slightly snoring next to me. Her curls a halo around her face. I wondered if she slept with a doek or her weave. In her relaxed state she looked younger. Half the time at work she walked around with that hard look on her face which made her look like my moms age. I supposed she had to be that way to be taken seriously. I never thought of myself being with an older woman, but it was exciting to know I drove her crazy. I wanted to see her fall apart in my arms as I fucked her into submission. I wanted to hear her beg me

for more as I deprive her the release, she seemed desperate for. I could see she was thirsty by how responsive she was to my touch. She seemed to fall apart at my proximity I imagine the things I could do to her. A wave of excitement washed over me at the thoughts of the things she could do to me. Didn't they say older women with experience were the ultimate fantasy? I couldn't wait.

(I apologise its short. Will make it up)

Chapter 8

I can feel a thumping headache against my temple. I know for sure I'm not in my own bed before I even open my eyes. The rough linen cotton and the funky sweaty smell is a dead giveaway. I dread opening my eyes. I'm terrified of what I'm about to discover. Am I in a backroom somewhere? Oh lord let it be not a student room! Or worse some dingy shack! I listen attentively for any movement and there is none. It's too quiet. I take a chance and slightly open the one eye. I can barely see anything the room is too dark. I turn my head to my left and the person sleeping next to me is buried under the

covers, head and all. How does he breathe? I would surely suffocate. I softly wiggle my body and feel for any injuries, nothing but a sore body. I clench my pussy for any tell-tale penetrations. It doesn't seem like there is any. Even my butt hole seems safe. I take a silent sigh of relief.

Both my eyes are open and have adjusted to the darkness. Definitely not what I would visit. I quietly sit up without interrupting my sleeping host and look around the room. Had it been not messy and filthy it would be decent. Walls are painted grey and the furniture is white oak. Not much of the furniture, it's the bed, a solid wood platform bed with matching low pedestals on the side. There is too much stuff on the pedestals. It's all clustered. There is a stylish dress against the wall and a door that probably leads to the bathroom. Did I mention that the room is a mess? The built-in wardrobe doors are all wide open with clothes overflowing. As I squint my eyes, I see female clothes as well and judging by the size, she is a tiny one. He slightly shifts next to me and I stop breathing until I can hear his deep breathing. I gently entangle myself from the blankets cautious not to wake him. As I put my food down, I step on something solid

and I nearly twist my ankle. It's a cup! What is a cup doing on the floor? For fucks sake! I'm in a child's room. I need to pee really bad, so I cautiously tip toe to what I think is a bathroom, avoiding snickers, boots, heels and assortments of undies on the way. The bathroom could've have been beautiful in its modern furnishes had it not been for the mess. My body cringes when I look at the bath! My word, this boy is a pig!

The toilet seems clean but I will not take chances so I squat but then the flow makes so much noise I fear it will wake up my host so I gingerly sit. There is a lot of tiny lace panties hanging on every rail in this bathroom. His undies have cartoon characters on them. Fuck me! I palm my forehead repeatedly. When I'm done, I do not flush nor rinse my hand, I use a hand sanitizer instead the tiptoe out of the room. This is what they call a walk of shame, I muse as I exit and silently close the door behind me.

The lounge is worse off than the bedroom made even more so because its flooded in light that filters from the wide long windows. This is a nice place for a driver,

interesting. Everyone is passed out on either the one couch, or the recliner. There is one girl on the floor. Pearl is folded on the recliner. Two girls are sprawled over the Indian guy on the couch. The one girl and the coloured dude are not in sight. I spot my bag and shoes in the corner. My skin crawls at seeing my bag just carelessly placed there.

“Pearl!” I whisper. No movement. I move closer and shake her a bit. Her husband is going to kill us both. She lazily stretches her whole body out and then it hits her that she not in her bed. She jumps to her feet and sways off balance. “Take it easy.” I help her stand and indicate with my finger against my lips for her to be quiet. Her face is a mirror of panic.

“What’s the time?” she whispers looking around the place.

“Probably 6 or 7 I’m not sure. Let’s get out of here.” She finds her hand bang and we quietly leave the place. I

switch on my phone as Pearl does. I don't know why they were off to begin with.

"Zizo, my husband will never trust me to go out ever again. What happened last night?" I understand her fear; I have the same fears for her as well. We were completely irresponsible.

"I'm not sure babe, but I feel its my fault." We are standing outside the complex and have requested an Uber that's two minutes away.

"Nonsense! I'm also a grown woman. I should know better." Messages start coming in and missed call notification. All from her husband. I've got a few from Sakhi. Later's problem. Our Uber arrives and we ask him to drop Pearl off first.

"What do you think John will say?" I ask her as she looks out the window.

“I’m not sure but I’ll deal with him. So, did you sleep with Ben?” she wiggles her eyebrows and I smack her arm. We are both sitting at the back.

“No!” I say vehemently.

“Okay, but you seem into each other in the pub and on the ride to his place. I mean if I’m in trouble it might as well be for a worthy cause.” She teases. My mind has flashes of the previous night or rather early morning. I see myself against the door with his hand between my thighs. Fuck! “What? Oh no you didn’t?” she turns her whole body to look at me. I cover my face with both my hands.

“He might have given me an orgasm with his hand. I can’t be too sure. I mean no one has ever done it for me before!” I remove my hands and look at her. Did I really?

“You mean?” she looks at the driver and moves closer as if to share a life secret. “you never ever with anyone before?” I nod my head. “Even the yummy Sakhi?”

“He tries, most people I’ve been with try, I just never seem to get there.” I kind of feel embarrassed right now. And to think I might have actually reached it and I wasn’t fully present to experience it, sucks.

“You overthink things Zizo, everything with you has to always pen out a certain way. Always in control and I think with Sakhi you don’t allow him in for fear of being controlled. Because he is powerful you think he can control you. You can’t be like that with sex babes, you just have to be and let go. I can orgasm with anyone because I take sex for what it is, pure pleasure. I do what feels good and I let go of everything else.” I envy her.

“Why are you psychoanalysing me! It’s just sex nothing deep.”

“Just saying. There we go!” we have arrived at her place. “Bye babes. Wish me luck. Look for my bones in the backyard and don’t believe him when he says I’m away visiting my mother or killed myself.” I can’t help but

laugh at her craziness. She blows me kisses and closes the car door. I sit back and listen to my pounding headache until we reach my place.

The moment I walk into my house I take a huge sigh of relief. Clean place, fresh air, hallelujah! I strip off and head for the shower. The shower spray soothes my sore muscles and calms my pounding head. The memories from the previous night come flooding and I cringe at everyone of them. What had gotten into me though? That level of ratchet is beyond me. I scrub my body as if to remove the imprint of his fingers on my thighs, my bosom and, oh my fucking God! In my...no I can't. I can't bring myself to think about that sweet forbidden moment. It's a figment of my imagination that's all. I stay under the shower spray until the water is cold and that takes a while.

I'm under the covers and I just read a message from Pearl 'operation atonement underway ' and there is an eggplant and apricot emoticon. Lucky her, she can be forgiven that easy. I finally get to Sakhi's message. He tells me he has been missing me and he thinks of cutting

his business trip short so that he could come home quicker. Something resembling guilt cuts through me, but it can't be. Why should I be guilty, he doesn't own me? We are not an item. I shake off that feeling as quickly as it came. He probably has girls keeping him busy wherever he is.

I sleep throughout the day giving my body a chance to fully recover. I keep ignoring the thoughts of Luthi that come unexpectedly at random times. He has a sexy smile though. I need to get a grip. How the hell am I going to face my driver after he touched my pussy though? The question keeps popping up like an unwanted pimple.

The following morning, I decide on wearing a power suit. Black one at that with my black heel. My hair tied into a pony, I'm not to be messed with. I'm on a mission to put a boy in his place. When I get to work, he isn't in yet which is weird because we are always the first ones in. By the time he comes in, I'm having a briefing with Mel about my schedule. He seems a bit distracted as well because he is not his usual flirty self. He only greets and inquire about packages and then he is gone. Does he not

remember what happened on Saturday? Or is he giving me a cold shoulder?

“Hey Zizo, you seem distracted this morning? Rough weekend?” Today her curiosity and boldness annoy me more than usual.

“Mel, you are not here to do my counselling or discuss my weekend. Is that everything for the week?” she nods her head looking a bit put out. Good, we are not friends! What happened to boundaries? You are one to talk while you are busy fraternising with employees? A small voice whispers. “Now you can leave.” She picks up the files and heads for the door. “Oh, and Mel, please call back the driver for me.”

“Do you have a package for him? I can take it to him?”

“Blood hell! Would you just do as I tell you !” I can see her physically flinch and then she scrambles out of the office. Why am I asking for him? Okay, I want to clear things between us. Set boundaries. I get up and go stand

in front of my mirror. Set boundaries huh? Right. Or maybe you want a taste of what he did Saturday? No. That will never happen again. I could be sued for sexual harassment. There is a sharp knock and the door opens. He closes the door behind him.

“You asked for me Boss.” I go and lean against my desk as he walks in. He is now standing before me with his hand in his pockets. He is wearing his usual gear. Faded black jeans, black t-shirt and black combat boots and a leather jacket this time.

“Listen,” I clear my throat. For once I’m unable to look at someone in the eye so I look at my feet. “What happened this weekend was inappropriate and shouldn’t happen again.” Suddenly my face is being lifted by a finger on my chin. I look up and find his red eyes intensely looking at me. my treacherous body warms at his touch.

“Its cool. I understand. You shouldn’t be apologetic for having fun. We had fun, that’s all. I won’t become a

stalker or a nuisance if that's what you're worried about." He let's go of my chin.

"Its not that. I just don't want there to be misunderstanding between us. I'm your boss and you are my employee." He nods his head absently. He doesn't look good. Probably hungover. "Oh, and you might be just a driver here but please take your job seriously. I will not have you driving under the influence under my company!" he frowns. "That will be all!" he doesn't say anything just turns around and leaves the office. I decide to put the shenanigans of the weekend behind me and start working. I don't see him after work when I leave, and I find it odd but subsequently shake it off.

When I get home, I decide to return Sakhi's calls and he doesn't respond. Well, his loss. I order dinner and take a bath while waiting. My mind keeps going back to the weekend. I had fun; I won't lie. Haven't had that much fun in a long time. Luthi's attention made me feel alive, wanted and desired in a way I haven't experienced before. I didn't have to do much it just happened. Or was it the alcohol? But his touch was potent , I can still feel

the ghost imprint of big his hands on my body and I break into shivers.

My phone rings as I get out of the bath and I rush to answer it. I'm disappointed to see the name flashing on my screen.

"Sakhi. Hi." I'm breathless from my sprint from the bathroom.

"Hey sweetheart, were you running?" he sounds cheery.

"Had to rush from the bathroom." I wrap myself in a towel and sit on the bed.

"It's so good to hear from you. We've been missing each other a lot lately. How are you?"

"I'm good and you?"

“Great. I was thinking,” I roll my eyes. “We’ve never been on a trip together. So, why don’t I book you a flight for Friday and you can meet me here in Cape Town for a small baecation. Then we can return together on Sunday.” I take a huge breath. I can’t do this anymore.

“Listen Sakhi,” I suddenly can’t seem to find the right words. Is it even proper to dump a person over the phone? Fuck it! “Sakhi, we are not working our, me and you. I can’t do this with you anymore. I don’t feel you. You love me I get it, but I shouldn’t be expected to feel the way you do. It’s been over two years! It’s just no happening.”

“What brought this on? I told you I am willing...?”

“Willing to wait? Do you hear how pathetic you sound? It’s a turn off Sakhi. You are smart, good looking, you can have any woman you want just not me. You are just to perfect for me, too put together, I’m sorry.”

“Too perfect ...” he chuckles. “Okay. Sharp. Bye Zizomila. I hope you find what you’re looking for.” He hangs up and a sharp pain goes across my abdomen and it lingers. I doesn’t feel as good as I expected to feel when I finally end things. The intercom rings and I let the delivery man in who seems excited seeing me wrapped in a towel. I give him a scathing look and he shrinks to his corner. He won’t be getting a tip.

I suddenly don’t feel like eating anymore so I pour myself a glass of wine and head to bed. My dreams are riddled with images of Sakhi morphing into Luthi in all sorts of intimate positions. I eventually wake up drenched in sweat and feeling horny. I look at my toys and I know for sure it’s not what I need. I need his breath fanning my face. His light kisses trailing along my neck down my collarbone into my breasts. I needy to feel his tongue swirling around my pebbled nipples then pulling at it. I let out a groan of frustration. Since when I started acting like a sex starved teenager. I grab my phone from the side table and when I check the time it’s 2 am. I check through my contacts and realise I don’t have the numbers I’m looking for. Would I have called if I had? I wonder. With the state that I’m in, it’s probably a good

thing that I don't have his numbers. I would've done something stupid. I throw the phone carelessly on the side then lay on my tummy while I bury my hand between my legs while the one cups and plays with my nipple. I close my eyes and let my mind wonder in time and let it settle on Saturday activities. I can vividly feel him against my body, his touch, his scent and his sexy voice. It's not a voice of a boy but a man. The voice sounds familiar. I let my mind take over as I ride the feelings. As my hand furiously work my wet folds, I imagine it's his hand and his tongue that flickers my sensitive nub and it's his hand that is pulling at my nipples. I give in to the sensation and feel my whole body goes rigid as I climax. Lord, what is going on with me? I don't get an answer as I drift off to sleep.

Chapter 9

I heard her the moment she woke up and realised she wasn't in her bed. I decided to pretend to sleep and save her the embarrassment of having to confront me. I knew she wouldn't be pleased. Okay, maybe I was tempted to embarrass her a little, but my conscience decided for me. Her warm thighs against mine didn't help the situation I

had gone to sleep in. I almost cracked and burst into laughter as I watched her walk of shame as she tiptoed out of the room. I hoped she didn't regret what happened the day before because I wasn't done with her yet. When I could tell they were gone, I woke up and took a cold shower to get rid of my morning wood. Then I went to get rid of the unwanted guests in my house. It wasn't easy as I would've liked as they first ordered breakfast and had a couple of drinks before leaving. I also needed to use Tino's car because the bike wouldn't do for my date with Kamo, and my brothers absence meant I didn't have access to his house. He didn't trust me with his house and yet he had access to mine.

My brother called to remind me of the family lunch which I had forgotten about it. I wanted to pull out, I wasn't in the mood for lectures, but he begged me to go. Saying the rents wouldn't take it well especially since he couldn't attend either. I couldn't say no to him, so I gave in, but I wasn't going alone. I needed a buffer and so I killed two birds with one stone by inviting Kamo.

On my way to Kamo's house I felt the urge to call Zizo. Oddly, I couldn't stop thinking about our morning activities. My loins stirred at the thought of her. Our attraction was weird. She was different from all the women I had been attracted to before, her body, personality and age. There was just something about her that had me want to bend her to my will and have her begging for it. Damn! I shook off the forbidden images that had invaded my mind as I parked in front of Kamo's gate. I wasn't one to hoot outside someone's yard, so, I switched off the car and went out to press the intercom, even though I wasn't up for the small talks with her parents. Fortunately for me, instead of opening the gate she walked out looking like a sex goddess in an off the shoulder figure hugging rose dress and a burgundy heel. Fuck she looked good. The clutch bag matched the shoe. I leaned against my car and watched her as she approached with her tiny waist and hips swaying from side to side. She had natural grace and poise which complemented her calm and quiet demeanour until of course provoked and then she becomes a fire spitting dragon. I realised just then that I had missed her. The gate automatically opened just as she reached it and it closed the moment she stepped out. She stood in front

of me and her familiar fruity scent teased my nostrils. I couldn't help myself, I gathered her in my arms and captured her glossy pink lips. Her hands automatically went to my shoulder as she stood on her toes and responded with heated urgency. Our bodies moulded against each other and she moaned when she felt my bulge against her tummy.

I reluctantly let her go and gently pulled her away. Her eyes were glazed over with lust and I knew mine probably looked the same.

“Hey Smurfette.”

“Hey.” She cleared her throat and her eyes dropped to her feet. I placed two fingers under her chin and made her look at me.

“Don't be embarrassed about being hungry for me. I am as needy as you are. Here feel this.” I took her hand and placed it on my erection. Heat spread across her cheeks and I hardened further.

“We have to get out here, my parents could still be watching us, you know how nosy mom can be.” That put a damper on things but her hardened nipples that poked through her dress told me all I needed to know. I turned around and opened the door for her. Her dress rode higher as she went in. She was on a mission to torture me and it was working.

“New car?” she asked the moment I switched the car on.

“No, it’s Tino’s, I couldn’t have you riding on my bike with that dress.”

“I love your bike.” She said looking at me.

“I love you.” She didn’t say anything just smiled revealing her one dimple. Fucking beautiful.

“Did you tell your parents you were bringing me?”

“I don’t need to. Who else would I bring but you, baby?” Her smile broadened and my tummy constricted. I will make her my wife one day. I took her hand in mine as we drove in silence. I couldn’t really lessen the trepidation I felt about being with my parents especially without my brother there to deflect and soften the blows that will be thrown my way.

My dread intensified as we drove into our street. Wide, quiet street flanked by tall trees that cast a shade over the concrete road. The sun filtered through as we drove through. I felt her tiny hand tighten and I appreciated the gesture of comfort. We turned into our long winding driveway and approached the impressive house. My parents lived in an affluent suburb that afforded them an opportunity to display their wealth. I must admit, I loved the place, neighbours were a few kilometres apart. They had outdone themselves with its design and architecture. I loved that our room had given me the space I needed at the time I lived with them. Once at the gate, I pressed the intercom and a few seconds later the gates parted revealing the vast green lawn spreading into the distance. I parked by the guest parking and took a deep breath.

“Relax baby, gees! You’d swear you were walking towards your execution. It’s just lunch, relax.”

“You’re right. Come, let go.” My father was waiting by the entrance hands in pockets.

“Hello son, Kamo.” He smiled as we reached him. He stretched out his hand and shook mine then gave Kamo a hug. “Come in, your mother is cooking up a feast.” We followed him in.

“By herself?” My mother hardly cooked. She was a great cook, but she only cooked on special occasions.

“Yes. Can you believe it.” He chuckled. I took a tiny breath of relief as he seemed to be in a good mood.

“Kids! You are here!” Mama exclaimed coming out of the kitchen. She even wore an apron. I was impressed. She took turns giving us hugs. “How are you, baby? You need

to cut your hair maan Luthi and trim your beard. Look at how gorgeous your girl is and you looking scruffy.” Trust mama to gush over me and embarrass me at the same time.

“She loves me the way I am mama, right Smurfette?” Kamo just laughed.

We were all sitting in the living room having light conversation over a bottle of wine. It was good to see my parents chilled for a change and not on my case. Eventually lunch was served, and my mother cooking tasted as good as I remembered. She had pulled out all the stops. After lunch, my father asked me to go with him to his study. My sense of dread returned. I could still hear the scolding’s I received in that room when I was younger. I was a handful though.

“Close the door and take a seat.” He walked towards his liquor cabinet, took out two glasses and poured neat whiskey on both. He came and sat opposite me and passed me a glass. “How are you?” his brow knotted just

like my brothers. They were twins those two. I was taken aback by the question. I tried to search my mind of the conversation's possible outcomes.

"I'm fine tata." I took a sip of my glass. And nervously shifted.

"Look nyana, I know I'm always on your case but that doesn't mean I don't care nor love you. In fact, I do that because I love you and I want what's best for you. I may never have been around much when you were growing up, I regret that very much, but you came at a time when I was diversifying the business into different markets and I couldn't fail your grandfather." The conversation was becoming more awkward for me. I was never any good with the soapy stuff and coming from my father, well it wasn't something I was used to. I didn't know how to deal.

"I know tata."

“Did your brother tell you that he is expanding the business?” There we go.

“Yes, he did.”

“He could use your help son.”

“I’ll just be in the way dad.”

“There is something that you ought to know about your brother. He is selfless. He is under a lot of pressure and taking so much strain, but he’ll never complain. He wants to please his mother by taking the load off me so that I can enjoy my retirement. He needs your help but won’t burden you with that responsibility because he knows how it feels to be saddled with responsibility from a young age. He had his own dreams; do you know that? He gave it all up for the family business. I know you want to be your own man. I admire that but couldn’t you do that within the family business?”

"I don't know tata. Am I wrong for wanting my own thing?"

"You are not but this business is your legacy too. Think about it, that's all I'm saying. We don't need to resort to threats but if I have to, I will." The conversation was going so well until then.

"Am I still under a deadline to decide?"

"I'll give you another month. After that you are on your own." He downed his drink in one gulp. "That's all I wanted to say." He got on his feet and I followed him. I felt out of sort. That felt like emotional blackmail to me and yet there was a lot of truth to it especially about my brother. By the time we returned to the ladies I could feel a headache approach. It was time to go home but not before my mother gave me a load of Tupperware dishes filled with leftovers to last me a week. I was grateful.

“I had a great time with you baby even though my parents almost ruined it.” I told Kamo on our way to her house. She point blank refused to spend the night at my place saying I still needed to prove myself.

“I had a great time too. Your mom is a great cook.” I parked in front of her gate and switched of the car.

“Movies weekend?” I asked taking her hand in mine.

“I’m working Friday and have a girl’s night on Saturday, Sunday maybe.”

“Wow, so are you telling me that you are too busy for me?”

“I’m telling you that I’m also developing a life for myself that doesn’t include you. Which is something I had neglected to do since I’ve been with you. It made me clingy towards you and when I look back at the girl I was

becoming, I didn't like her at all. I'm even surprised you put up with my nagging for this long."

"You weren't that bad Smurfette. I was also an ass at times."

"No, you are just a young man growing up and experiencing life and I should do the same." I didn't like the sound of that especially about doing the same as me. What did she mean by that? Did she realise what I got up to behind her back? The thought of her doing what I do threatened to unravel my sanity, yet I was felt proud of her at the same time.

"Come here." I moved my chair back and helped her to straddle me. She fit perfectly in my arms. I tucked the stray hair that had become loose from her bun behind her ear. "I love you and I miss you. I understand what you are trying to do, and I support that. But don't forget that I love you." She nodded her head and cupped my face, then she leaned forward and slowly captured my lips with hers. I placed my hands on her butt cheeks and

pulled her closer as the kiss deepened. Her tongue did wild things in my mouth. She kissed me like she was pouring life into my soul and I felt myself become rock hard against her mound. She moaned against my lips and her breath quickened. I wanted her with urgency I couldn't contain. I slipped my hand under her dress into her panties and found her bare mound and my arousal intensified. "Fuck! Why aren't you wearing panties?" I breathed against her lips.

"I feel sexier around you when I don't wear panties." Her voice was thick with arousal and I wanted her more. I tentatively touched her heated core and she slightly pushed her hips forward. I dipped my fingers in between her wet folds and started circling the tip of her nub. Her dress had ridden and bunched in her waist as she open her legs wider to allow me better access. I dipped my middle finger inside, and she contracted against me as she sucked me in. once her muscles were relaxed, I finger fucked her and she undulated her hips while she held me tighter. I was literally in pain and her rotating hips were not helping things. Our lips were locked together, and we struggled to breathe. I felt her whole-body tense and then began to shake uncontrollably. I creamed my pants

a little, but I needed more to get over the edge. Once she came down from her high, my finger was still buried inside her mound. My fingers seemed to be getting all the action lately. That thought brought a wave of guilt I'd never experienced before. Kamo deserved better than my cheating ass. She got off me and open her bag, took out wipes and cleaned herself then fixed her dress. She didn't even look at the bulge that threatened to break through my jeans.

"Babe, and this?" I dropped my eyes towards my bulge.

"Haa, baby. We can't. Remember we are abstaining.' She pulled down the mirror above her and fixed her lip gloss.

"Blow job nyana?"

"In front of my parents' house! Are you mad?" I wanted to scream that she just fucking climaxed from fingering in front of her parents' house but that would be childish."

“I can drive to the corner.”

“No, Luthi, go home and take a cold shower. I’ll see you next week Sunday.” She pecked my cheek and got out of the car. I watched her disappearing into her yard. I was left baffled and painfully hard. I uncomfortably drove home silently seething. Two nights in a row my needs were left unattended. Women in my life were becoming selfish lovers.

I woke up the following day to a pounding headache. I couldn’t afford to skip work. For some reason, I wanted to make a good impression at my new job even if I wouldn’t be there for long. So, bunking work was out of the equation. I took tablets but they didn’t provide with much relief. I was running late and by the time I got to work my boss was already there. She called me back to try and set the record straight regarding Saturday. I could barely hear a thing except for the pounding in my temples. Had it been any other time, I would have loved to see her unravel and that power suit laid carelessly on the floor.

My day became longer afterwards. I couldn't even get through it, I made half my deliveries and called it a day. I didn't even go back to the office. I also knew there would be hell to pay the following day. By the time I got home, my whole body was shaking. Kamo called to check up on me just as I got under the covers drugged to the max. She told me to go see a doctor. Its migraines, they'll just give me the same medication I have.

I woke up the following day feeling better. I decided to be early so that I can cover the work I didn't do yesterday and the day's work. The building was still quiet as I began on the top floor, hoping to be there before they arrived. Especially the boss. The open area was still empty even the receptionist desk.

I went to her office, knocked once and opened, then I froze. Why the hell was she standing in the middle of the room in her underwear? Fuck! Damn she looked sexy! She had a flat tummy and her boobs were almost spilling out of her bra creating the perfect cleavage her narrow waist spread out into wide hips and I knew her behind was loaded. Her skin though, perfection. Smooth and

flawless voluptuous body! Made even more perfect by the black lace that seemed like I had just walked into a Victoria secret showroom. Her high heels accentuated her legs and made them look longer.

“Get out!” she screamed with her dress now clutched in her chest. I was just glued to the vision in front of me. I closed the door and locked then walked towards her with intent. I saw the panic look in her eye change into something else. I walked until I stood in front of her without losing eye contact. Her chest heaved and her breath quickened as we starred at each other as if we were having a silent conversation. Then she dropped the dress on the floor and her tongue came out to lick her lips. I leaned in a little closer and she did too until our foreheads were touching. Her breath mingled with mine as we were both panting. I moved closer still until there was no space between us. Her tongue came out again and I lost it. I slammed my lips into her, and she grabbed my me by shoulders and clung to me. Her lips were lush and soft as they yielded to my touch. At first it was a delicate butterfly of a kiss as if we were trying to learn each other. Then my arms encircled her, and the kiss grew bolder and more passionate as our tongues

duelled. I was unprepared for the fire that shot through my brain as warmth spread throughout my body. I wanted her with a need that I even failed to comprehend. We both became desperate as the kiss obliterated every thought from my mind except being inside of her. Then we both heard a knock and instantly pulled apart struggling to get much needed oxygen in our lungs. Her eyes looked dilated and her face and chest flushed. A huge budge threatened to tear through my jeans, and I was in pain. The person tried the door again and that brought us back to our senses. She quickly picked her dress up from the floor and put it on.

“Help me with the zipper! And be gentle I just fixed it.” Her tone was a dripping with arousal. I felt disappointment wash over me as I covered her lovely skin.

“Done.” I didn’t recognise my voice. She quickly grabbed my hand and pulled me towards a close door. I realised then that she had a bathroom in her office.

“Stay here and don’t make a sound.” She warned and closed the door behind her. I slowly opened the cold tap and splashed cold water on my face. Damn! I needed to get laid.

Butterfly 10

Fuck! I’m drenched. I can feel my thighs rub against each other and the sticky evidence of my arousal. The flimsy lace is no barrier. What has gotten into me? Imagine if my employees walked in on me in that position, worse the clients! I could never be taken seriously again in this business. All because I felt the urge to jump a boy’s bones. I quickly open the door and find a frowning Mel on the other side with her diary in hand.

“Why is the door locked? Are you okay?” she quickly walks pass me and I’m annoyed.

“I had to take my dress off to fix my zipper. You are here early?”

“It’s my usual time boss. Are you sure you are okay; you look a bit flustered?” She is now standing by my desk and continues her inquisition. I quickly steal a look towards the close door and pray that Luthi doesn’t feel brazen enough to come out. With his arrogance, I can’t be too sure.

“I told you I was fine. What’s my day like?” I sit on my chair; I fear I’ll stain my dress when I get up.

“You have a meeting in town with your new clients at 12, and a few conference calls afterwards. Should I reschedule one of them for the morning? I can see your diary is empty.” She is all business now.

“No, don’t do that. I need this time to sort out a few things.” Like going home and changing my panties.

“Okay. That’s all then.” She turns to leave.

“Oh Mel, before you go, please order breakfast for me. I dint have one this morning.” I lie. I need her gone from her desk so that I’ll be able to get rid of Luthi.

“Sure thing. Your usual?” I nod my head. she disappears out the door. I wait a few seconds and go check her table and she is gone then I quickly go usher out Luthi out of the bathroom.

“Should we pick up where we left of?” he lazily asks dragging his feet as I push him towards the door.

“Are you mad? You need to leave!” He chuckles.

“Alright! No need to sweat. I’m going. Let me take my packages firsts.” I let go of him. he picks ups his packages and leaves. I can breathe a sigh of relief. I pick up my keys and bag and leave the office. I run into Mel as she exits the elevator.

“They say your breaky will be ready in 10 minutes. Where are you off to?”

“Home, you can have the breakfast.” She seems lost, I don’t really have time to explain anything to her.

I absently drive home with my mind reliving the elicited moment in my office. I have never wanted anyone like I did in that moment. It was electric. My whole body and nerve system came alive and I burned from within. Why couldn’t Sakhi do that to me? The thought of Sakhi dampens my mood. I haven’t heard from him for over 24 hours and it feels weird. Usually he calls or SMS’s before I go to bed and then there is always a message from him first thing in the morning. I shake off the thoughts as I arrive at my place. Once inside I head straight for the shower and quickly take one and change the dress that led to my office disaster. What am I going to do about Luthi? I can’t deny that the attraction is there but what I can say with certainty is that nothing good will come of it. We are so different from each other in every other way it’s almost comical. Maybe that’s why I’m attracted to him. The knowledge that nothing will come of it, no expectations from both sides.

It only takes me less than two hours and I'm back at the office. I tune Mel a story about my broken zipper to explain my change of clothes. I quickly get through the morning and drive to my meeting. I'm not happy after my meeting. My potential clients are yielding toward my rivals as they have more to offer them than I can. Their main issue is that they have an IT person that will fully be dedicated to them and I can't afford to assign my programmers to just one client. That means I either hire a programmer or lose my business. I can use consultants but that will be costly, and a consultant won't commit to just my services. Then it's a light bulb moment. Luthi has a qualification in Computer Sciences, but can I really trust him to carry out instructions and to provide excellent service to new clients who I need to impress? The question is left unanswered.

The day is a flurry of activity afterwards until it's time to go home. I'm reminded of my idea when I see Luthi by the parking lot.

“What are you doing for dinner?” I ask as he walks me towards my car. He seems surprised by my question.

“Warming up my mom’s leftover food.” Gosh his mother still cooks for him.

“Join me for dinner, there is something I want to discuss with you?”

“Sure, I’ll follow you.” He watches as I get into my car and then drives behind me as I lead him to one of my favourite restaurants. We are seated in a corner table and I order a glass of wine while he orders a beer for himself. “Is this a date?” I choke on my saliva.

“What? No! I need to propose something to you and I also need dinner. Consider it killing two birds with one stone. He shrugs his shoulders.

“Ah well. I thought maybe my performance this morning had earned me a dinner date.” He wiggles his eyebrows.

“Do you ever take anything seriously?”

“Life is too short to be all serious all the time. What is it that you want to discuss with me? delivery of drugs?” he chuckles again. I can’t help but smile at him. He is incorrigible and unapologetic. Our drinks arrive and we place an order for food.

“Nothing shady. Drugs are not in my business nor will they ever be.”

“Oh, you only smoke them.” His smile broadens.

“Luthi, can you for once be serious!” He raises his arms in surrender and sits back watching me intently. “I need a programmer.” His face turns serious and he knots his brow together.

“I’m listening.” His serious deep tone sends goosies down my spine.

“Well, I saw that you are qualified. Why aren’t you practicing?’ He rubs his hair vigorously.

“I haven’t found a job yet and also I had only been planning to open up my own business but no funds yet.”

“Well, this could give you exposure while you raise the funds. The position will pay well but not the market value, I don’t have the budget for that, hence I’m approaching you. You don’t have experience yet.”

“How much are we talking?” I take a napkin and write the figures down then slide it towards him. He looks at it and I wait for a sign of being happy, I mean this is way above the driver’s salary wage he would be getting.

“Is this a joke?” I can feel my eyes widen.

“What do you mean?”

“You are basically exploiting me here; I won't settle for anything less than this.” He writes down an amount and slides it back to me. I look at the counter amount it's the current salary wage of experienced programmers.

“You are the one that's joking. You have zero experience and exposure. The only thing you have is a piece of paper that says you are qualified!”

“Think again, maybe you need to go back and look at my CV and come back to me with a better offer!” he winks. My confidence falters a bit. Did I miss anything on his CV? I may have I can't be too sure, but I need his service, but I can't really match the market value.

“Okay, you drive a hard bargain, how about this and then we can renegotiate in six months when I see results.” He looks at what I place in front of him. then he looks at me squinting his eyes.

“You are desperate, aren't you?” I roll my eyes.

“Luthi?”

“How about in six month we will renegotiate from nothing less than my counteroffer.” Well if I can’t afford him then, I will let him go and he would have secured me my client.

“You have a deal.” He leans forward and stretches his hand to me. I feel an electric shock goes through my arm as we shake hands. He is the devil incarnate. Our dinner arrives and we eat over a light conversation. He is an okay conversationalist, if you consider flirty a conversation, and talking about basic stuff. His mind isn’t as stimulating as I would like. He talks more about himself. “Do you have a girlfriend?” I interrupt him. He smirks.

“Of course, I do? We are currently taking things slow. Her idea not mine.” He goes on about his girlfriend for a while as I grin and nod here and there. I asked for it. What I can pick up is that the girl got tired of his childish ass. It’s a cute ass, my mind screams! But a child who is

still hung up on his girlfriend but too much of a player to give her what she needs. She is better off in my opinion. So, why are you undressing him at this moment? Because this child seems to be able to make the pots. “Are you even listening to me?”

“Of course, I am?” I lie taking a sip of my wine. I’ve been drifting in and out.

“Do you have a man in your life. Saying boyfriend kind of seems disrespectful considering your age.” I frown.

“What do you mean by that?” I find myself offended by his age reference.

“I didn’t mean to offend you, just a woman your age, older more matured probably has everything that a woman can need except maybe mind-blowing orgasms. Which I can freely provide for you at any time.” He winks. He is cute when he winks, its saucy.

“How old do you think I am?” he shrugs.

“I don’t know, you look to be my mom’s age.” I splutter my wine all over my empty plate.

“Wow!’ that’s all I can come up with.

“Don’t sweat mami, my mom is considered by my friends to be a MILF.” He makes a disgusted face.

“That’s comforting then.” I pour myself another glass.

“What are you doing on Friday?” he asks after a while.

“I’ll probably be watching movies and chilling in my bed. Why?”

“I want to take you out to this club I know. I’m sure you’ll love it.”

“I love clubbing, but the club scene seems to be getting younger and more ridiculous. So, I’m very particular about where I go.”

“Don’t worry, you’ll love this one. It has your vibe.” How does he know what vibe I like?

“I don’t think its appropriate for us to go out.” The uncertainty in my statement is glaring.

“Zizo, I like you and I know you want some of this. No one has to know. But rest assured whether we go out or not we will still fuck. You want me, badly, and guess what? I want you with the same intensity. So, I say we have as much fun while doing it.” My clit flutters as he speaks.

“What will your girlfriend say about your cheating ways?”

“What she doesn’t know won’t hurt her, right. Come on, lets live a bit.”

“I don’t think so Luthi.” I pull myself together. He blinks for a few seconds. I call the waiter over and ask to settle the bill.

“Your loss.” He smirks.

“Maybe. You are my employee and therefore I can’t cross the line with you, but I will go dancing. There is no rule against that.” His face perks up. The waiter returns with the bill and I settle it. Luthi isn’t even bothered.

“Thank you for dinner boss.” He says opening my car door for me.

“Thank you for accepting the dinner invite.”

“I wish you could’ve accepted mine. We would be magic together.”

“Good night Luthi.” I close my door and drive off. He is one big temptation in my life. My mind is preoccupied on the drive home. I laugh at some of the ridiculous things he said over dinner. The boy has balls of steel I can tell, and he might be flirty and basic at times, but he could be a force in business if he gave himself the time. He just doesn’t take anything seriously.

I get home and prepare to soak in a bath when the doorbell rings. I’m not expecting anyone and how did they get into the apartment building? I wear a robe and walk barefoot towards the door

“Who is it?” I ask when I reach the door.

“Its me Luthi.” How did he find me? “You are easy to follow, too oblivious.” He answers my unasked question. I yank the door open and find him leaning against the door frame. All the words die in my mouth as my whole body wakes up and feel a different energy vibrates. “Well, are you going to let me in or gawk at me the whole evening?” I swallow to moisten my patched throat.

“Come in.” I say then open the door wide to allow him in as I take a much-needed breath. This is not a good idea.

Butterfly 13

I was at a pharmacy buying morning after pills that I had promised to buy. I couldn't believe how stupid I had been. Unsafe sex is not something I usually play around with and I suddenly became careless. I've seen the consequences of such. It baffled me that I would be safe all my life and then suddenly a sugar mama made me lose all my marbles. I had to be tested quick before I get intimate with Kamo. Kamo and I had been getting tested together regularly and had promised each other to remain faithful while together. I had made a promise to myself that I would be safe while not with her. Thinking about her made me miss her. I missed the simple things about her. I missed having her legs over mine when we would be sitting on the couch. I would be watching TV and she'd be reading her book. I loved our weekend rides to the hiking trails.

I left the pharmacy to go back to the office. I found the boss behind her laptop busy as usual. She worked too

hard and I suspect given an opportunity she played just as hard. She blushed when she saw me which I found cute. I suppose she was reliving our earlier activities and my blood became warm at the thought. I planned to push all her buttons and have her ruffled a bit. I smiled inwardly as she tried to act tough in my presence. After making sure that she took the pills I left for home, I was done already with work.

The week flew by and it was a Friday. I hadn't seen Zizo much the past few days except for the one time she had me attend a meeting with her clients and introduced me as an interim programmer. I sat in the boring meeting and listened and made necessary gestures when needed. She seemed to be in control of the situation though and I found it sexy especially when she couldn't meet my eyes the entire time.

I left work early but not before checking if she was still going out with me in the evening. She seemed to perk up at the mention of our outing. As I arrived home, I received a call from Tino asking me if I had plans for the evening, I told them I did but they could tag along. Clubbing was even more fun as a group. Once home I

rummaged through my fridge and there wasn't anything to eat or drink. I decided to shower and change so that I could have an early dinner. Before the shower, I called Kamo and had a long chat with her and she sounded like she missed me just as much as I did her. I went to take a shower afterwards and when I came out of the shower, I could tell there was someone in the house. At first, I thought it was my mother. I wrapped a towel around my waist and walked to the kitchen where all the noise was coming from, to find my brother with a mop and already something on the stove.

“Whasup bro” he looked up and gave me a smile that didn't reach his eyes. He looked messy.

“Dude, your house is messy!” he said by his way of greeting.

“You look just as messy as the house. What are you cooking?”

“I brought some groceries; I knew your cupboards would be empty.”

“I wasn’t expecting you. Are you okay?” I asked opening the fridge to find a dozen of beers. I grabbed one and opened it.

“I’m good, are you going out?”

“Ja, I’m getting ready to, but it can wait now that you are here. When did you get back?” I took a sip and watched as he finished with the mop.

“This morning. Go get dressed while I finish up here.’ I nodded and went to get ready. I worried about him. It was unlike him to look unkept. It could be a woman or business or both. With him it could be anything, he takes things way too seriously. Once I was dressed, I went to join him. I found him sitting in the lounge with a beer in hand watching the news.

“Dinner will be ready shortly.” I nodded and went to get myself another beer. The house looked cleaned. He always cleaned my place before he could relax. He once suggested I get a cleaner to come a few days during the week. He even offered to pay but I refused. I didn’t want a stranger in my space. I grabbed a beer and went to join him. We watched the news in silence until we were on our third beers

“I decided to join the business end of the month.” He raised his beer in recognition.

“About damn time! What made you agree?”

“Sense of responsibility I suppose. And I also hear you need me.” He chuckled.

“You heard right.” Another few minutes of silence.

“Do I have to pry it out of you?” I asked.

“What?”

“What ever it is that has you so gloomy.” He ignored me and continued watching his news channel and drinking his beer. I resorted to chatting with Kamo. She was also getting ready to go out with her friends. I was happy to notice that they were going to the other side of town and there wouldn't be a chance of us meeting. My brother got up on his fourth beer and dished up food for us. We ate in silence and I allowed him his space silence. Even though I knew something was bothering him I also knew him well enough to know that he would speak when he was ready. I volunteered to do the dishes after dinner while he continued to drink and sulk. After I finished with the dishes, I went back to sit with him.

“So, Kamo finally left your ass.”

“She didn't leave me, she returned home. We are still dating.”

“You are lucky, you got yourself a good woman. Even though you treat her like shit, she doesn’t leave you. Careful not to lose her.”

“And you? Trouble with your lady again.” I didn’t even know who he was dating. He never introduced her to me, and mom told me that they once met her, and she thought she was a high class hooker. Not to her son’s standard.

“She dumped me.” My eyes grew wide. “She said I was too perfect.” I snickered at that. I knew exactly how she felt. “ Me, perfect. You know! She didn’t even have the decency to wait for me to come back. Just did it over the phone like the past two years meant nothing to her. Absolute zilch!” He took a swig of his beer. He was probably on his sixth. He didn’t drink much so when he did, he didn’t handle his alcohol very well.

“It’s her loss, bro. You’ll find your person, who will appreciate you just as you are.”

“I tried with her. I love her Thithi.” He used his pet name for me which I hated when I was young but learnt to appreciate as his term of endearment for me as I grew older. “That chick even faked orgasm bruh! I would try and try and try and she’d fake it and then get rid of me as if I had plaque.”

“Gees, that’s rough. Maybe she has intimacy issues.” I said even though I could tell, he just needed to vent.

“More like commitment issues. Do you know that not even once, she ever visited me at my house? The woman doesn’t know where I live. I had to ambush her to meet the parents. I never met hers either. I actually think I was a fool by following her around like a puppy. Jokes on me right.”

“It sounds like you were the only one invested in this relationship.”

“More like a curse. I can’t stop thinking about her.”

“You know what? You need to get laid. Fuck someone else and get her out of your system.” He shook his head.

“Nah. It won’t work. I can’t use a person like that. I’ll find my person eventually, I suppose.” He finished his drink. “I have to go. He staggered to his feet.

“Why don’t you spend a night here.” I didn’t think he was in a good condition to drive. His whole-body visible shook as I mentioned him spending a night.

“And sleep in one of your beds? Never! But I’ll order an Uber. I’ll leave my car.”

“You don’t mind if I use it?”

“Not if you will drink and drive.”

“No someone will give me a lift tonight, I’m taking Kamo out tomorrow.”

“Well, enjoy yourself. My Uber is here.” I also stood up and shoulder hugged.

“Think about my offer, I can hook you up.” He chuckled as he left.

I had already received messages from the boys telling me that they had arrived. I called to check on Zizo and she told me she would meet me at the club. I ordered an Uber and it arrived a few minutes later. I found Tino and Ashlyn with a girl each on their side.

“I thought you were bringing your sugar mama.” Tino said the moment I sat down and they all laughed.

‘She is sweet, in all the right places,’ I said, and they all whistled. I ordered a drink and joined in their banter. They teased me throughout about sleeping with someone my mom’s age. I didn’t take them seriously, all I

said is that they shouldn't knock it before trying it. It was almost 10 pm when Zizo called me to tell me she was outside the restaurant.

"Gents excuse me, I have to go fetch my lady." I left the table and called when I exited the restaurant. I immediately dropped the call as I saw her standing not far from the entrance. She wore a short flowy black dress. Off the shoulders with wide long sleeves and a black heel. She had a red clutch bag in her hand. Her hair left loose. She looked damn sexy. I walked towards her as she stood rooted on the spot. The moment I was in front of her I wrapped my arms round her waist and pulled her against me then dipped my head and captured her lips. She tasted of strawberries. I felt her hands as she clutched me on the side of my hips as I pushed my tongue against her lips demanding entrance and she parted her lips allowing me in. The kiss grew bolder and intense and I could feel a stirring in my loins then I pulled away.

"Hey," she whispered in a husky tone.

“Hey mami. You look gorgeous. Come.” I took her hand in mine and led her towards the restaurant. She resisted and I turned to look at her worried face

“What’s wrong.”

“Who are you with in there?”

“Tino and Ashlyn with some chicks, why?”

“I’m not sure about this.” She had a frown on her face.

“Don’t stress. You’ve been with my boys before and they are cool.”

“I was drunk then!”

“I’ll get you drunk again. Come on. If you find it uncomfortable, I’ll take you somewhere else.” She nodded her head and followed me. The boys stood and

greeted her when we reached the table and then she gave the girls a small wave. I could see the two sizing her up and I glared at them and they looked away. They were there for free drinks and they shouldn't forget that. Tino and Ashlyn engaged her in easy banter until she was visibly relaxed. An hour after she arrived, we moved to a club. She loved dancing, I could tell, and she knew how. We spent half the night dancing and flirting more than we drank until I spotted someone who looked like Kamo being led outside by some guy. I didn't even see that she had been in the same club. Had she perhaps seen me? I wondered, and panic went through me.

"I'll be back," I didn't explain myself as I left Zizo in the middle of the dance floor. I struggled to get past the throngs of people but eventually I managed, and I found her in the parking lot with the guy's arms around her waist. She had her face buried on his chest. I literally saw red as I approached them.

"Let go of her!" her head went up when she heard my voice and I saw anger flashed in her eyes. "Kamo what

are you doing with him?” she got free from him and marched towards me.

“You don’t get to ask me that! You, of all people! Why don’t you go back to your gogo!”

“Kamo don’t test me! You are coming with me!” I grabbed her hand and tried to pull her. She wrestled out of my hold and slapped me hard on the face.

“Luthi go back to your granny whatever she is! I cannot believe that I gave you the benefit of the doubt and wanted to surprise you. You are an asshole you know that! To do that in front of my face!’ Pain flashed in her eyes.

“I didn’t know you’d be here Smurfette. She is just my boss and we were only messing around.” As the words spilled out of my mouth, I knew I was fucking up. Especially when I saw her whole face go red. Just as she was about to say something, she seemed distracted and looked behind. I inwardly groaned.

“Is there a problem Luthi?” Why couldn’t she stay in the club?

“I’m handling it.” I didn’t even look at her as I began to chase after Kamo who was walking towards the dude’s car. He seemed ready to strike at any moment. I held Kamo again and when she tried to escape I tightened my grip.

“Let go of me! You are hurting me!”

“I’m not letting you get into that car. Do you even know this dude?”

“Why do you care? Go back to your girlfriend!” I felt someone touch my shoulder and I turned to find the guy glaring at me.

“I believe the lady asked you to let go, and I think you should do just that.” I was so mad that he even dared to speak to me. I swung a fist and it landed square on his

temple and he staggered backwards. I heard screams around me, but I was lunging at him again. When he saw me charging, he quickly straightened up and found himself balanced as I threw a second punch, he was ready for me. The scuffle began as we rolled each other to the ground. I felt hands pulling us apart and realised that we had a small audience with phones taking pictures and videos. Kamo was besides herself. I realised then that Tino and Ashlyn were the ones trying to break the fight. The guy could see then that he was outnumbered. He got into his car and threw Kamo's handbag out the window as he drove off.

“What are you doing hanging around with that asshole.” I could taste blood on my tongue.

“You are the asshole. That is my friends' brother who was kind enough to offer me a lift home when he saw how upset I was.”

“He was going to offer you more than a lift believe me.” I looked around and Zizo was nowhere in sight. “Come, I'll

take you home.” She seemed shaken and didn’t argue as we walked into Tino’s car. We said goodbye to Ashlyn and went our separate ways, evening ruined. We sat in the backseat while Tino drove with his girl next to him. Kamo looked out the window the moment we drove out until we reached her house. We both exited the car and I asked Tino to give me a few minutes.

“Wait Kamo!” I had to chase after her and held her before she opened the gate.

“I have nothing to say to you Luthi. I it’s over.

“Well I have a lot to say.” I pulled her away from the gate and had her caged in against the wall. “Come on babe. Do you think I would do you like that! She is my boss and we were goofing around. She is old enough to be my mother babes. She could even be my brothers’ type, who knows. You know I like my girl’s petite like you.” She held her arms as she hugged herself.

“It didn’t look innocent Luthi. Why would you be partying with your boss?”

“It was an office thing; we were celebrating my promotion to be a programmer and a new deal that we clinched. You didn’t see the others because they were at the tables not dancing. I took my promise to you seriously baby.

“You got a proper job!” she sounded excited and I did an inner cartwheel.

“Yes my Smurfette I did, it will only be for a month though.” Her face fell. “Don’t worry its for a good cause. I’m joining the family business.” Her face brightened and I visible relaxed.

“You finally agreed?” I nodded. “I’m proud of you. It seems like you are growing up baby.” Her hands came to my chest.

“I have to show you that I can take care of you and I’m also capable of making adult decisions. I’m doing this for you Smurfette, for us.” She smiled and my heartbeat returned to normal.

“Oh my word! What is your boss going to think of me?” she covered her face with her hands, and I pried them open.

“She will understand that I have a very beautiful and crazy girlfriend and she needs to stay away.”

“Ja, she needs to stay away.”

“Now, who was that guy?”

“No one important, only a friend’s brother and he is gay, relax.”

“Angifuni nicks ngawe.” She smiled I pulled her closer and bent my head to capture her lips in mine. She went

on her toes and hooked her arms around my neck kissing me back. I could feel the kiss becoming heated and I pulled away. "I love you."

"I love you too." She said sweetly.

"We are still on for tomorrow afternoon, right?"

"You mean this afternoon?" I nodded my head smiling. "It must be somewhere posh; you're getting the big bucks now." she teased.

"I haven't even gotten paid yet but for you I'll move mountains." I kissed her one last time and reluctantly let her go. I watched as she went through and waited until I could see her bedroom light come on and went back to the car to find Tino and his girlfriend heavily kissing. I sent a message to ask Zizo where she was, and she didn't respond but I could see the two blue ticks. I called and she cut the call and switched off her phone because when I called again it went straight to voicemail. I asked

Tino to drop me off at my place. I could feel a headache approaching.

Butterfly 14

It was a Monday morning and I wasn't hungover, thank goodness, because I spent my Sunday at home with family. They were celebrating the news that I was joining the family business. For once I felt like I did an adult thing. I was included and treated like an equal. Kamo was with me since Saturday night as she spent the night at my place. No, we didn't have sex, well penetration that is, at least she got me off by giving me the best blow job ever. She seemed happy as well with my decision. She was with me when my parents called to invite me for lunch and they essentially extended the invitation to her.

I was dreading going to work but I had no choice. Zizo's phone was off the whole weekend and she never returned my calls. I didn't know how it would be after what occurred Friday night. I walked into her office and wasn't sure what my duties would be. She looked up as I walked in and didn't show me any reaction. Her face was neutral revealing nothing.

"Morning Boss." I tried to sound jovial.

“Luthi,” she greeted “Come in and take a seat.” She sat back in her chair and watched me as I approached. It seemed like she was studying me, and I felt little nerves creeping in.

“Have you been avoiding me?” I had to ask as I sat down.

“Not really, I just didn’t feel like talking to you. What did you want to speak to me about?” The conversation was just cold.

“You left without saying goodbye on Friday. I wasn’t sure if you got home okay and then you ignored my calls.”

“Even if I had said goodbye, you probably wouldn’t have noticed seeing that you were occupied.”

“Okay, I accept that but still, why the cold shoulder?” She leaned forward and balanced her elbows on her desk.

“Let’s get something clear Luthi, you and I fuck and only fuck. None of the nonsense with dates and call unless the call is about us fucking. Let’s not complicate things. Are you up for that?” the word fuck conjured up images that would probably shock a nun, especially the way she said it.

“Are you not going to ask me about Friday?” I mean, she witnessed me fighting for another woman.

“Its not my business. Boundaries should’ve been set. Now, are you ready to start with your new job this week?” I nodded my head. I was puzzled by her attitude. She didn’t seem fazed by what happened and yet she spent an entire weekend mizing my calls. Nah, I didn’t buy her nonchalant behaviour, but she effectively put a stop to it when she mentioned business. She told me that she had a meeting set up with the other designers so that they could brief me on the current project and to get a feel of how things were done. I was now a programmer effective immediately. She called Mel in and told her where I would be stationed for the duration of the month.

She introduced me to the few IT guys and then creatives that she has. I’m briefed about what they had done so far and then they hand over. I’m told that I’ll work with one creative and we report directly to Zizo. She was all business-like the entire time no one would believe me if I told them that she had a birth mark on her left buttock. Seeing her in action and dishing out instructions and orders was such a turn on for me. At some point I daydreamed about bending her over the desk and fucking her senseless.

Once everything was done, I sat at my desk and began to work. Time flew and before I knew it was time to knock off. I hardly saw Zizo and I missed her knocking off time. By the time I got to the parking where she usually parked, it was empty. I went home, took painkillers and passed out immediately. I knew that being in front of the computer for almost an entire day could aggravate my headaches.

My week became a blur of activity, work, briefing sessions, meetings and headaches. Our concept was exciting, and the client was happy with what we had presented so far. Zizo was still giving me the cold shoulder outside of work and during work she was all about business. She loved my work and complemented me on it. I enjoyed the way she bit her lower lip as she thought over a concept or a suggestion then her eyes would brighten, and her face come alive. Then you'd know that you had hit the spot. She didn't do a lot of those but when she did, they were satisfying.

We had a presentation by Thursday and our client loved the concept and promised to approve it. We were all excited. She called me to her office after the meeting and

had me lock the door. She didn't ask or speak afterwards but striped naked as I watched getting aroused, she bent over her table with her legs widespread.

"Are you waiting for an invite," she purred. I sprung into action and strode towards her while unbuttoning my jeans. She pointed me towards a foil of condom on her first and I put it on with shaky hands. Once I was sheathed, I slowly slid into her warmth and felt her muscles contract around me. She was already wet.

"Don't be gentle Luthi." I didn't have to be told twice.

She was back to boss mode afterwards as we fixed our clothes, but I could see the satisfied glow on her face. No that I'm bragging she was quiet vocal about how good it was. I went back to my office and left her to do her work afterwards. We both knocked off at the same time and I found my bike with a flat tyre. She gave me her car keys and offered me a ride but only if I joined her at her house for dinner. It wasn't an offer I would refuse.

Dinner was a takeaway and we barely ate as we couldn't keep our hands off each other the moment we got to her apartment. It was when we were lying on the couch both satiated when I received an SMS from Kamo reminding me of a promise I had made to fetch her from the movies

with her friends. I had completely forgotten about her. I thought of suggesting Uber but thought she wouldn't be impressed.

"I have to go. I promised my friend a ride now I have to go make a plan for them."

"You can use my car and come fetch me in the morning." She offered getting up from my chest.

"What! Are you sure? I can Uber."

"Absolutely, just don't crash my car."

"I won't, thank you." I got dressed while she watched me with a glass of wine in hand. I gave her a kiss and took her car keys then left. I called Kamo to let her know I was on the way. I found her waiting at a coffee shop with her friends. I led them towards Zizo's car.

"Whose car is this?" She asked as I opened the passenger door for her while her two friends got in at the back.

"My brother's."

"He has so many cars, he should give you one."

"No one should give me anything babes, I must earn it.". She smiled at me. They started chatting about the movie they watched as the friends directed me to their place.

Once we dropped them off, I asked if Kamo would spend the night with me, she agreed without hesitation. Once home I went to take a shower first and she came to join me.

“I don’t think you should be in here if you still want to remain chaste.” I said lathering a generous amount of shower gel on her back.

“Who said I still want to.” She responded looking at me over her shoulder. Her pert butt was inviting, and I could feel my loins stirring.

“Does that mean the trial period is over?” I moved closer and began kneading her shoulders.

“It does but I still won’t move back in with you but that doesn’t mean we should deprive ourselves.” My heart leapt with joy, I bent my head and started planting kisses on the side of her neck and she leaned to one side allowing me better access. The shower turned into a steamy session. A while later we were both gasping for air and the water was turning cold. We both got out of the shower on shaky legs and went to dry ourselves. We didn’t wear anything else and cuddled while whispering sweet promises to each other. I had my Smurfette back and I was elated. I fell asleep with a smile on my face.

The following morning, we had to wake up early so that we could first go to her house and then drop her off at work. By the time I got to Zizo's house I was already late, but she seemed to be in a good mood, so she didn't give me any flack. I had my bike towed to the garage the moment I got to work. They told me it would be ready by weekend. I continued to use Zizo's car throughout the week. On a Friday she drove me to the garage to fetch my bike and then followed me to my place. I had to make up a story to Kamo because she was already planning to spend her Friday evening with me. I tuned her a story about working late on a project and postponed for Saturday.

I wasn't sure the state the house was in and I was nervous about her coming to my place, but she insisted on spending the night at my place. Compared to her apartment my place was a dump. Nothing was out of place in her house, her and my brother would probably get along. She surprised me though when she walked in and placed her bag on the kitchen counter, her nose wasn't turned up like the first time she visited. She walked and threw herself on the couch while taking her heels off then folded her legs under her butt.

"Can I get you anything to drink?" I asked.

“Do you have wine?” Wine? No, I didn’t. I told her as much. We decided to order food and include two bottles of wine. We sat and chatted as we waited for our order. It was good to see her being silly and laughing at my silly jokes. Watching her let loose and drop her guard made her look younger.

ZIZO

I’m sitting here with no care in the world. Even the stain on the coffee table doesn’t bother me, okay maybe a little bit. But I’m still seated not looking around the house for a cloth and a bucket. His dick game is that good. I may even be blind to the fact that his place is filthy. I mean here I am waiting for food and wine to be delivered, relaxed on his shady couch. I gave him my car the other day, while the past weekend I witnessed him fight for his girlfriend, the girlfriend I will not think about or even speak about.

Of course, I thought about her, the whole damn week. How young she is, very young indeed, beautiful and petit, everything that I’m not. Which makes me wonder what he wanted from me; I suppose it’s the novelty of sleeping with someone older. I can see he enjoys taking control of

me and I revel in it. It gives me a thrill that I can't even explain. I can't even get any satisfaction from my toys of late, he has consumed my mind and my body. I get mini orgasms when I think of him inside of me, that's how far gone I am. So here I am, with my body vibrating in anticipation, laughing over his silly jokes.

I enjoyed seeing him at work. He is brilliant and he'll make an impact in the business. I don't even think he needs to be serious about anything. The laid-back attitude is part of who he is. He absolutely impressed me; I wish he didn't have to go. A small voice whispers, if it was the orgasms in the office that impressed me but it's not it. Even when I was mad at him, I was still impressed by his work.

Our food arrives and he sets it up on the coffee table and pours me a glass of wine and gets a beer for himself. We enjoy the food over a lively conversation. I can feel the wine warming me up and his deep voice adds to the stimulation. I watch him as he throws back his head and laughs at something I just said. He suddenly reminds me of Sakhi, and I frown. Why would I think about him at this moment? I haven't spoken to him since that day. I must admit I've been feeling shitty about how I ended things, he deserved better. But sometimes a breakup is like a

bandage if you remove slowly you prolong the hurt, but a quick removal will hurt ,yes, but then it fades quicker. I wonder what would happen if he had been the one to make my pussy vibrate? But honestly though, how long will this new thrill last?

“Are you even listening to me?” Luthi brings me out of my thoughts.

“I’m sorry, I just thought about work for a second.”

“Gees, should I be offended?” He clutches at his chest dramatically.

“No man, there is no competition.” Work always come first but I don’t tell him that. I place my wine glass on the table and take his beer and do the same then I climb over him and straddle his thighs. He relaxes back on the couch a lazy smile breaking on his face. I like that he is strong and able to handle me. He brings his hands to my ass and pulls me towards his groin and I feel his hardening muscle and my pussy clenches. I run my hands through his course messy hair. I hope they don’t come out oily. I lower my head and plant a soft kiss on his lips he doesn’t respond but I can feel the smile.

“Is it you trying to make up for having a wondering mind while I’m with you?” he mumbles against my lips.

“This is me trying to tell you that conversation time is over, and I need my needs taken care off.”

“Is that so?” he growls. I respond by capturing his lower lip and pull. He is now responding, and the kiss gets heated and clothes starts flying. This begins a heated tryst that ends up with naked limbs, intertwined and satiated in the bedroom. This attraction is becoming dangerous and addictive. That is my last thought before I fall into exhausted sleep.

The following morning, I am woken up by a smell of something frying followed by the clanking pots and plates. I stretch my sore body and after a quick bathroom trip I wear one of his oversized t-shirts. A rare thing to find in his room. It barely covers my bum, but I don't care, its just the two of us. I pick up my panties from the floor and wear them. I paddle bare foot toward the kitchen. He doesn't hear me approach as he dances while he stirs the pot. I don't hear any music and he doesn't have earphones on; he must be in a good mood. He is only wearing boxer shorts and his back muscles work as he moves. Damn! I really know how to pick them, don't I.

“Do you like what you see?” he asks without even turning. I feel my face heating up. I walk over to him and hold him from the back ignoring his question.

“What are you making?” what ever he is making doesn’t look good.

“Scrambled eggs, I think. I’ve seen Ka— I mean my mom makes it. I hope its good. Want a taste?” he turns around and feeds me a bite. Its rubbery and salty. He is worse than me. I tell him just as much. He switches the stove off and pushes me against the counter and begins kissing me while tugging at my panties. “Since we don’t have breakfast, we shall have each other for breakfast.” I giggle, a whole giggle, imagine that. He starts kissing with intent and I respond in kind. He does a quick work of removing my panties and the t-shirt I’m wearing. I help him take his undies off as he suddenly turns me around and bends me over the counter while he swiftly enters me. He has a thing for my ass, and I feel it in the way he always caresses and kneads it when he is taking me from behind. The intensity builds and his thrusts become more urgent. I let my eyes close and enjoy the ride. I’m getting close I can feel it and I start rubbing my hooded nub in sync with his strokes. He is also getting close as I feel his movements become less coordinated and breathing

become heavier. I feel his teeth at the side of my neck. Then I hear a sound, half moan half groan. My eyes fly open and right by the door is a shocked Sakhi one hand balancing on the wall while the other is clutching at his chest. I feel Luthi go rigid behind me and my orgasm breaks through me so unexpectedly I let out a strangled cry. Sakhi looks like he has just seen a ghost while I suddenly feel a sharp pain go through my abdomen as my body is wrecked with an ice-cold feeling. My senses are confused from euphoria down to feeling a sense of doom in a split second.

“Fuck Sakhi! Don’t just stand there bra!” I can barely hear Luthi. My ears are ringing. He is still inside me and I feel him slip out. Sakhi is still rooted on the spot slightly shaking his head.

“He is my brother, Zizo. My fuckin brother!” He murmurs and turns around staggering!

“Wait! You two know each other?” Luthi asks with urgency in his voice. My knees are shaking. I’m still looking at where Sakhi has been a few seconds ago.

What the fuck! They are almost twins!

I apologise for the errors

Butterfly 15

“How do you two know each other?” He demands and I’m finally spurred into action as I scramble into my panties and then the t-shirt I was wearing. He does the same with his underwear. I notice his hands are slightly shaking. “Talk to me damn it, how do you know my brother?” He is almost screaming.

“I was dating him!”

“ What? What do you mean you were dating him?”

“I broke up with him a few weeks ago!”

“On no!” He says that more to himself. I can hear his voice break and he becomes grey. I turn and chase after Sakhi. I find him in the parking lot walking towards his car. He seems way too relaxed for someone who has just witnessed what he just did.

“Sakhi!” I desperately call after him. He doesn’t respond and keeps walking. “Sakhi!” I walk faster. I’m already winded from running down the stairs. He reaches his car and I scream his name again because I feel I won’t catch up to him in time. He turns around and looks at me and the look in his eyes stops me dead in my tracks. It’s anger filled with disgust then hurt. The myriads of emotions flow through his eyes like water in a running river. Then suddenly his eyes go wide and he breaks into a run towards me. My body is wrecked with fear which renders me immobile. Today is the day that a man will beat me. I close my eyes and wait for an impact but when none comes I tentatively open my one eye. He runs pass me screaming, I can’t hear because my ears seemed to be drowned by my galloping heartbeat. I turn around to see where he is going and I see him crouched over a lifeless Luthi on the concrete parking. He is holding him by his head and slightly patting him on the face. I immediately walk over to them on shaky legs. This morning is turning out to be a disaster.

“What happened?” I ask.

“Call and ambulance!” he barks

“Is he okay?” he looks deathly pale and has blood running from his nose.

“Call the ambulance Zizomila!” he sounds panicked and I then realise I don’t have a phone on me. I’m practically naked in the middle of a parking lot. I tell him I don’t have my phone, he gives me his. My heart lurches when I see his screen saver. It’s a picture of the two of them in a boat. Why didn’t I see their resemblance before? I make the call and they tell me they’ll be here in 15 minutes. I tell Sakhi as much.

“That will take too long.” Before I say anything he scoops him in his arms and take him to the car. I run before him to open the door. He gently places him in the backseat and instruct me to get in and hold his head. I don’t have the luxury of time to argue as he immediately gets on the drivers seat and starts the engine. I get in and grudgingly do as told.

He drives like a maniac to the hospital and fortunately the hospital isn't too far from us. The moment we arrive he runs into reception and comes back with a stretcher with a doctor and a two nurses. They quickly attend to Luthi who hasn't woken up since. They load him on the stretcher and usher him away.

"I have to go get dress, can I use your car?" he doesn't say anything and just throws his keys at me. I'm overwhelmed with shame as I still feel the morning juices slippery between my thighs. The smell of sex is overpowering. What must Sakhi think of me? I get to Luthi's house and find the door still open. I don't have the time to go to my place. I jump into the shower and take a quick one then get into yesterday's clothes.

Afterwards I drive back to the hospital.

I'm too nervous as I walk in. I can't bare the look on Sakhi's face and I question my sanity at to why I suddenly care how he thinks of me. I broke up with him moss and I didn't know they are brothers, so technically, I didn't do anything wrong. My thoughts are halted when I walk in to where I was directed and spot Sakhi's parents. He

must have called them. The mother is inconsolable in her husband arms. Sakhi is pacing.

“Molweni.” I greet. The mother’s head comes up from under her husband’s embrace as they both look at me. She is frowning while they acknowledge my greeting well except for Sakhi. I might as well be invisible the way he ignores me. “Any news yet?”

“Not yet, the doctors are with him.” Sakhi's father answers after a few seconds of silence. I decide to take a seat and join the wait. I can still feel the mother’s eyes on me and I don’t dare turn to look at her.

“You are the girl that was with Sakhi at the restaurant the other day?” my heart jumps to my throat. She remembers me.

“Yes mama.”

“Oh.” She sounds disappointed but doesn’t say anything else. We wait in silence for a while with my thoughts running a circus in my head. What am I doing here? Is the most constant. I keep reassuring myself that it’s a decent thing to do. After sometime the doctor comes out looking tired. He confirms if we are all family and they absently nod their heads. seemingly anxious to hear the news. He informs them that Luthi has to be taken in for an emergency surgery. They have found a clot in his brain which seemed to have been gradually building for some time. He tells them that he needs them to sign consent forms so that they can perform an open surgery which is the only thing that can possibly save his life. Sakhi is the only one responding and asking all the relevant questions. His mother has lost all her energy and is sitting down a sobbing mess, I can see the father isn’t faring well either.

Once Sakhi is satisfied with his questions he instructs the doctor to do what he has to do to save his brother. He looks more like Luthi as he paces the floor and constantly messing his hair. I feel like an intruder, I want to say something comforting to everyone but no words form in my brain. The doctor comes back with forms and asks the

family to follow him to a nearby office. I'm left alone to stew in my guilt and out of place feeling. I can understand the later, but the guilt, why? What am I feeling guilty of? But even as I ignore that feeling, it's persistent.

A few minutes later the parents return without Sakhi. The father tells me that he went outside for some air after signing all the forms. I excuse myself and go in search of him. I find him standing out the balcony with his back to me and hands deep in his pockets as he stares into the distance.

"I was looking for you. Are you okay?" I tentatively ask keeping my distance. His posture screams back off.

"Why are you still here?" he still has his back to me.

"Well, I'm," I falter for a second. "I just wanted to make sure that you are okay." He slowly turns around and faces me with a sneer on his face.

“Really.” His tone drips with sarcasm. This is not the Sakhi I know. I don’t recognise the cold person standing in front of me. “ Do me a favour Zizo, if you are that concerned about my well being. Go home. Your presence isn’t needed.” He walks pass me and I have to quickly step aside to give him space. I remain standing staring into the distance. He is right. I don’t belong here. My heart constricts at the thought. I care about what happens to Luthi and then I suddenly realise I care more about what Sakhi thinks of me. Where the hell did that come from? I feel the urge to run after him and beg forgiveness. Maybe I’m losing my marbles. He is right. It’s time I went home. I order an Uber and go wait outside. None of them will even miss me so I don’t even bother letting them know.

The Uber arrives and I change my mind about going home. I need to unpack what I’m feeling so I ask the driver to take me to Pearl's house while I message her to let her know I’m on the way. The moment I arrive at her house, her husband, John takes the kids to the park.

“I hope I’m not driving him away.” I say settling in a couch. She gives me a glass of wine and has her own in hand. I may need more than a glass. I’m not sure about my feelings. I feel all sort of crazy things maybe she can help me realign my life.

“He was going to take the kids out anyway. What has you so worked up?” she doesn’t waste time. She is looking at me expectantly and I realise that I don’t know where to begin. I’m not sure how to tell her.

“I’ve been sleeping with Luthi.” That’s a good place to begin. Her eyes light up.

“The Ben 10? You went and did it? You dirty slut!” she puts her glass on the coffee table and sits back with glee on her face. “And, how was it?”

‘Glorious my friend. An orgasm fest.’

“Tell me more!”

“Babes, there is more pressing matters.” She frowns.

“Well it turns out he is Sakhi’s younger brother.”

“Oh my word! I knew he looked familiar. How did you not know this?”

“Like friend, I don’t know how I missed it. Maybe I just didn’t connect the two and their lifestyles and personalities together. I kept getting these flashes whenever I would be with Luthi but I pushed them aside. Nam, I don’t know. Seeing them together they are splitting images of each other.”

“Wait, what do you mean seeing them together?”

“Well this is where the story gets scary. This morning, while Luthi is buried deep in me over the kitchen counter, Sakhi walked in.” Pearl’s gasp is frightening.

“Oh no Zizo. Fuck man that’s messed up.”

“That’s not even half of it, seeing him made me climax right then and he stood there with horror on his face. I can’t seem to erase the sight of him in my head.”

“He must be devastated. What did you do?”

“I chased after him kaloku and while doing so his brother must have decided to do the same but then collapsed on the pavement.”

“Hayi, man Zizo.”

“Yep, he is in hospital right now, in a critical condition awaiting surgery. It’s bad Pearl.”

“I don’t know what to say. This is a mess my friend.”

“You are telling me. Now, the problem is Sakhi refuses to speak to me. He won’t even look at me.”

“What do you expect him to do? You slept with his brother and he caught you in the act.”

“It’s not like I knew they were siblings. And, I broke things off with him.”

“Over the phone, while he was away. Did you even allow him time to process the break up, closure or anything? You can’t be that careless with someone’s heart my friend. You knew how Sakhi felt about you for all this time and you still strung him along. That was selfish of you. And now you expect him to do what? Congratulate you on your newly found romance? Give the guy a break?”

“Gees if I wanted an emotional beating I could’ve stayed at home and listened to my conscience.”

“Just being honest. I’m sorry if I’m being brutal. What's done is done.”

“There is more,” her eyes widen. This is the part I’m most confused about. “I think I may be feeling guilty about what I did.”

“Okay. Isn’t that normal in the situation?”

“Is it? Like, I know Luthi’s life is in the balance and I’m worried about that but only a friend would do. But when I think of what I did with Sakhi, I’m ashamed and I feel the need to apologise. If I could erase it in his memory I would. What must he think of me?”

“Do you think maybe there is deeper feelings there for him?”

“I don’t know, I’m not sure.” This is where my feelings got murkier. I feel like I betrayed him and that doesn’t sit well with me. In my head I know I haven’t betrayed him but my heart or conscience disagree. We chat for a while and try and figure out what my feelings could be. Pearl is

convinced that maybe my feelings for Sakhi are stronger that I realised. I'm a confused mess. I leave when John returns with the kids. I decide to Uber again and fetch my car from Luthi's place then go home.

When I get home it's late afternoon and I want to find out how Luthi is doing and the only person I can find out from despises me. After much internal arguments I eventually grow a nerve and call him. The phone rings until voicemail and then when I try a second time it gives me an engaged tone. I think he has blocked me. This doesn't sit well with me. What the hell?

(My deepest apologies for disappearing with out a word. That is bad administration and I know and understand how frustrating it can be to keep checking the page and find nothing, no updates. I'm truly sorry I'll be busy for sometime so I won't be as active as I would like. If I'm too busy and occupied by other things then mind isn't in a good state, I can't write. Please bare with me.)

Butterfly 16

It's been almost a week since Luthi collapse. I haven't heard from anyone not that I was expecting to hear. After being blocked from Sakhi's phone the following day, I went by the hospital and I found the mother and the girlfriend huddled together at reception. I didn't think they would be happy to see me, so I quickly turned back and returned later when I thought everyone was gone. On my return the staff turned me away telling me they were under strict instructions from the family not to let me in, well they said nonfamily members were not allowed it. I decided to get back to work and put my energy into it.

It irks me that Sakhi would be this bitter or maybe it's not his doing but I highly doubt that. I need to know how Luthi is, as simple as that. I can't pretend that we didn't have a connection, I mean the boy gave me multiple orgasms. Besides that, he is a cool dude, I don't want anything bad happening to him. Sakhi needs to get over himself. I broke things off with him and I didn't know I was fucking his brother.

As I focus on my work my kind keeps getting distracted and flashbacks of the weekend invade my mind uninvited. As much as I try to shake them off, I succeed half the time except for the look on Sakhi's face. It is haunting me. In that moment I truly understood how he felt about me, the love he confessed constantly unrequited. As I saw it break and disappear right before my eyes and only replaced by disgust. My drowning mind is rescued by a knock and door opening. Mel quickly gets in a close the door behind her.

"There is someone here to see you." It comes out as a whisper and I look at her expectantly. She doesn't say anything, so she clearly expects me to ask who. How annoying!

"Do I have to drag it out of you?" I'm not in the mood for her silly games.

"It's Sakhi."

"My Sakhi?" her eyes widen.

“I thought that was over.”

“Let him in.” I say a little prayer for strength. Mel and her nosiness can be extra sometimes. I can see she wants the details but I’m not about to divulge my secrets. She needs to know her place. She walks away and I start fidgeting with fixing my blouse. A few minutes later there is a knock and then the door opens. I involuntarily hold my breath for a second. The grey suit he has on fits him like it was tailored on him. He has a grim look on his face and in makes my insides tremble.

“Zizo!” he clips.

“Sakhi.” My voice is huskier than usual. I can’t stop the tremble. I’m not sure what is wrong with me, but I hate the way I’m feeling. I’m unsure. “What brings you here?” considering that you’ve blocked me. I don’t voice it out of course

“It’s Luthi.” My insides drop to my feet.

“Is he okay?” He clenches his jaw. He doesn’t want to be here I can tell.

“He woke up from surgery and he is stable.” Relief washes over me.

“Oh. Thank God!” something flashes in his eye. It’s passes too quick for me to tell what emotion it is.

“He has been asking for you.”

“Why?” I croak.

“How the hell should I know? You are the one fucking him!” the swear words sound foreign from him as his voice echoes in the big office and I feel the lashes of his hurt as if it’s physical pain. I take a deep breath.

“I’m not sure I should come. Sakhi I...”

“Save it! I expect you to be there this afternoon.” He cuts me off and then turns and walks away. I am a bit annoyed by that. He can at least allow me to explain myself and secondly who the hell does he think he is to make such a demand?

“I didn’t know he was your brother.” He stops dead and slowly turns. Then he walks towards me until he is standing before me with his head tilted to the side. I have to strain my neck to look at him.

“Do you see me?” I frown. Of course, I see him. He is standing right in front of me. “You don’t see me. You never did or maybe you take me for a fool.” He snarls then walks away leaving me to swim in confusion. When he reaches the door, he stops and turns to me once more. “Zizomila, if you know what’s good for you, you’ll show up in that hospital room as expected.” The arrogant son of a hoe! He is gone. I sit down unceremoniously letting out the breath I didn’t even

know I was holding. What does he mean by me knowing what's good for me? I however do want to see Luthi, so I plan on going. Even though the defiant part of me screams for me not to. I ask Mel to cancel my afternoon meeting and quickly complete whatever I can until it's time to go to the hospital.

When I get to the hospital, I'm directed to the same ward he was in before. No one tells me about the hospital rules and policies. Not far from the wards there is a seating area. It's where I find. Sakhi, parents and the girlfriend. I'm tempted to turn back, but they've already seen me. They don't look happy to see me, actually, if looks could kill, I'd be dead. I slowly walk over to them.

"Molweni." No one responds except for the mother and not a positive response.

"Yhaz, awunantloni! I knew from the moment I saw you that you were a cheap slut. How can you do this to my family?" I'm taken aback by her reaction. How do they know about Luthi and I?

“Mama, please.” Sakhi tries and intervenes.

“No man Sakhi, lonondindwa ufunani ebantwaneni bam? Uguge noguga for my baby.”

“Mama! Please.” Sakhi admonishes his mother firmly this time and she waves her hand dismissively. I’m cringing at every word. A small voice says you don’t have to be here, but I’m rooted to the spot.

“Zizomila sisi, I’m sorry about my wife. She is under a lot of stress lately as you can imagine. We have a bit of a problem and we are hoping you’ll be helpful. We are all here because of my son Luthi and we love him and hope the best for him.” He pauses and looks at me pointedly. I’m not sure about love. We had a good time , hell bomb time but that isn’t love. I don’t say anything of course. I wait for him to get to the point of his speech. “Luthi has undergone a big surgery and it was half a success. There was more than one blood clot and they managed to remove the one that would cause an imminent danger.

One, however is still in there and any stressful situation could kill him. The doctors are hoping to remedy that with medication in due course. He can't have another surgery anytime soon." He pauses to make sure I still follow him. I nod my head encouragingly. This is a lot. "My son is awake and doesn't remember a portion of his life. His university life and anything afterwards until you. He only remembers your relationship and believes you are the love of his life. Since he woke up, he has been badgering us and begging to see you to a point of distress. His doctors have caution us that any distress could cause a relapse and it that would be fatal." He reiterates. I want to scream and say I heard you the first time because I don't like the direction we are going towards. I hear a sniff and look around to find the girlfriend in Sakhi's mother's arms crying. Damn! This is a mess of greatest proportions.

"Oh. I can't do that. We are not a couple." Maybe they don't know yet.

"Ow, cut the bullshit Zizo. We both know you are fucking each other! Now go in there and be the dutiful

girlfriend!” Sakhi lashes at me and I feel my face getting heated. The word fucking from him makes my skin crawl. Probably his intention.

“Can I talk to you privately?” I ask him.

“Eeh, Sisi. I don’t know the dynamics of your relationship, frankly I would rather I didn’t but my son at this moment is a priority. His life and well-being depend on the stability we provide him. Please go in there and assure him that you are okay and whatever he needs to hear until he is well. Please.” The father is the only calm person in the room. The rest are looking at me with venom in the eyes.

“Tata, I hear what you are saying but what you are asking me is to lie and play a role. I can’t do that.”

“You do that so well though.” Now Sakhi is pissing me off.

“I had never lied to you! Your ego lied to you and made you believe that we were more than what we were! That is on you!”

“You never even given me a chance! You were threatened by a real man, so you went after a boy to assuage your need for control. My damn brother. Yintoni? You wanted a younger version of me?” I let out an uncontrolled laughter.

“ Oh, believe me he wasn't ...

“That's enough you two! Sakhi calm down. This isn't about you right now. Think about your brother. Sisi, I'm asking you as a father, please go see him. Then we will take it from there.” The pleading look on his face has me caving in. He looks more like a softer Sakhi and I find myself nodding my head.

“Okay, I'll do it” he clasps both my hands in his.

“Thank you. You can go in. Remember, no stressful situation.” I nod my head again and walk into the ward. I find him lying on the bed with a bandage around his head. He still has tubes from his arms connected to the beeping machine by his bed side. He is awake and he smiles when he sees me walk in.

“Oh baby, finally you are here. What took you so long? Come over here and give me some love.” Even though his speech is slow and voice on the scratchy side, I’m still shocked to see him talking and looking this strong, the man had undergone a surgery in just over week ago. But he looks well and healthy. I walk over to him and take his hand in mine. He tugs at it until I bend and give him a kiss. “I’ve missed you.” His eyes are full of love and pure joy as I pull away.

“I've missed you too. I'm sorry it took me this long to come and visit. I didn't think you'd be awake so soon. How are you feeling?”

“Better now that you are here. Listen, Kamo my friend is here, for some weird reason she thinks we are a couple. I’d never cheat on you baby, I love you.” I can see panic in his eyes, I smile at him.

“I think she had a crush on you but don’t worry I can handle her. You just need to get better so that you can get out of here.”

“How is work? You must be busy with the new project.” He seems to remember this part well. So, I update him on what’s been going on. A mind is a weird thing. He is able to advise me based on the skills he acquired at university and yet he can’t remember a portion of that life. I don’t tell him this. I play along and yet at the back of my mind I’m worried. What if this doesn’t end? Will I have to pretend for the rest of my life? Hell no! I must put a stop this today. After I leave his ward, the only person I find at reception is a puffy eyed girlfriend.

“So, it’s true, he was cheating on me with you. That night at the club he was really with you.” I look at her and

wonder what Luthi wanted from me. Okay the want was mutual but still. This petite girl looks nothing like me. She is soft, tiny and gorgeous, oh and let's not forget young. Her skin is glowing even if it's a little too red from all the crying.

"It's something you have to take it up with him. I'm not here to answer your questions. I don't know you and you don't know me. You are in a relationship with him not me."

"You have no heart. A woman your age, you left a great guy like Sakhi for my man who is way younger than you. What do you want from this family? Are you that desperate to go for someone half your age?" I let out a humourless laugh.

"Listen little girl I don't have time for this. Clearly your man wanted something from this old lady that you couldn't provide. Why don't you grow up and face the reality, maybe stop playing wife and concentrate on you? Mh." I don't wait for her to answer, I leave her with her

jaw hanging. No one else is in sight as I exit the hospital. When I get home, I soak in the bath and think about the events of the afternoon. I then decide that I will not be a part to this lying and deceiving game. That's not me. I maybe a lot of things but I'm not a liar nor an actress.

A few days passes. I haven't been to the hospital again. I ignore all calls from Sakhi and his family, and I eventually block them. I instruct the security at work not to let him in in the building and in my apartment building as well. I'm done with the whole family. They want to use me and yet they think of me as the lowest scum. I don't owe them shit.

A week has passed since I've been in hospital to see Luthi and the office calls has stopped because I couldn't block Sakhi on that line, however I had instructed Mel to deflect. She kept giving the messages though. Sakhi says call him urgently, Sakhi's father would like to see you. Sakhi's mother is begging you to call. I'm not sure about the begging part but that's Mel for you.

I have a meeting with one of my biggest clients and I'm waiting in the boardroom for him to arrive. He is late and that is unlike him. When I call him to find out how far he is or if there is a reschedule, I'm unaware of, he tells me he won't make it and that he is pulling out of the deal. Just like that. When I recover from my shock, I remind him about his contract and threaten to sue, he isn't fazed by that. He can afford a lawsuit, I can't. A day later two of my other clients have pulled out and one that has been with me the longest, since I began the company. I'm panicking and shit scared. Without the three clients I might as well shut down the company, I wouldn't survive the loss. It was difficult to even secure them. You know how men are when it comes to trusting a woman with their business. I had to toughen up and show them that I could do better than any man. I jumped through hoops that no men had to, I endured their suggestive words and their inappropriate touches or conversations because I needed them for the business. What am I supposed to do now? Fear slowly creeps in and threatens to paralyze me. This is my business, my livelihood and my pride and joy. When people flash their relationships, marriages or kids, I'm always unfazed because I always

believed I was one up on all of them. My business is my all of those. What becomes of me then?

Butterfly 17

I'm sitting in a huge boardroom waiting for the CEO of one of the companies that are abandoning mine. I must say, for the first time in my life my nerves are infused with a bit of fear. Since I started my business, I had been fearless with confidence that had left many on my trail shrinking. At this moment though, even my power suit isn't helping in boosting my confidence. It's been a tough week of grappling with a lot of things getting out of my control. Fielding journalist became an extreme sport and they were relentless in their pursuit for answers. The vultures. Once everyone, especially the media, got the wind of what has been happening at here at ZM then it's over for me, well, if it isn't already over.

I've been to this company a number of times. I remember the first time pitching my business to Mr Dwesi, well in his sixties with kind eyes, he was the only one I felt comfortable with and who I believed was really interested in what I had to say. Over the years we've had

a good business relationship hence he granted me this meeting.

I'm here to beg simple as that. As I start to fidget in my seat, he walks in followed by members of his staff. They are all wearing serious faces which makes me more nervous. He gives me a small smile as he greets. What piques my interest though is what he does after his greeting. He takes a seat on the side not at the top of the boardroom table as he usually does. That space is left empty. I feel my tummy doing summersaults. Why on earth?

"Ms Mabhanga, today we will be joined by the owner of the company," he eventually addresses me and I swallow the thick spit that threatens to clog my throat.

"Owner? I thought you owned the company Mr Dwesi." I can't disguise the shock in my voice. I mean I was hoping to appeal to his good side and our good will. This is a curve ball I didn't anticipate.

“Well he has been a silent partner for a while, I didn’t need to divulge that part. Now that I’m going to for my retirement, he will become a huge part of the company and he has major shares in the business. That is why we are even terminating some of our contracts.” I’m wrestling with what to say next. Honestly I’m lost and I suddenly feel ill prepared or blindsided or both. The boardroom door suddenly opens and I blink a couple of times to make sure I’m not hallucinating. It can’t be!

“Good morning everyone, my apologies for being late.” He drawls. He hasn’t looked at me yet. What did I do to the universe to conspire so cruelly against me? He looks absolutely gorgeous in his grey three piece suit which fits him like a second skin. I catch a whiff of his glorious scent and I have to slightly shake my head just to ward off the heady feeling. He gently folds himself where Mr Dwesi usually seats, unbuttoning his suit jacket then he looks up. He is not surprised to see me. “Ms Mabhanga good to see you.” He brings me out of my stupid fog.

“What are you doing here Sakhi?” It might be blatantly obvious but I’m still in denial.

“Oh, Mr Dwesi didn’t tell you ?” He feigns surprise and dramatically turns towards Mr Dwesi. Who clears his throat and looks in my direction not meeting my eyes. I can see he is uncomfortable.

“I just explained to Ms Mabanga a moment ago.” My eyes drill a hole in Sakhi’s forehead. He has a smirk on his face.

“You son of a bitch!” the words come unbidden from my lips. His eyes slightly widen but the smirk is still in place.

“Leave my mother out of it. I’d be careful if I were you. You are in a very precarious position right now.” He is so calm while I feel angry heat spread throughout my body. “Mr Dwesi, would you and your team please excuse us.” Everyone scrambles to their feet without a word. He also gets on his feet and follow them to the door, once everyone is gone, he closes the door and locks.

“Its you isn’t it? You are the one behind me losing clients?” I move towards him like a panther stalking it’s prey. He smiles but the smile doesn’t reach his eyes. I notice then as I get closer that he has tired lines around his eyes.

“Right on the money.” His nonchalant response pisses me off further.

“How did you do it? How did you weasel your way into my business?” I really want to know.

“I’ve been in your business from the beginning. You were just so full of yourself, you never even paid attention. Why do you think you suddenly had people signing with your company? Mh?” I can feel my frown deepen as I drown in the sea of confusion. My brain tries to scramble back into memory looking for confirmation or truths to what he says.

“What do you mean?”

“All the companies you work with, I have shares in them, at least the important one’s anyway.”

“What?” I can’t hide my shock.

“Oh miss know it all, I’m in control doesn’t know it all after all.” His taunting grates my tits.

“You weak spiteful swine!” again the words come out of me uncontrollably.

“You self-centred egotistical bitch!” I feel a sting in my hand and I belatedly realise I have just hit him. He doesn’t seem as shocked as I and his smirk is still in place which further pisses me off. I send another clap flying and he is quick this time he grabs my arm mid air and tighten his grip while pulling me closer until there’s no space between us.

“Let go of me!” it’s a half scream.

“Or what!”

“Sakhile you are hurting me!” he lets go as if I just branded him but we are still too close to each other.

“You are such a typical man, weak and insecure!”

“You wouldn’t know a strong man if it hit you in the face Zizomila.”

“Well I think your brother is ten times more of a man than you’ll ever be.” I hardly finish my sentence and he has me pinned against the wall in seconds. My heart begins beating fast.

“Don’t talk about my brother as if you care.” He growls. He so close his breath fans my face as he speaks.

“He did all the things you couldn’t. Made me climax just with his hands and when he fucked me, it was over and over and o...” He places his hand over my mouth. His

eyes flash with scorching fire. I bite his hands and he snatches it away. Then as I open my mouth again to continue my tongue lashing, he smashes his lips against mine and that halts my taunting. The kiss is bruising and yet my lips yield to his as I respond with fervour. We are both breathing heavily yet no one is backing off or coming up for much needed breath . No one is willing to it's a power struggle. I can feel my whole body buzz with excitement. I love the way he dominates my body as the kiss intensifies. This is not soft, calculated and measured, its an uninhibited show of power and he wants me to yield my control. My body is more than ready to as I pull him even closer I feel him place his hand around my neck and begins to slightly choke me, my pussy flutters and I feel my juices trickle between my thighs. I feel hot and needy. My hands are all over his suit clad back, scratching away. He suddenly picks me up and moves with me as if I weighed nothing and places me on the boardroom table without loosing contact with my lips. I'm drinking him in as if his fresh water from a well. He has never kissed my like this before. I want more of it and I demand more by pulling him down while I hook my legs around his waist which effectively has him flush against my heated core. I can feel his hardened member

pulsating against me or is it me pulsating against him? I'm not too sure. His pants are an unwelcome barrier between us and my high-waisted skirt has ridden high and bunched around my waist. As if he read my mind, I feel him fumble with his pants zipper and while I'm anticipating a long wait he disappoints me again as I feel him enter me in one swift stroke. I stretch to accommodate him as we both groan against our lips. I remember the times he stretched me to what I think would be my limit and yet still able to accommodate him. I realise the feel of him inside me excites me more than it ever did. It feels like a strange new visitor yet familiar in so many ways. I can feel every hard ridge of him as he pistons in and out. He grabs my thighs and pulls me closer, I try as hard as I can to return his thrust but the grip on my thighs keeps me in place. He is the one in control and I love it. Right now my body is his to do as he pleases and I feel the urge to declare this but I manage to curb that stupidity. Barely. He pulls away from the kiss and looks at me. His eyes bore into mine, there is both love and hate reflected in them. Yes I recognise the love. It's still there wrestling with the hate.

“Is this what you want?” I can hardly hear his deeper voice with my buzzing ears. “That’s what you know and care about is it not? Being fucked like a bitch in heat. Men are only for one thing with you as you assert your power over them. You don’t yield and you don’t bend because you feel that you can be the man too. You are not a man Zizo. You don’t have to become one to prove your strength.” His thrusts become slow and measured. “My brother is a pawn to you, your pet. Someone to bend at your will. You couldn’t let me in because I’m your equal and that doesn’t sit well with you does it? You are the one who is weak and insecure about your power!” I physically flinch as if he has just punched me. But I refuse to let him see the impact those words just had on me.

“That’s always been your problem Sakhi, all talk and no action. Something you can learn from your baby brother.” His eyes flashes and he suddenly turns me around pulling my ass towards him and ramming into me. It’s borderline painful. Then he pulls me up one hand around waist and the other round my neck. The one around my neck begins to tighten as his thrusts quicken. The sound of skin against skin echoes in the boardroom.

“This is what you want? Right a quick and meaningless fuck.” The language he uses with his lips so close against my ear spurs me on. My moans and soft cries are unrehearsed. He pounds into me while I hold on to his arm around my neck. He keeps tightening just right and every time he does I squirt a little. “We could’ve been so much more Zizo.” He hold tightens further and my whole body convulses as I succumb into an unexpected climax. I let out a soundless cry and feel my body shake uncontrollable. I have never felt anything like I had just experienced. Just as I begin to feel light headed he lets go of me completely. I feel his spent member slip out of me and the loss of his grip around me makes me fall over the table. My knees are week and I’m not sure they would be able to carry me. Then I hear him silently swear and I look up and find him looking wildly around the office.

“The are wipes in my bag.” My voice is unrecognisable even to my own ears. He reaches for my bag and takes out the wipes while I try to get off the table. I can feel our mixed juices trickle between my thighs. He cleans himself as best as he can and then throw the wipes to me

while desposing the ones he just used. I wipe myself and dispose the used wipes in the dustbin as well. We try and fix ourselves as best as we can. This is all done in silence. I'm trying to search my mind about how I feel. Instead of being ashamed I find myself thinking of when we could do it again.

“When you are ready to speak about your company you'll come find me. My brother has been asking about you.” His serious tone brings me out of my stupid delusion. He doesn't seem as affected as I am by what just happened. Before I can formulate a response he leaves the room. Is he blackmailing me to seeing his brother? I feel stupid right now. I look around and then it hits me that we just fucked in a boardroom and someone could come in at any moment. I take out my perfume and spray around the air once then I also leave. There is no one insight as I walk on wobbly legs towards the elevator. Once in my car I switch on the engine and turn on a much needed air-conditioner. I slowly return to my senses, I had just been thoroughly fucked and yet haven't achieved the goal of why I came. I'm still losing clients and the person that holds my future hates me and is also blackmailing me. I also realise I'm not above begging if it

means getting back control of my company. I decide then to call him. I am happy to hear a ringing sound but then my happiness is short lived as it goes to voicemail. I try again a couple of times and just as I'm about to give up he answers.

"I hope you are on your way to the hospital to see my brother." Then he hangs up. Before I succumb to his blackmailing, I need to speak to him. I'll have to go to his offices. Where are his offices? To my shame, in the time we've been together , I had never been to his offices.

Butterfly 18

Mel knows where Sakhi's offices are. I mean she has signed for my deliveries a number of times and because she pays attention to that sort of thing. She is excited as she calls me to give me the information. In her mind there is full blown romance going on and she has always known. I think about going back to my place to freshen up but I don't have the luxury of time. My fate rests in the hands of a man, something I always swore would never happen. Most of the drive to Sakhi's offices I spend trying to reign in my anger. Damn it I'm pissed. My

company is not something I play with. And yena in a split second he has made me redundant. Unacceptable, I'm angry at myself more than anyone else. I should've seen this coming. I've always been on top of things but this. But then I again how could I see a worm that was silently slithering it's way into my business.

As I navigate through the traffic I'm distracted by flashbacks of our earlier encounter. Him in my space, his scent, the fire in his eyes and then the way he dominated my body and made me yield under him, oh so heavenly. I get shivers thinking about it. No, I'm not ashamed of it, I'm never ashamed of getting pleasure. Having struggled for so long, reaching an orgasm with someone else is a new revelation for me and I won't lie, it's pure fucking bliss. What he did to me makes what his little brother did pale in comparison. Today I was taken by a man. Which begs the question, where the hell has that been all this time? The inner beast was out to play and that's what and who I wanted.

As the navigator informs me that my destination is on my right, my jaw drops. Literally. This impressive building looming above all can't be his. But then again, he comes

from money, probably what his father built. The little inner voice tells me that this building is new, it could have only been built after his father retired. Still his family money helped him to do it. Why am I stressing myself about his business. I should be planning to get mine back.

After a long security check, I am finally directed where I should park. I take a few minutes inside the car collecting my thoughts. I pull down the mirror and look at my pale face looking back at me with a scowl on the forehead. I need to get rid of it quick.

“He is only a man. You can handle him. His ego has been bruised but he’ll come around. Right?” right. I exit the car and fix myself then get my hand bag from the boot. I listen to the sound of my footsteps as I walk towards the reception area. They are sure and measured, displaying confidence I don’t feel.

I greet the pretty ladies behind the beautiful modern desk. They have big smiles plastered on their faces.

Nauseating. I greet and let them know the reason for my visit. I'm given a book to sign and showed to the elevator. The elevator is silent as it whisks me to the top level. The loud ping indicating the door opening gives me a little scare. The floor is wide open with a few doors closed along the passage. Just outside the elevator there is another reception desk. The lady stands as I approach and greets with a smile. I try and return the smile but it's a struggle. It probably comes out as a snarl. That would explain her nonstop blinking. She asks the reason for the visit. I tell her that I need to see Sakhile. She blinks again. Probably at the use of his first name.

"I wasn't aware he had another appointment." She says.

"He doesn't, but tell him Zizomila is here to see him."
Another blinking made more dramatic by the long eyelashes. She dials a phone on her desk.

"Mr Gabada, there is a miss," she looks at me expectantly.

“Mabhanga.”

“A Miss Mabhanga to see you.” I detect a hint of nerves in her tone. “You are?” she frowns and frantically flicks through her tablet. “I’ll let her know sir.” She hangs up and looks at me nervously. “Eh... Mr Gabada is currently in a meeting, do you mind waiting? Alternatively I can schedule an appointment for you. Maybe tomorrow?” The poor soul can’t lie to save herself. She is turning red as her lie continues.

“No, I’ll wait, just show me where to.” She blinks hard again. Then springs into action as she leads me towards a seating area. It has the side view of the city. There is different tables with either chairs or sofas scattered around the open plan area. A bar area and a mini coffee shop. The wide sliding doors open to an even wider balcony possibly a smoking area. I love the place. It is airy and visually stimulating and yet simple.

I choose a secluded table in a corner and the lady offers me something to drink. I consider water but then again, I am off duty and I need something for the nerves I suddenly feel. I order a glass of wine. She brings it over

and then disappears. As soon as I finish the glass another lady appears and ask if she can bring me another glass. Why not? Sakhi is intent on being petty might as well get sloshed while I wait. I ask for another glass. It's an hour and three glasses later when the receptionist returns and asks me to follow her. We take another lift to a floor I didn't even know existed and this floor does scream executive floor. She leads me to a wide door that is currently closed. Knocks and waits. The door opens revealing a relaxed Sakhi who seemingly has changed clothes since our last encounter. He is dressed in black fitting pants and a white buttoned shirt, sleeves rolled to the elbows.

“Zizo, what a surprise seeing you here. I didn't know we had a meeting.” He smiles but the smile doesn't reach the eyes. I return it with an equally fake one myself.

“We don't but I'd like to have a word if it's not too much trouble.” I respond sweetly.

“You can leave Sino, I’ll take it from here.” He actually gives her a genuine smile and I see her face flush as she walks away. Poor girl. “Do come in.” He opens the door wide and lets me in. I inhale a whiff of his scent as I pass him. I take a sweeping look around his office. It’s magnificent, that’s the only word that pops into my mind. The long wide windows behind his huge oak desk give the room sufficient light. I know without even getting closer that he has the view of the city. There are two closed doors that I see and a seating area on one side. The office is minimal and yet fully functional. “Take a seat. May I offer you anything to drink ?

“Water please.” I say sitting down. I need to sober up from the wine I just downed. He walks over to a bar area and gets bottled water and a glass and places it on his desk in front of me. I drink without using a glass.

“Why are you here Zizo?” He interrupts my gulping moment. I prolong the drinking while collecting my thoughts. He seems too relaxed for my liking. I take a final sip of my water.

“You know why I’m here Sakhile. Stop playing games.”

“Actually I don’t. I expected you to be in the hospital where you are needed not here.”

“Why are you being petty?” He lets out a loud laugh. Then quickly sobers up.

“I can assure you Zizomila when it comes to my family, I can be anything. Now, why are you here?” He makes a show of looking at his wrist watch.

“I want my company back !” he raises his hands and acts confused.

“I don’t have your company. Why would I, I have my own company to run.”

“You have your father’s company!”

“Really.” His nonchalant behaviour irks me badly and I feel the urge to swear at him. Like really swear at him but I don’t.

“ Sakhile what do you hope to achieve with this nonsense? I built that company ground up and would’ve succeeded even if you hadn’t interfered! I...”

“I know that.” His serious response cuts me off midsentence.

“Then if you know that why the hell would you interfere in my life like that? My business?”

“I hear men talk behind these closed walls Zizo. Honestly my interference was never meant to be used like this, ever! I only wanted to protect you from the vultures that were circling in and that still do. You are in a cutthroat business and most time men get dirty to get what they want...”

“Just like you did! Typical of men to be threatened by a woman’s power.”

“I get why you would feel that way and I apologise that I have become one of the men I was protecting you from. It is what it is. My brother thinks you two are in love and you’ll act the dutiful girlfriend until he fully recovers then you’ll have your company back no strings.” He opens his drawer and pulls out a document. “This is a contract detailing my terms of engagement. Go though it, sign it, and return it to me.” He pushes the document over to me. I flip through it but I don’t really see anything at this moment. My emotions are all over the place.

“I’ll go see him.” I give in. I don’t really have many options and I feel drained. I put the contract in my bag and get up to leave.

“Did you not make a connection between Luthi and I? Did I mean so little to you?” I’m taken aback by that question and the graveness in his tone.

“Sakhi” I sigh. “I couldn’t make the connection because even though you look alike, you are two different people. I met him as a waiter for crying out loud. Why would I connect him to your family?”

“It doesn’t matter now does it?” he gets up and escorts me to the door. He opens the door and let’s me pass. “See you when you return the contract.” I only nod my head and walk await. I feel cold all of a sudden. Cold from within.

On the way home I change my mind and drive to my parents house. Maybe my mom’s warm meal will warm me up. I find her in the kitchen as I predicted cooking up a storm for just two people. No wonder my father is gaining more kilos around the waist.

“Hello mama.” I walk towards her and give her a kiss on the cheek.

“Hello nana. Wash your hands and peel those potatoes for me. Help me make a salad.” I roll my eyes and open the fridge to get some juice.

“I’ll peel the potatoes ma but you know my cooking is disastrous.”

“How did I fail you mara? It’s your father’s fault though.” I’ve heard this before. Growing up I was closer to my dad than even my brother was. He practically raised me like a boy. “So, what’s wrong?”

“How do you know that something is wrong?” I take a sip of my juice as I watch her clean the chicken. She is very thorough in removing the fat.

“Because you’ve just showed up unannounced in the middle of the week looking like you were wrestling with a hurricane.”

“It’s business ma, you wouldn’t understand.” I brush her off. My mother never worked. She was always a housewife. Had to ask my dad for money until I told him that he could at least open an account for her so that she didn’t have to ask. She told me that it wasn’t an issue with her she knew her place and that always drove me up the wall. I love my father but always I felt like my mother became his slave. Something I swore never to become. I intentionally didn’t learn how to cook because I didn’t want the burden of becoming someone’s maid. I don’t clean, none of that. If I were to marry , God forbid, that is one institution that is designed to hold women in captivity, I would never cook nor clean for no man.

“Yho, you think because I never work I don’t know anything don’t you.”

“Mama it’s not like that but honestly I need some business in sight.” She stops what’s she’s doing, wipes her hands and sits on the high chair.

“I know how your mind works Zizo you are my child. I know you’ve always been ashamed of me and my position in this house in fact you detest it. You do all possible to become the opposite of what I am. I never wanted you to be like me. I love being me, I love my life and the life I’ve chosen and given a choice to do it again, I wouldn’t change a thing. Now you, to be tough doesn’t mean you have to be mean or rude or discard people’s feeling. It sure as hell is not what your father taught you.” I swallow a lump that is stuck in my throat.

“I never meant to offend you mama.”

“I know my child. I know. So now, are you going to tell me what’s going on or do we wait for your father?” I suddenly feel tears prickle my eyes and I can’t seem to stop as the one tear falls, then another one.

“I screwed up mama. I screwed up badly.” I can barely speak. My chest is clogged with so much emotion I feel like I’m about to burst. I feel my mother’s hands around me and the whole dam breaks.

Butterfly 19

My mother's soothing hand on my back helps me to calm down. I was drained even before arriving here now I'm officially spent. I don't remember the last time I cried. I subscribe to that notion that big girls don't cry. A mantra I would repeat to myself when I was at school being teased for being a skinny child and then for being fat when I eventually gained weight. Kids can be very mean.

"What is wrong nontombi?" I abandon my mother's arms the moment I hear my father's voice and rush towards him with arms wide open. He engulfs me in his own arms and the tears resume their streaming.

"Hush now my child and tell me what's wrong so I can help you fix it." His soothing tone makes me cry harder. Yes I am that way, once I start I can't stop.

"Someone has taken over my company daddy." I manage to say after a while. He gently lets go of me and takes

my hand directing me to the living area. I sit on the couch and he sits next to me.

“Tell me what happened.” He gives me his handkerchief that he always keeps in his pocket. I blow my nose and clean myself up as well as I can with a dry cloth. My mother comes in and gives me a glass of water then sits opposite us.

“Well it’s kind of a long story.” I am unsure now where to begin. Firstly I’ve never spoken to my parents about my love life nor that I ever had any.

“We have all day nontombi and we won’t judge.” My father encourages me and I take a sip of the sweet water my mom brought for me. They both look at me expectantly. Gosh, this is difficult.

“Well, I was dating this guy for almost three years. He was in love with me or so he said, he wanted more than I could offer him. You know marriage, kids the whole domesticated stuff. I’m not about that daddy, you know

I'm still building my empire. Something for myself , you know. Anyway, I broke up with him and not long after, I met someone else." I am not going to tell my parents I met this someone before breaking things off with Sakhi. In my defence though I hadn't done anything with Luthi. But still this conversation is already awkward, I don't want to make it worse. "I liked him. He is fun, doesn't take anything seriously and most importantly he didn't have any expectations from me. It was easy and fun. So a few weeks ago his older brother walked in on us in a compromising situation only to realise then that his brother is the man I had just broken up with." I hear my mother gasp my father is still looking at me his eyes encouraging me to continue. "The younger brother collapsed and eventually had a brain operation which brings me to my current predicament. When he woke up from the surgery he had partial amnesia and he thinks we are a couple in love. His situation is still fragile and there is a looming threat of relapse. His brother and family asked me to pretend with him until he undergoes the second operation and hopefully get better. I couldn't do it. His brother hates me and is angry. He feels that I betrayed him. His family hates me the only person who is cordial is the father and I think because he is the sensible

one. It's a hostile environment. My fears are, what if he doesn't recover? Do I pretend for the rest of my life? Worse, he has a girlfriend who loves him very much. It's a complicated situation that I really just wanted to remove myself from."

"Okay I hear all this and seems to me like a misunderstanding between you all. I'm saddened by what the brother is going through and if you don't want to be part of it, you are not obliged to. You had a fling unknowingly right?" I nod my head. My father speaks my thoughts. I just love him. "The other guy is to blame for staying in an unwanted relationship. So help me understand nontombi, where does your company fit in all of this?"

"Apparently the family owns the companies where I have major clients in. The brother has pulled out and basically leaving me with no business. He says he'll only return them when I've done what his family asks."

“Uphambene! Rha. Ngubani igama lale ntwana?” My father’s rage on my behalf makes me smile a little.

“Sakhile.” I mumble.

“Wakwabani?”

“Gabada tata.”

“Gabada?” he frowns. “I know a Gabada, I play chess with him. It can’t be him, he is my age. Is it.” He looks at me suspiciously.

“No! Hayi daddy, Sakhi isn’t that old!”

“It could be his father then. He always speaks of this one son who gives him trouble.”

“Must be the younger brother.”

“No man the one he talks about is a youngster just out of university.” I clear my throat looking away ashamedly.

“Goodness Zizo! It can’t be.”

“You said no judgement daddy!” My mother has been quite the entire time.

“Excuse me, let me get to the bottom of this.” My father gets up and walks away dialling on his phone.

“Quite a mess you are in. Brother's. Mh.” She finally speaks.

“Mama please no lecture. I didn’t know honestly.”

“I know, just like you don’t know that you are in love with the other.”

“I’m not in love with Sakhi mama.”

“How do you know I was referring to him?” I didn’t, just a kneejerk response. I keep quiet. “Zizo, you don’t keep people in your life for no reason. Why did you keep this man in your life for so long if you didn’t see this going anywhere?”

“Maybe I was just comfortable having him around mama. I don’t know why. The point is him blackmailing me not our non-existent relationship.”

“Well, I’m just saying. What are you going to do then?” I sigh.

“Honestly mama I’m not prepared to start from scratch with my company. I’d rather do what he asks me to do.”

“It wouldn’t hurt, right. He gets what he wants and you also get what you want. I may not agree with his tactics but I understand where he comes from.”

“He is just another self absorbed and entitled man mama. He got his ego bruised now he wants to strip me off mine.”

“Do you think your father is like that?” I frown. Mama mara, what does daddy have to do with Sakhi’s issues?

“No. I don’t think so.” I reluctantly say.

“So, not every man is out to get you baby. You have to put your guard down a little.”

“Mama, man like daddy are far and few. This day and age you lower your guard for trash to infiltrate and take advantage. Sakhi is no different. He used his advantage to get what he wants. I don’t care what his reasoning is.”

“He probably feels betrayed as well. Have you considered how he feels?”

“Not my job to nurse his feelings mom. I tried apologising he didn’t want to hear it. What’s done is done I can’t go back and change it.” Just then my father walks in.

“We have visitors coming. You might want to go freshen up nontombi.”

“Who’s coming?” my mother is the one to ask.

“The Gabada's.” I’m shocked but my father is now sitting buried under his newspaper. His way of deflecting any question. I could be a pest but I decide to go freshen up in my old room instead. I find leggings and an oversize t-shirt which I change into after a quick shower. I’m not about to impress anyone they are coming to my territory they need to do the impressing.

Just after returning to the lounge the intercom rings and my father quickly gets up to go open. I feel nervous all of a sudden and my mother looking at me as if she knows a secret I don’t makes me more nervous.

“Come sit by me.” She says. Is that a hint of a smile on her face? I can’t dwell on that, I go and sit next to her. “Relax it’s not a lobola negotiation.” She chuckles. I’m glad she finds my demise funny. We hear voices by the entrance, it’s a male voice and then a female. My father walks in first followed by Sakhi’s father then his mother. No sign of Sakhi. They greet my mom and I as they enter. Mrs Gabada is her sour self. However she does give my mom a warm smile.

“Love, this is Mzingisi Gabada and his wife Thandiwe. Mzi, meet my wife Tina. I believe you’ve met my daughter.” They both sit opposite my mother and I, while my dad sits on the side. It’s a spacious lounge so we are not in each others faces. They have their small talk about how my dad and Sakhi’s father met. They’ve known each other since they retired. The chess club is where they go to unwind. They are both on the nerdy side so it makes sense that they would bond over chess. No one touches on the issue of why they are really here. My mother eventually drags me to the kitchen to help her make tea. She whips out pastries that I didn’t even see when I came

in. You'd think she was expecting visitors. She takes out her fine china and I'm fighting the urge to roll my eyes.

Once everything is all set, I help her carry the serving trays to the living room. I whisper to her and ask if we should use the dining room table since she is going all out. She gives me the look that says I'm pushing it.

A while later, I think everyone else has forgotten about me. My mother is chatting up a storm with Sakhi's mother while my dad and his dad are involved in their own conversation. Just as I'm about to sneak away to my room the intercom rings. Since no one else is interested I go and open. It's Sakhi. I open the gate and watch him as he drives up the driveway. He parks next to my car and comes out, takes a quick look around the place. He still hasn't seen me standing on the porch. I can see him visible taking a huge breath then he walks towards me. He only sees me when he is about to go up the step and he is visibly startled.

“Zizo!” I can see him trying to compose himself. It’s amazing that we’ve seen each other three times already today. Had sex even. Aren’t we just a happy couple.

“Sakhi. Come through. Everyone is waiting.” I say turning around.

“Wait!” I feel his hand on my arm and I slowly turn.

“What did you tell them? My father is pissed?” I frown. What does he mean his father is pissed?

“Everything.” Duh! But I’m not childish so I don’t say that out loud. He silently swears. I turn around and open the door wide to allow him in then I close it after him. He waits for me to go pass and I lead him to the lounge. I might as well be leading him to the slaughter house the way his shoulders have dropped.

Butterfly 20

The living room is suddenly quiet and stern faces are looking back at us as we walk in. I show Sakhi a vacant

sofa and I drag a dining room chair for myself to sit in. He greets my parents first and his mother is on her feet and gives him a quick hug. I suppose that's her way of showing him her solidarity. Once we are all seated his father speaks.

“Nyana, we called you here because I heard some disturbing news from bra Fiks here. What is it that I hear that you are blackmailing his daughter? I couldn't believe it hence we decided that you needed to come here yourself and clear this nonsense.”

“I had no other choice Tata.” He is sitting elbows on his knees looking down.

“What do you mean, you had no other choice.?Must I teach you boys everything. What happened to tact?”
Mute. “He madoda. Sakhile?”

“Tatakhe, give him some time to explain. This must feel like an ambush to him. I absolutely understand why he did this and I would've done the same had I known we

had that kind of ammunition.” The mother intervenes. This woman is gorgeous even in her annoying state.

“Sweetheart, don’t tell me you were in on this.”

“No, I wasn’t but I wouldn’t have stopped it had I known. That’s my son in the hospital, the least this girl can do to make up for her hood rat behaviour...”

“Mama!”

“Excuse me!” My mother shrieks same time as Sakhi chastises his mother. “ Listen here lady, you will not come into my home and insult my child. If anyone has hood rat tendencies here is your son. What kind of man blackmails a woman because he can’t get what he wants?” I’ve never seen such fire in my mother before. I can see Sakhi’s mother isn’t bothered though.

“Everyone please calm down. We are trying to resolve this and the insults are not helping.” My father says

softly. “Sakhile, is it?” Sakhi nods and I see him fidgeting. Is he nervous? How the mighty has fallen.

“Look at this woman here” my father points at me.

“This is my daughter, my child and no one will play with her while I’m still alive. She doesn’t owe you anything and as her father, I will protect her against any man who harms her. Do you understand me?”

“Yes Tata I do.” He looks at my father then. I can see regret in his eyes and something clenches in my tummy. “I will fix this. I promise you. I apologise to you and your daughter for the way I have acted. That is not the kind of man I am. I was desperate for my brother.”

“I accept your apology but you need to direct it to her.” My father says. Sakhi turns to me.

“I’m sorry Zizomila, I’ll fix this. You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do.”

“Apology accepted. I will do it.” His eyes widen and I can see shock all around the room.

“Are you sure?” He asks.

“Yes I will.” I can see everyone seems out of sorts, I guess no one was expecting me to agree so easily. “I just have one question,” they all look at me. “What happens when Luthi doesn’t get his memory back? Is there a time frame for this charade?”

“Look this is until he can have the second operation done. That operation will put him out of the danger zone. For now we buy time for him to heal and then get the second operation. Afterwards we will tell him whatever he needs to know. Who knows, he might even regain his memory before then.” Sakhi explains. He doesn’t seem as thrilled, for someone with the lengths he went through, I’m surprised.

After the meeting is concluded the Gabada's leave happier than my family. My father calls me to the side and asks me if I am certain about my decision and I reassure him that I am. Afterwards I pack my clothes and return to my house. Later in the evening, I decide to go and visit Luthi in hospital. I have to do what I promised.

"Smurfette." He cheerfully greets me as I walk in but then he immediately frowns. I'm as confused as him at this moment. What did he just call me? "Why is your nickname Smurfette? You don't look like a smurf." He seems to be trying to figure it out.

"What is a smurf Luthi? And no, you don't call me that. I hate pet names."

"You do? Oh. It must be from somewhere though. Come here." He stretches out his hand to me and I walk towards him and place my hand in his. He pulls me down and holds the back of my neck bringing me closer to his lips. The kiss is slow and tentative at first and then he deepens it as his tongue sweeps in. I pull away and sit

next to him. I'm feeling awkward and I'm not sure why but the kiss isn't doing what it did before. No sparks or fireworks explosions.

"How are you feeling?" I ask him. He smiles.

"I'm feeling much better now that you are here. No one would tell me where you were at. Is it the business again?"

"Yes, it has been busy the couple of weeks."

"I can't wait to get out of here. My doctor promises that in a few days I might be able to."

"Really, that's great news. And the second operation?"

"He says it could be in a month if my recovery goes as well as he hopes." We sit for a few minutes and chat until he can't stop yawning. I take that as my cue to leave.

The following day when I get to work, it's business as usual. My clients are back at work as if nothing had happened. It scares me to think that someone has a potential to destroy me and my business like how Sakhi almost did. So my new vision is to get clients that will not be attached to his business. When I visit Pearl and update her on what's been happening she is shocked to say the least. She thought Sakhi was amongst the good guys and feels more betrayed than I did.

Today Luthi is being released and will be moving in with his parents and has begged me to move in with him. I couldn't say no when he asked because his whole family was in the room and I didn't want to come off as if I was going back on my word. It seems though that the only person that's happy is Luthi. He also complicates things by choosing me to drive him home. At least he remembers where his parents home is apparently that's where they grew up. He can't believe that I've never been to his home and feels bad about it. He should've done better with me, he says.

His home looks like a picture out of Top Billing magazine. It's huge and it's beautiful. It's characterised by lush green grass that goes endlessly until it disappears into the distance. The modern Tuscan style house stands majestically in the centre and is as inviting as it is intimidating. I'm in awe as I drive up the long winding driveway from the gate flanked by well trimmed trees. The car comes to a roundabout with a fountain at the center, I drive around it and continue up towards a fantastic sprawling house to park next to many other cars under a shaded parking . I recognise Sakhi's car when my jaw finally snaps closed. These people are wealthier than I thought. The whole family seems to be home by the time we arrive judging by all the cars upfront and there is flurry of activity.

"Welcome to my home." Luthi says with a wide smile on his face.

"It's a beautiful home." That's all I can manage at this time and I struggle to return his smile. As we get out of the car his father comes out all excited to see him. He squeezes in his arms until Luthi's begins to complain.

“It’s just so good to see you home son. Welcome to our home Zizomila.” He looks at me warmly and I return his smile.

“Thank you Mr Gabada.”

“Nonsense, call me Mzi. Come you two. You are going to love this son, your mother has prepared a feast.”

“By herself?” Luthi’s teases while his father chuckles.

“Of course not. This is your mother we’re talking about. She instructed some people.” They are both walking ahead of me. I watch as they gossip about Mrs Gabada with Mr Gabada’s arm around Luthi’s shoulders. They are both similar in height and in stature.

I marvel at the wide entrance that we just walked in. There is a winding staircase that leads to a second level and there is familiar portraits gracing the high walls until they disappear up the stairs. We walk pass the staircase

into one of the living area where we find Sakhi and his mother. They both stand as we come in, Mrs Gabada rushing to envelop Luthi in her arms. I stand awkwardly and watch the exchange. She really does love her kids. The love is evident in her face and makes her look much younger than she already looks. Once she is done fussing Sakhi takes over and shares a manly hug with his brother. Something tugs at me as I witness this exchange. I feel my eyes sting and I quickly look away to be met by Mrs Gabada's disapproving look. I know exactly what she thinks of me. Even though she needs me she'd rather have me far away from her boys. She doesn't have to say it. It's written all over her face.

"Welcome to our home Zizomila, come take a sit. Can I offer you anything to drink?" Sakhi asks.

"A glass of water would be nice." What I really need is a glass of wine but I restrain myself. We all sit in the living area except for Sakhi who comes back after a few minutes with bottled water and glass.

“Lunch will be served shortly.” The mother announces after a few minutes of awkward conversation.

“May I use the bathroom.” I ask needing to run away from all the tension in the room. The only person who seems to be oblivious is Luthi. He is genuinely happy to be home. His constant smile and unadulterated joy makes him look much younger.

“I’ll show you.” The mother is quick to offer. I only nod my head. She leads me out of the living room down a long passage. I see the kitchen briefly and a dining room on the other side. The dining room opens to a beautiful patio then a pool area. I don’t linger as I follow her brisk walk. We pass what seems to be another living area, with beautiful vibrant colours, then a more dark one with muted tones. This one has a humongous bookshelf. I would love to see what collection is there.

We are finally at the end of the passage and she opens a closed door and it’s a huge guest toilet. I walk in and as I

turn to thank her she is already inside and closes the door behind her.

“What do you want from my family? Money?” she dives right into it.

“What do you mean? You people asked me to do this charade, no actually begged and then blackmailed me.” She waves her hand dismissively.

“Oh, you know I’m not asking about that. I’m asking what it is you wanted before my son collapsed. You could see that Sakhi wasn’t gullible and went for my young son to get what you want. Do you realise the damage you have caused!”

“It wasn’t my intention. I didn’t even know they were related.” Why are we having this conversation in a bathroom?

“Oh please! I know your kind. You act like you have it all figured out to fool everyone while you sleep your way to the top! Who is next? My husband?”

“Mrs Gabada, you are out of...”

“Listen here wena nopatazana, I have my eye on you. You may think you have everyone fooled but you are sadly mistaken .” She turns around and leaves. I sigh and do my business. This is going to be harder than I thought. When I’m done I rinse my hands and take a deep breath before I walk out. I find Luthi as he is about to open the door.

“Hey, I thought you had run away. Are you okay?” he asks taking both my hands in his and gently pushing me back against the wall.

“I’m good. Luthi. Stop it your parents are here.” He continues to nuzzle my neck. Someone clears their throat and I find Sakhi not far from us. His face has darkened. I push Luthi away from me, not so gently I might add.

“Lunch is ready.” Sakhi says then walks away.

“Come let’s feed you then we can go feed other cravings.” Luthi says taking my hand in his. He opens the chair for me once we are in the dining room. I look everywhere but at Sakhi. It is indeed a feast and it looks delicious but I suddenly have a lump of ash clogged in my throat. There is a lively conversation around the table as they enjoy their meal. Updating Luthi about the little things in his life especially his friends. Which he doesn’t seem to recall most of his life with them except for recent times but everyone assures him that it will all come back to him in time.

I steal a look across from me and find Sakhi absently looking at me. I don’t even think he realises that he is staring. He doesn’t seem to have eaten anything. When he catches my eye and he doesn’t look away. There is so much pain reflected in his eyes, it’s difficult to hold. I look away. How will I survive my time here? I just hope he won’t be coming by a lot. Who am I kidding, it’s his home.

“Love, I think you should take sometime off. I’ve got a little getaway planned for us.” Luthi brings me out of my internal torment and I choke on my spit while Sakhi coughs uncontrollably.

(Please do rate my books on [goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com))

Butterfly 21

My stay with the Gabada’s is less eventful than expected. I share a cottage with Luthi of course but we haven’t been intimate, yet. It is not for the lack of trying from his side. I always find an excuse to avoid it and mostly it’s work. Not entirely a lie because my current project is very demanding of my time and we still don’t have a programmer. Also, it helps that Luthi isn’t physically strong yet. His meds that he takes make him sleep earlier than he would like. He also has physical therapy that his mother takes him to during the day and that also leaves him utterly exhausted. I battle to share space with him though, the boy is messy. Always leaving a trail of clothes all the way to the bathroom. I’m actually grateful for the helper that comes to clean everyday otherwise it would

be a whole lot messier. How one person can create such a mess baffles me.

I haven't seen Sakhi since the day Luthi asked us to go for a mini vacation. Which I politely postponed for when he was better. I hear him speak to Luthi over the phone before he sleeps, judging by Luthi's responses I can tell he always inquires about his health.

My office door opens and breaks me out of my musings. Mel walks in with a pile of files I had requested. I'm going through our client's files and reviewing my contracts with them. I will also meet with my lawyers just so that I'm clear even with the complicated jargon. I can see she has a lot of questions for me. Especially after finding out that I had moved in with the Gabada's. She doesn't understand how I could betray Sakhi. I cut her off the other day as she wanted to begin a monologue about how great of a guy he is. I had to remind her of her place which is what I pay her to do. She has been walking on eggshells since then. She places the files on the table without saying anything then she turns to leave. As long

as she does what she is paid for I'm happy. I don't care for her chit chat.

My phone rings and it's Luthi. Dutiful girlfriend that I am, I answer. He tells me that there is a family dinner scheduled for the evening and I need to be home early. We chat for a few minutes before he hangs up. Family dinner means Sakhi will be there. The thought leaves me in a state of anxiety. I'm never sure of my feelings lately and that is also annoying. I'm questioning my sanity half the time. What happened to the badass Zizo? This unsure and second guessing being that has replaced me has to go. I cancel my afternoon meeting because I need to go find a dress for the evening something to perk my mood. Nothing really does. I can't find the outfit I'm looking for and eventually I give up on my impromptu shopping spree and drive home, well Gabada's to be accurate. I miss my own home, I go to my house sometimes just to sit and try and recover my bearing and centre. When I get home, I find Luthi anxiously waiting for me. His face lights up when he sees me walk in.

“Finally, you are here!” he exclaims. I give him a small smile and a perk on the lips as I walk pass him to get to the bathroom.

“I know I’m late. I went to the mall for an outfit and ended wasting two hours. I’ll just take a quick shower.

“Can I join you?” His eyes dance with mischief and tiny hint of hope.

“You’ll delay me babes. I don’t want to be on your mother’s bad side today.” I really don’t. The woman has developed an intense dislike for me and there is no changing that. It seems to grow everyday I spend with them and she can’t even hide it. Now I’m avoiding a situation where I will explode and put her firmly in her place. That might not be good for everyone involved.

After a quick shower I change into a simple black chiffon pleated dress that hugs my boobs snugly and flows from the waist down and rests just above the knee. It has tiny straps so I don’t wear a bra. Seems decent enough. I pair it with a black high heel. When I come out of the dressing

room Luthi is on his feet, TV remote in hand , surfing through the channels. He turns to look at me when I come out and whistles.

“Damn you look like a snack.” Just the look I was going for.

“Well you look like a salad.” I return his smile. He is wearing faded jeans and a white formal shirt with his boots of course. A change from animated tees.

“Not even the main dish, damn, I’m losing my touch.” He puts the remote down and gives me his arm. “Are you ready?” he asks. I nod my head, hook my arm in his and we leave for the house. The yard is beautiful in the evening. The grass and the trees are illuminated by garden lights that are strategically placed so as to enhance the gardens majestic beauty. I could sit in one of the garden chairs for hours soaking in the tranquillity that this place has to offer. There is a slight breeze as we navigate the path flanked by meticulous green lawns leading to the main house. There are various cottages,

well they call them cottages, I would call them town houses within the yard. Luthi tells me the first one to be built was to accommodate the live-in staff. As they grew older one was built for Sakhi and later for himself. Sakhi's stays unoccupied, occasionally used when he visits, if he ever decides to stay. I've been curious to see it, just go get a glimpse of how he lives.

As we turn the corner and in full view of the house, I gasp at its magnificence, but I'm quickly distracted by a figure leaning against one of the huge pillars of the front entrance. He hasn't seen us yet as we approach. The clicking sound of my heel against the concrete floor competes with my thudding heart. I feel swirling movement at the pit of my stomach and the hand clutched by Luthi's becomes damp. I catch a whiff of his scent as the night breeze blows our direction. His shoulders seem broader than I remember, and I love how his jeans fit to show his strong thighs and a bow of his legs. Has he always looked this hot? He turns and sees us approach acknowledges us with a small smile and then walks away phone against his ear. His hair has grown, and his beard is longer and messier. He looks dangerous.

“He never stops working this one,” I can barely hear Luthi as my brain spins with unanswered questions. I do acknowledge him with a grunt. He pulls us to an abrupt stop and turn me to look at him. “Don’t be nervous mami it’s going to be great.” My eyes fly to his at his term of endearment for me. it doesn’t seem as if he realises the significance for it. I don’t push the matter as the doctor advised us not to push but to let his memory return naturally. “Just ignore my mom, she’ll come around, you’ll see.” I nod my head and force a smile. He envelops me in his arms and the hug that’s meant to comfort me make me uncomfortable as I see Sakhi over his shoulder, approaching us. His look seems full of contempt and disgust. I can’t meet his eyes for long I look away pulling myself from Luthi’s arms. Luthi, however has other plans as he captures my lips in an intense kiss that I have no choice but reciprocate even though my head screams no. I’m acutely aware of Sakhi as he walks pass us. Eventually Luthi pulls away and drags me towards the house. I’m worried about my lipstick; it’s supposed to be matte but with such a kiss one can never be too sure.

The aroma that welcomes us as we walk through the door is heavenly. There is a flurry of activity as the kitchen staff prepare the dining room table. Luthi leads me to the direction where the hum of conversation comes from. We walk into the lounge and find everyone sitting relaxed with a glass of something in hand. What surprises me and should really not at this point, is to find Kamo amongst the group. There is also another stunning looking lady coming through from the patio followed by Luthi's mother. She is tall, slim in that fit type of way. Smooth dark skin that looks like it's been drowned in butter. Her romper barely covers her ass but it still looking decent on her, making her legs go on forever. Damn. She walks over and perches her tiny ass on the arm rest next to Sakhi just as we walk in.

I can't help but notice Kamo's face as it lights up when she sees Luthi walk through, followed by an immediate crushed look. She must be having a hard time with this arrangement. What I don't understand is why she is putting herself through it all. Maybe she is hoping that her presence will trigger Luthi's memories, who knows. We greet everyone and Luthi offers to get me a drink , I ask for a glass of red wine. I need all the courage tonight.

I take an empty couch as he walks away to the bar. The conversations we've just walked in on have evaporated leaving an awkward silence.

At the corner of my eye I see Sakhi's arm move to hold the gorgeous lady's waist and she falls into his lap not so graciously, eliciting a giggle from her and subsequent laughter from Sakhi. I'm disgusted. They continue their cosy conversation oblivious to our presence. I want to puke. Has he always been this attentive and relaxed? I look across me and find his mom watching them with a satisfied smile on her face. She turns to look at me then smirks. Her whole demeanour communicates how much of an unwanted inconvenience I am. Luthi returns with my drink and I gulp it down like its water as his eyes widen and then he breaks into laughter bringing everyone's attention along. I'm not bothered.

"Should I get you the whole bottle," he asks, smiling.

"Don't even need to ask," I smile back. He goes off to get the bottle and return with it. I enjoy my second glass in

silence while different conversations continue around me. my eyes keep straying towards the cosy couple despite my best efforts to not. Something deep within me is boiling and I can't put a name on it. I'm angry at myself for feeling this way. Eventually we are told dinner is ready, and we move to the dining room. I find myself seated across Sakhi and his guest. That gives me an uninterrupted view of their sickening and disrespectful behaviour. The constant giggling, and whispering, and touching. Nauseating really.

"Are you even listening to me?" I hear Luthi sometime feeling a jab of his elbow on my side.

"Mh" I absently respond.

"You look angry mami, what' sup?" he whispers against my ear. I try and compose myself. I am as confused as he is with my behaviour.

"I'm good just thinking of a meeting I had earlier. I didn't go as planned." I lie.

“It’s always business with you.” continues his chat with his dad while Kamo chants with the mother, I’m left to drinking my wine in silence. My eyes, like a moth are drawn back to Sakhi. Besides the scruffy look, he looks really good, I must admit. I watch his arms as they flex when he moves to push a strand of hair off her face. Or when he takes her hand and bring to his lips for a soft touch. How his jaw moves and the corner of his eyes crinkle as he laughs revealing his perfect teeth. Has he ever laughed or smile this much when he was with me? How long have they been seeing each other? It seems too sudden for someone who claims to have been in love with me.

“How is business Zizo? Your father tells me you work very hard.” Mr Gabada brings me out of my wayward thoughts. The question reignites my anger towards Sakhi for what he did and with the wine flowing warmly through my veins, I have no chance in hell of schooling my tongue.

“It would have been just great if it wasn’t for the circling vulture and greedy dogs trying to sink their paws into my business.” I fail to even guise the disgust in my tone while starring daggers at Sakhi. He lets go of his guest hand and sits back in his chair, expressionless.

“Please watch your tongue sisi, you are a guest here and I’ll not have you making people uncomfortable at this table.” The mother responds in a controlled tone.

“Mama please loosen up, Zizo is trying to share her frustrations. Its not like this is a prim and proper family. I’ve used far worse language.” I appreciate Luthi coming to my defence by he has no clue of the underlying issues currently being addressed.

“Zizo is no stranger to trashy behaviour, mama.” Sakhi smirks. Before my brain can react, my hand is already aiming the glass of wine his directions, the contents landing squarely on his face. The whole table gasps. He is blinking uncontrollable. His guest jumps into action, grabbing a napkin trying to wipe his face, only he grabs it

from her and throws it back on the table. I can feel everyone's eyes on me, and I can't sit here and take the crap anymore. I unceremoniously push the chair back and flee from the table. I hear Luthi calling after me while his mother screams at him to remain seated. I don't look back as I run towards my car. I open the door and of course its locked but just as I'm about to turn, a tall figure blocks me and cages me in. His scent gives him away immediately.

"Zizomila, what the fuck was that about?" His tone is low and urgent. I can feel every inch of him against my back and I don't like how that make me feel.

"Let me go Sakhi!" I turn to face him and that becomes worse. I must tilt my head backwards to see his face.

"Not before you tell me what's gotten into you. You seem angry. I thought the business thing was past us."

"Oh, because you said so right. I must just forget what you did? You must really think I'm stupid. Please move,

your girlfriend is waiting.” He doesn’t barge and instead he moves closer. His scent and the smell of wine bombard my nostrils and I breath him in. I get tired of craning my neck and place my hand on his chest with intentions of pushing away. However, my wayward body betrays me as my hands remain on his chest. I watch them as they slowly slide down towards his abdomen then slide underneath his t-shirt. I hear a gasp as my cool hands meet his heated skin. I love the feel of his hard abs as my hand slide upwards then behind to hold him from the back. His muscles keep bunching beneath my touch. I’m not sure who is breathing heavier between the two of us. I look up once more and find the most terrifying look on his face. He looks like he is about to devour me. The tip of my tongue slips out to moisten my suddenly dry lips and that elicit a groan from him as he dips his head towards my eager lips.

“Yo mami! Where you at?” We both jump and immediately pull away. Sakhi keeps a good distance between us.

“This way!” my voice has dropped to its husky mode.

“I’ve been looking everywhere for you. Where are you running off to?” Luthi says coming through the driveway with a worried look, oblivious to the crackling energy between his brother and me.

“I just needed to get away.” He comes closer and brushes my arms with his warm hands. I see Sakhi over his shoulder turning and walking away.

“We can go somewhere else for dinner if you like,” he says. I really need to get away, so I take him up on his offer. He has brought his keys and wallet. We take his car, well one of the family cars anyway. We drive in silence for a while. My mind keeps replaying the moment I just had with Sakhi. “What’s happening between you and my brother?” My body suddenly goes cold and my head snaps towards his face.

(I hope all will be forgiven 😁 🙏 . I’ll try and posts Tuesdays and Fridays)

Butterfly 22

Sakhi

Christ! This girl is going to ruin me! Then my family while at it. How did we get here? I feel like a pawn in her chess game. Why is it that I go and act like a stupid teenager whenever I'm around her? It's like I can't control myself. It's freaking ridiculous! What confuses me is that I can't stop thinking about her, at the same time I have this deep-seated hatred for her. Every time I see my brother's hand on her, or when they kiss, even the thought of them sharing a bed makes me want to throttle her. I can never get the image of them out of my mind. The way she was lost in pleasure as my brother pounded her from behind, my own damn brother! Even the way her face had contorted in throes of her orgasm haunts me even in my dreams. Then why am I inexplicable drawn to her like a moth drawn to a light? What ever it is, it must stop. We can never be.

I don't even realise that I've wandered to my cottage. I need to shower and change the t-shirt that's covered with a stench of wine and also get rid of the tension

that's vibrating through my body. If I was at my place I would go to gym. It seems like the only thing that works me up good. I pump those irons until my body is too sore to do anything but pass out.

Just as the spray of cold water hits my back, I remember that I have a guest I left hanging. I'm sure my mom is entertaining her well. Gwen, she is gorgeous, smart and funny too. She is also not a complicated human being. She seems to love life and exudes confidence. Just the kind of girl my mom would love as a daughter in law. I met her a few weeks ago. I had just finished having a few drinks at a bar not far from the hospital where Luthi was admitted. I literally bumped into her as she came out of the coffee shop next door, spilling the contents of the cup she had in hand and messing the both of us. I had expected anger or frustration but instead she had laughed, fumbling through her handbag and came up with a scarf and started patting my chest dry.

"You should watch where you are going." She had said with a hint of smile on her face.

“I’m sorry. I must have had one too many.” I had responded with my eyes still fixed on her face. “You don’t have to do that, I’m good.” I had said, stilling her efforts to dry my shirt. I had gotten the bulk of the coffee while she only had a few already drying splashes. “I’m sorry, can I buy you another one?”

“Sure, I have the time.” She had responded putting her scarf back into her handbag. I had ushered her back into the coffee shop and went for a table instead of a takeaway.

“Just being cautious. We don’t want another drunk ruining your coffee.” I had responded to her eyebrows rising. We then sat for coffee which became lunch. I only had to listen to her troubles and the time had just flown by. She’d told me of how she had just been fired from her job because of a missing file and that she hadn’t had coffee in year and on that day, it had been warranted. I liked her from the first time we met. Had it been anyone else maybe she would have been at the bar crying herself into a stupor, not Gwen. She took everything like a

champ and just soldiered on. I could learn a few things from her.

I can feel my body shaking and realise that I have been too engrossed in my thoughts the cold water has turned icy cold. I close the taps and leave the shower. Just as I am about to go back to the house, there is a tentative knock at my door. I open to find Kamo looking lost. Poor girl has been through the most as well. It can't be easy to find out that your boyfriend has been cheating and to make matters worse doesn't even remember your relationship. Luthi has a lot of work to do when he gets his memory back if he ever does. The thought makes my heart constrict.

“Hey Sakhi,” she pushes her way in, and I step aside to allow her access. “Your mom asked me to call you, she said you are being rude to your guest.” She walks through while looking around the place. “Nice crib, so different from Luthi's.”

“It's cleaner and tidier.” I say. She giggles.

“That’s true. Are you not hurt that your girlfriend is with him?”

“Ex,” I clip. She frowns “We had broken up, so, she is an ex.”

“But still it must hurt. I hate her, I saw them once in a club and he denied being with her. Why do I love him so much?” But she hates her, okay. Women confuse me sometimes.

“You saw them, when?”

“Oh, maybe two weeks or three before he fell sick.” She waves her hand dismissively.

“We should go.” She nods her head and walks out as I follow her to the main house.

“They are both gone, I went to check on Luthi, and no one is there,” she says.

“Ja, probably. Kamo, why do you still hang around for my brother? He doesn’t treat you right and hasn’t for a while and yet you are here to watch him with another woman he cheated with.” She doesn’t immediately respond. I can only hear the steady sound of our footsteps on the paved pathway to the house. The night is eerily silent as if mourning the loss we feel. She tilts her head upward into the sky.

“Same way you are pining over Zizo. I can’t help it. I love him and there is this little hope that he’ll come back to me,” she says folding her arms against her chest as if to protect herself from the night’s chill. I don’t respond to her comment. I wouldn’t even know where to begin to justify it. So, I let it go. We walk in the house and find my parents with Gwen chatting over a cup of tea. Gwen smiles when she sees me, and I return her smile. I walk over and sit next to her.

“My Uber has arrived,” Kamo announces still on her feet and my mother offers to walk her out while my father makes his excuses to go to bed. It’s now the two of us left in the house.

“You changed.’ it’s a statement.

“I did. I needed to shower and change after the wine baptism.” She laughs a little.

“So, are you going to tell me what that was about?” I shift uncomfortably creating a bit of space between us. Do I really want to tell her details of my sordid past with Zizo?

“I kind of blackmailed her using her business.” Her eyes widen in shock. “I wasn’t going to go through it, I just needed her to agree to dating Luthi.” The words rush out of my mouth to explain.

“Why would you need to resort to blackmail? Weren’t they dating before?” this is why I didn’t want to speak about this. It’s a bloody mess that is unexplainable.

“There weren’t sort of, it’s a long story.” I stand to pour myself a drink. I need it, in fact I think I’m becoming an alcoholic the way my consumption has increased. She silently waits for me to continue without any pressure. I take my time in placing the ice cube in the glass and the clanking sound is louder in the deafening silence. The swirling dark liquid in my glass is the reflection of how I feel on the inside. I take a sip and the bitter taste glides down smoothly giving me courage to continue. “Luthi had a brain surgery which resulted to partial memory loss. His health is still at risk, and he needs a second surgery to fix the original problem.” I tell her all the details of their affair and the subsequent fall. By the time I’m done I’m on the 3rd glass and her eyes glisten with unshed tears. I can’t handle her pity not right now.

“Oh Sakhi, this is a complicated situation for you.” She manages to hold back the tears and I’m grateful. “Are you still in love with her? It must be tough to see them

together.” I don’t respond and take sip of my whiskey instead. Her nearness is comforting. I shouldn’t get use to this.

“Let me take you home.” I stand only to lose my balance and the fall back into the couch and that elicits a giggle from her. “Help me up” she takes my outstretched hand and pulls. With a simple tug, I bring her down and she is splattered over me. She is cracking up and I notice how perfect her teeth are. “You are so beautiful.” That comes out more serious than I intended, and she sobers up staring into my eyes. I am acutely aware of her soft body on top of me. I push her hair out of her face and bring her face down. She is hovering inches above me and her breath fans my face. The kiss when it happens is soft and tentative at first. She tastes of wine and something chocolaty. Her lips are soft and yielding towards mine. I shift so that she can lay comfortable on top of me. I feel the softness of her boobs against my chest while her crotch awakes a sleeping giant. I lose all thoughts and savour her sweetness, She is freaking responsive to my touch. I can hear the disjointed rise of our breathing. She suddenly pulls away and I immediately regret the loss of

her touch. Her eyelids have dropped into tiny slits. Her chest rapidly heaving above me.

"I don't think this is a good idea." The huskiness in her tone reminds me of Zizo. Dammit why would I be thinking of her at a time like this? I slight shake my head. My need is pulsating against her core with a mind of its own. I let out a loud groan and flip her over feeling slightly dizzy with a sudden movement. I've had too much to drink my brain says but my lower anatomy is almost bursting at the seams with the need to escape. I dip my head and capture her lips with urgency. Her equally eager reaction spurs me on. My hand fumbles with the straps of the jumpsuit she is wearing. It proves to be more complicated than it seems. I can't win. Her soft moans and sounds are encouraging as I deepen the kiss.

"Hayibo Sakhile! In my house nogal?" I feel like an ice bucket has just been thrown over me, rendering my arousal depleted. We both jump with shame all over our faces. I am behaving like a teenager caught with his pants down. A few more minutes she would have.

“Sorry ma, we got carried away.” I can’t even look at her.

“I’d say. You have a cottage here for a reason Sakhi. Your father and I don’t need to see this. Good night and do lockup.” She fails to completely hide the smile that creeps in. Gwen and I are once again alone in the room, the moment has been ruined though.

“I’ll ask my driver to take you home.” It’s between a statement and a question.

“Thank you, I think it’s a good idea.” I immediately call Walter. I know I can trust him with her safety. He tells me he has just pulled up and will be waiting in the car.

“He is here already. Let me walk you out.” She nods her head at take my outstretched hand. We walk in silence until we reach the car. I turn her around to face me and cup her face. Did I mention she is freaking gorgeous?

“Thank you for tonight.” She gives me her sweet smile that I’m quickly becoming addicted to.

“I’ll call you when I get home.” I give her a soft peck and open the door for her. I watch as the car drives out until the red lights disappear into the distance. Maybe she is what I need to move on with my life, my conscience whispers. What you see is what you get with her. An unfamiliar part of me rejects these thoughts immediately.

Butterfly 23

Zizo

The feeling of pleasure begins to arouse me from my deep sleep. The insistent pressure of the hot tongue against my nub has my toes curling into the mattress. The pleasure I feel makes me pray to the gods that I don’t wake up. My hips contract arching upwards for a better angle. I’m so close. Then the pleasure suddenly stops. I wrench myself off my sleepy fog just in time to find him hovering above me with a satisfied grin on his

face. Then the pleasure returns as his head knocks at my entrance. I'm sleek, hot and ready for him. He doesn't waste my time as he slides in a single thrust. A loud scream escapes my lips in tune with his loud groan. The feel of his ridged length pulsating inside me has me squirming.

"Luthi please," my voice comes out as a whisper. "Please, move!" He balances his elbows on either side of my face then dips his head for a wet kiss and I eagerly return it. The movement of his hips is subtle at first.

"You feel so good." He murmurs against my lips. I can't respond the only thing I do is to hook my legs around his waist. This makes him go deeper and we both moan louder. Our breathing is laboured, and my hands roam all over his back slick with sweat. He picks up the pace and the room is filled with sounds of our mating. Animalistic, servicing our baser need. It doesn't take long before we both lose control and splinter into pieces. He collapses on top of me and I can feel the frantic beating of his heart, or is mine?

It's a while later, the weight of his body on me has me cramping in my thighs. His even breathing lets me know that he has fallen back to sleep. I pinch his ass and he lift his head and looks at me with his sleepy eyes.

"You need to move; I can't feel my legs." He immediately rolls over and apologies while he leaves a string of cum against my thighs. Another sexual encounter with no condom. I have become a dare devil. It's a good thing I am taking contraceptives. He turns me to look at him. He pushes my hair out of my face and traces a finger along my jaw.

"Your skin is so soft. I love your afterglow. Damn mami! I did all this." His smile is contagious, I can't help but smile as well. We are just staring at each other. His beard has grown since the hospital I observe while my hand is lazily tracing circles on his arm. "Something is wrong with me, isn't it?" It comes out as a statement and my brain scrambles for an appropriate answer.

“What do you mean?” I can’t meet his eyes and settle on his chest. He lifts my chin with his forefinger and makes me look at him. I saddens me to see that the smile has disappeared. I clear my throat, and nothing comes out.

“Zizo.” I sit up and lean against the headboard. He does the same. I look down and see the slopes of my ample breast with my hard nipples still pointing. His eyes are already all over them, I pull the sheet and cover up. He chuckles. “Talk to me, what don’t I know?”

“I don’t know Luthi, all I know is that you need to recover so that you can go back for your second operation.” I’m looking at everywhere but him. I can hear him sigh.

“Ja, it’s just an odd feeling I can’t explain. Like something is missing. Why has Ashlyn and Tino not been to visit me anyway?” This is getting more complicated than I would like. I’m not sure either why his friends haven’t been to visit him. I mean they only visited when he was in hospital and never came afterwards.

“Maybe they are busy. Maybe you should give them a call. Invite them for a drink or something. You also need to get out of here. The Luthi I know loves to party.”

“I do?” He seems genuinely surprised.

“You do, we weren’t out a couple of times.”

“Only a couple? Why wouldn’t I go with you if I enjoyed it so much?” Goodness! I keep getting caught in this web of lies.

“I’m always busy at work.” He turns to me taking my hand in his.

“I understand you love your business and I am hundred percent behind you, but you must live a little right. I promise you from now on we will do things together.” I nod my head in agreement. I feel like this will backfire one day. How will I entangle myself from this when he does regain his memory? Being weak and falling for his

potent touch will only complicate things further. But the way he touches me is different. His touch does what I need. Have I been deprived of orgasm for so long that I'm desperate? "Let's go for a swim." He jumps off the bed and takes a few strides until he disappears to the bathroom. "Are you coming?" I get off the bed and walk on shaky legs towards the bathroom. The glass shower is already filled with steam when I join him. he begins to lather my back with soap and that eventually leads to another steamy session until the water runs cold.

He whistles as he walks besides me on our way to the swimming pool. It seems like everyone is still asleep and I'm not sure why we woke up so early on a Saturday morning.

"Damn mami! Play that ass for me." I laugh at him. I can just imagine what his view is like walking behind me. I love scandalous swimming costumes. The two-piece that I'm wearing is one of my favourites. It leaves little to the imagination. "Fuck! Look!" I turn and find the growing bulge his pants. "I need to get a towel and a swim costume with more room! I'll be right back." He winks at

me and runs back to the cottage while I continue to the pool. I need to cool off as well seeing that I am insatiable. The sight of an erection had me feeling warmer. I immediately sink into the pool and the cool water is a welcomed distraction. Suddenly a figure emerges from underneath the water as if it's black Aquaman himself. My heart catches in my throat as I let out as a squeak. Goodness Sakhi! He shakes off the water on his face and runs his hands through his hair. His look bores into me and feels like I am being branded by a hot iron.

"I didn't think anyone was here." I say my breath catching in my throat.

"You have as much right to be here as I do." We are standing a few feet apart his chest still heaving. Seconds tick slowly as we stand in silence. His eyes have dropped to my chest and I'm too scared to check what has him transfixed. It feels like an eternity when a huge splash breaks the awkwardness. Then Luthi emerges in a jovial mood. He begins to play with his brother. It's evident that it is their routine by how well they move and play together. I am left on my own to do a few strokes on the

side then I eventually sit on the side and watch their frolicking. I envy their camaraderie. Its so seamless. I don't think I have that with my brother.

We spend better part of the morning swimming. Okay, the two are swimming I've long abandoned it and basking in the sun, because of how awkward it became every time Sakhi and I came into contact. One of the staff members eventually comes to let us know that breakfast will be served shortly. We towel off and go to our separate cottages. When we get to ours, we take a quick shower. The activities of the morning have left me ravenous and I'm looking forward to breakfast despite the company.

We arrive in the main house and it seems like it's just the two of us. I don't complain, I welcome the reprieve. Mrs Gabada has a way of always ruining my appetite. If things continue this way, I'll shed a few kilos before my stay with them is over. Just as we finish and enjoying a cup of coffee , Sakhi walks in looking relaxed in faded jean and a simple t-shirt. I can see he had hoped to be alone and I grant him his wish by excusing myself feigning tiredness.

Luthi remains with him and I immediately go back to bed when I return to the cottage.

It's almost noon when I wake up and Luthi isn't around. It seems no one is around the entire home. I don't feel like being alone in this humongous home, so I decided to visit Pearl. I haven't seen much of her lately. I guess she is also busy with her new job. I'm glad it never came to me asking Sakhi to hook her up. The less I have to do with that man the better and I don't need to owe him any favours.

I find her alone sitting by the pool with a glass of wine when I arrive at her house. She tells me that the kids have gone out with their father. Since I brought two more bottles then I decide to drink with her.

"You are so scarce these days my friend. Are the two brothers keeping you busy?" she teases once I've settled.

"Friend, it's a mess. I am a mess. It's not like me to not have things together."

“It’s the power of the D.” she laughs, raising her glass. I don’t. I can’t be this stupid over a dick, I refuse.

“I slept with Luthi this morning.” I blurt it out and she nearly chokes on her wine the way her head snaps in my direction.

“I thought you were putting the breaks on that one, in fact on all of them. What happened?” I sigh and take a big sip of the wine.

“Being there Pearl, around them, It’s a lot for me. I was fine the past two weeks because I didn’t have to see Sakhi and then last night.” I take another sip.

“What happened last night?” she has all but turned her whole body to look at me.

“He brought this floozy to dinner and they were all over each other. It was sickening really. They had no sense of decorum whatsoever.”

“Wait! What! Are you jealous?”

“No, I’m not!”

“You sound jealous!”

“Not in the least. I’m just annoyed that he gets to have a normal life while I have to maintain a lie with his brother.”

“Okay, but still, that doesn’t explain why you slept with Luthi.” I run my hand through my hair in frustration. Pearl is like a dog with a bone and she won’t let this go. How can I explain something that I can’t even explain to myself? Do I tell her that I dream about the other brother while I burn under one’s touch? all I know for sure is that I need to get out of that house and be away from both of them for good. Nothing good can come out of all of this.

Butterfly 24

Sakhi

It had been two weeks since I had been home. I didn't want to be around them anymore because I knew something would give and that wouldn't be good for anyone. Luthi seemed genuinely happy around Zizo. I wondered what would happen when he regained his memory. He didn't only show signs of happiness but of growth too, more grounded than the Luthi I know, who has been always chasing a thrill. My father also noticed as he commented on it with his brow furrowed the last time, I saw him. I knew what he was thinking, I was thinking it too? What would happen when the small bubble my brother lived in shattered?

One thing I knew for sure was that I didn't want to be the one to break it. I had to sacrifice what I thought I felt for Zizomila, shove it somewhere deep where it can never resurface. A place I'll never visit again. We had our time

and it was a moment in time where our starts weren't aligned. There'll forever be crossed.

Another firm thought I had was that, I wasn't ready for another relationship. Even though I found Gwen absolutely attractive, had it been another time I would've fallen crazily in love with her but I just couldn't bring myself to string her along while I licked my wounds. Which is why I found myself sitting at one of my favourite restaurants waiting for her to arrive.

I spotted her immediately she walked through the door. I stood and watched as she spoke to the stewardess by the door. I waved as she looked my direction and a huge smile broke on her face once she saw me. I watched as she politely thanked the lady and walked gracefully towards me. My resolve of ending things with her was shaking. She held my arm and met me halfway for a kiss on the cheek when she reached me. Her sweet and spicy scent wafted through my nostrils tantalising my senses as warmth zipped through my back.

"Hi." She said while pulling away and I immediately opened a chair for her to sit. "You are such a gentlemen

Sakhi, thank you.” That weirdly pleased me as I hadn’t heard much compliment over my chivalry for a while. Her deep emerald green dress had a deep plunge in her chest which allowed me just a hint of her delectable cleavage. It had me distracted for a second. We sat in awkward silence as I waited for our waitress to come over. I tapped my fingers on the table, a sign of impatience or nervousness.

When we spoke, we did at the same time and I allowed her to go first.

“I was happy to receive your invite today, I don’t know, I sort of felt like you were blowing me off.” She went in for it. I had at least hoped we would enjoy dinner first and then I would break the news.

I had doubts swirling in my head about what I intended to do. Gwen is a great person and she made me smile and laugh more often than I care to believe. I didn’t have to try hard with her and yet she made me want to try harder to please her. Now how do I kill such a budding

friendship? Or relationship? Whatever. It just seemed like I was self sabotaging. I took her hand in mine, her soft delicate hand.

“To be honest I have been, not in a bad way,” I quickly added. Was there any other way to look at it? “Gwen, I like you, a lot. More than I expected to if I’m being honest.” I could feel sweat forming under my collar, and I resisted the urge to undo my tie. I should’ve changed after work, but I didn’t want to be late, so I came straight from my daylong conference to the restaurant. She waited, looking at me expectantly with warmth in her eyes. “It’s just that I’m in a mess of a situation with Zizomila and my brother,” I cleared my throat. It had seemed so easier when I had worked this out in my had. Invite her to dinner, enjoy dinner and then afterwards gently break the news to her. But now, it was a whole new ball game to me. An uncharted territory and that silent voice that kept screaming ‘ don’t do it!’ didn’t help my case at all. I found myself adjusting my tie.

“Are you trying to break things off before we even began?” she was still gifting me with her warm smile as she clutched my hand tighter.

“No!,” it came out harsher than I intended. “No, well yes, my intention was to break things off with you but I can’t seem to have the will nor the guts. Frankly I don’t want to.” She was confused and amused at the same time. I was messing it up, I knew it and she knew it. I cleared my throat again. “What I am trying to say is that my life is complicated. I shouldn’t want a relationship with anyone as I have unresolved feelings for someone else. But selfishly, I also don’t want to let go of what I’ve found with you. If you are willing to wait and be patient with me for a while longer, would you be?” there I had said it. It was out there and there was no taking it back. The most selfish thing I’ve ever asked of a woman. A personal low for me and I didn’t have many of those.

She shifted back in her chair her disposition no longer smiling but serious with her brow furrowed. She still clasped my hand in hers and that felt weirdly comforting. I know I was asking a lot. I was asking her to be on the

side-lines while I figured my shit out with another woman who by the way was currently fucking my brother. What had become of me?

“Sakhi, you are asking a lot of me,” her voice came out raspy and she cleared her throat. “I like you too, a lot. But what you ask of me, I know I should fully reject and walk out of here. Something is holding me back though. I know you are a great guy and I’d really love a chance to get to know you.” I could feel a smile creep in, and I had to use all my will power to control it. It was relief I felt. Relief that maybe, just maybe I wouldn’t lose her. I had to be sure.

“What are you saying?” I asked, hopeful. Or was it pleading?

“I’ll wait for you to sort yourself out. We can remain friends in the meantime. It won’t be indefinite Sakhi. And when I do get you, I want all of you, I mean it, I won’t be second best to anything.” I vigorously nodded my head like an idiot. “I also want transparency throughout the

process. If at all your feelings change either way I need to know.” I stood and tugged to her feet and she staggered from the unexpected move. I hooked my arm around her waist to balance her. She was suddenly close and almost at my height with the help of the heels she wore.

“I promise you, thank you for giving me a chance.” Her eyes up close burned like the winter fire and my skin prickled as they pierced through mine. I pulled her even closer until I could feel her breath against my neck and held her in a tight embrace. Her body hard from her workouts and yet soft in places that mattered, yielded against my hard body and felt right. We stood in that position until our waitress cleared her throat and we pulled apart returning to our seat.

The solid rock of ice had been broken and we relaxed and enjoyed our dinner. We were engrossed in each other until we realized that the restaurant staff were impatiently but politely waiting for us. We settled our bill and decided to take a walk. It was a beautiful evening the sky covered by a blanket of stars against the black canvas. There was a cool breeze that was refreshing to my burning skin. Gwen’s dress however wasn’t as

protective from the light chill as her back was open very low until her lower back. I offered her my jacket as we began our walk which she gratefully accepted, I knew the neighbourhood well as it wasn't too far from my place and I also new that it was safe and pleasant for evening walks.

Taking her hand in mine became natural as we strode down the street. Her laughter became more addictive as she laughed at my stupid jokes. She kept the cold away, the cold I constantly felt that was lodged deep in the pit of my stomach coiling itself here on daily basis. Her company was really a breath of fresh air. We were so lost in our conversation that we found ourselves in front of my estate block. I tugged her into a stop, and she covered her confusion with a smile.

"I live here." I indicated with my head. Her eyes widened.

"Here! Wow. I suddenly feel way out of my league with you."

“It’s nothing.” I was suddenly embarrassed. I didn’t want to be out of her league. In fact, I was way out of her league in more ways than one. Ways that mattered more than money.

“Sakhi I’ve seen your home and now this. I’m definitely out of my league.’ I could see her fidgeting and sensed a bit of insecurity. I couldn’t have that.

“It’s just money, my father was fortunate, and I was also fortunate to continue that legacy. All material stuff really. What matters most is the heart and you have the heart of gold Gwen.” She smiled.

“You are just being modest but thank you.”

“Would you like to come in for coffee?” I asked. And immediately I felt nervous. I never had a woman over at my place before. I asked Zizo until I gave up asking because she made one excuse after the other until she eventually told me that she didn’t do boyfriends visits.

Which is why it was an added hurt when I found her at Luthi's place.

"Sure why not, I'd like to see hoe the other side lives."
She giggled. We walked through hand in hand. It wasn't a lot of units as a result each unit had its own private space. I told her as we took a mini tour of the estate and her eyes widened into round saucers the further, we went. I didn't tell her that the entire estate was part of my company's investments. One of the many ventures I undertook when my father left me the company that was on a brink of bankruptcy. That would've have been boasting my ego.

Once inside the house, we opted for a bottle of red wine which she chose from my cellar collection. She was more excited to see that than anything else I possessed. She didn't seem impressed by my car collection in the underground parking. Nor did she seem impressed by the opulence of the place that was supposed to be revolutionary according to my designer.

Once I had her settled in the lounge with a glass of wine I excused myself to go change. She waved me away saying she'd keep herself occupied with my movie collection. I went to my room a ball of nerves. How did one entertain a woman in their house? With girls before Zizo, it was never anything serious and it was either I visited their homes, or we met at hotels. I never felt comfortable in having people in my space until Zizo and we know how that went. But with Gwen, it was different, I found myself wanting her more than anyone to be impressed. To like the place at least.

Once in my room I went through to my walk-in closet, to the casual side of it. I had someone who came and organised my cupboard and shelf space every two weeks. Gwen had been shocked a few minutes earlier when she had seen my pantry stacked like it was a supermarket. My closet was the same. Nothing was out of space and it was easy to find what I looked for. It was as organised as my life had been until Zizo happened. I had to shake off all thoughts of her. Purge her from my system.

I quickly changed into sweat pants and a simple t-shirt and returned to my guest. She didn't hear my bare footsteps

as padded towards her until I was standing behind her. She wasn't at the movie section but checking out my book collection. She nearly dropped the book she had in her hand.

"Oops! You startled me!" her voice came out raspy. "Your book collection is impressive by the way." She had discarded my jacket and her shoes which brought her height barely to my shoulders. My hand itched to trace the bare contours of her back, but I resisted the urge. We had agreed on a platonic friendship until further notice and I didn't want to be a jerk about it. I was already feeling like one for asking.

"Thank you, if you need to change, I can find you something comfortable."

"That would be nice thank you." Sha said placing the book back on the shelf. I took her hand and tug her as she followed me upstairs. I led her to one of the guestrooms and took out t-shirt and sweatpants then left her to change. When she returned downstairs, she was a

sight for sore eyes in my clothes which were a lot baggy on her.

“I think I just pulled off the 90s look.” She laughed as she through herself next to me. I had already refilled her glass and we sat, drank and chatted until the golden rays filtered through the curtains. We had completely lost track of time. I was grateful that it was a Saturday and I could afford to cancel the meeting I had set up for the morning.

I felt reluctant to let her go. Like she would just disappear out of my life. So instead of calling Walter and asking to take her home, I found myself asking her if she would like to take one of the guestroom and maybe join me for a late breakfast. To my delight she agreed and my heart thumped with excitement. I loved the feeling.

It was later in the day when we were seating by the pool engrossed in our endless chats that I received a call for my mother. She informed me that Luthi had been scheduled for his operation the following week and

demanded that we needed to have lunch the following day. When my mother demanded an audience, no one refused her. I was happy that my brother would finally have his health back at the same time I felt trepidation for what was to come. One thing for sure, we would finally be rid of Zizomila Mabhanga from our lives, God willing.

Butterfly 24

Sakhi

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“What are you saying?” I asked, hopeful. Or was it pleading?

“I’ll wait for you to sort yourself out. We can remain friends in the meantime. It won’t be indefinite Sakhi. And when I do get you, I want all of you, I mean it, I won’t be second best to anything.” I vigorously nodded my head like an idiot. “I also want transparency throughout the process. If at all your feelings change either way I need to know.” I stood and tugged to her feet and she staggered from the unexpected move. I hooked my arm around her waist to balance her. She was suddenly close and almost at my height with the help of the heels she wore.

“I promise you, thank you for giving me a chance.” Her eyes up close burned like the winter fire and my skin prickled as they pierced through mine. I pulled her even closer until I could feel her breath against my neck and held her in a tight embrace. Her body hard from her workouts and yet soft in places that mattered, yielded against my hard body and felt right. We stood in that position until our waitress cleared her throat and we pulled apart returning to our seat.

The solid rock of ice had been broken and we relaxed and enjoyed our dinner. We were engrossed in each other until we realized that the restaurant staff were

impatiently but politely waiting for us. We settled our bill and decided to take a walk. It was a beautiful evening the sky covered by a blanket of stars against the black canvas. There was a cool breeze that was refreshing to my burning skin. Gwen's dress however wasn't as protective from the light chill as her back was open very low until her lower back. I offered her my jacket as we began our walk which she gratefully accepted, I knew the neighbourhood well as it wasn't too far from my place and I also knew that it was safe and pleasant for evening walks.

Taking her hand in mine became natural as we strode down the street. Her laughter became more addictive as she laughed at my stupid jokes. She kept the cold away, the cold I constantly felt that was lodged deep in the pit of my stomach coiling itself here on daily basis. Her company was really a breath of fresh air. We were so lost in our conversation that we found ourselves in front of my estate block. I tugged her into a stop, and she covered her confusion with a smile.

"I live here." I indicated with my head. Her eyes widened.

“Here! Wow. I suddenly feel way out of my league with you.”

“It’s nothing.” I was suddenly embarrassed. I didn’t want to be out of her league. In fact, I was way out of her league in more ways than one. Ways that mattered more than money.

“Sakhi I’ve seen your home and now this. I’m definitely out of my league.’ I could see her fidgeting and sensed a bit of insecurity. I couldn’t have that.

“It’s just money, my father was fortunate, and I was also fortunate to continue that legacy. All material stuff really. What matters most is the heart and you have the heart of gold Gwen.” She smiled.

“You are just being modest but thank you.”

“Would you like to come in for coffee?” I asked. And immediately I felt nervous. I never had a woman over at my place before. I asked Zizo until I gave up asking because she made one excuse after the other until she eventually told me that she didn’t do boyfriends visits. Which is why it was an added hurt when I found her at Luthi’s place.

“Sure why not, I’d like to see hoe the other side lives.” She giggled. We walked through hand in hand. It wasn’t a lot of units as a result each unit had its own private space. I told her as we took a mini tour of the estate and her eyes widened into round saucers the further, we went. I didn’t tell her that the entire estate was part of my company’s investments. One of the many ventures I undertook when my father left me the company that was on a brink of bankruptcy. That would’ve have been boasting my ego.

Once inside the house, we opted for a bottle of red wine which she chose from my cellar collection. She was more excited to see that than anything else I possessed. She didn’t seem impressed by my car collection in the

underground parking. Nor did she seem impressed by the opulence of the place that was supposed to be revolutionary according to my designer.

Once I had her settled in the lounge with a glass of wine I excused myself to go change. She waved me away saying she'd keep herself occupied with my movie collection. I went to my room a ball of nerves. How did one entertain a woman in their house? With girls before Zizo, it was never anything serious and it was either I visited their homes, or we met at hotels. I never felt comfortable in having people in my space until Zizo and we know how that went. But with Gwen, it was different, I found myself wanting her more than anyone to be impressed. To like the place at least.

Once in my room I went through to my walk-in closet, to the casual side of it. I had someone who came and organised my cupboard and shelf space every two weeks. Gwen had been shocked a few minutes earlier when she had seen my pantry stacked like it was a supermarket. My closet was the same. Nothing was out of space and it was easy to find what I looked for. It was as organised as

my life had been until Zizo happened. I had to shake off all thoughts of her. Purge her from my system.

I quickly changed into sweat pants and a simple t-shirt and returned to my guest. She didn't hear my bare footsteps as I padded towards her until I was standing behind her. She wasn't at the movie section but checking out my book collection. She nearly dropped the book she had in her hand.

"Oops! You startled me!" her voice came out raspy. "Your book collection is impressive by the way." She had discarded my jacket and her shoes which brought her height barely to my shoulders. My hand itched to trace the bare contours of her back, but I resisted the urge. We had agreed on a platonic friendship until further notice and I didn't want to be a jerk about it. I was already feeling like one for asking.

"Thank you, if you need to change, I can find you something comfortable."

“That would be nice thank you.” Sha said placing the book back on the shelf. I took her hand and tug her as she followed me upstairs. I led her to one of the guestrooms and took out t-shirt and sweatpants then left her to change. When she returned downstairs, she was a sight for sore eyes in my clothes which were a lot baggy on her.

“I think I just pulled off the 90s look.” She laughed as she through herself next to me. I had already refilled her glass and we sat, drank and chatted until the golden rays filtered through the curtains. We had completely lost track of time. I was grateful that it was a Saturday and I could afford to cancel the meeting I had set up for the morning.

I felt reluctant to let her go. Like she would just disappear out of my life. So instead of calling Walter and asking to take her home, I found myself asking her if she would like to take one of the guestroom and maybe join me for a late breakfast. To my delight she agreed and my heard thumped with excitement. I loved the feeling.

It was later in the day when we were seating by the pool engrossed in our endless chats that I received a call for my mother. She informed me that Luthi had been scheduled for his operation the following week and demanded that we needed to have lunch the following day. When my mother demanded an audience, no one refused her. I was happy that my brother would finally have his health back at the same time I felt trepidation for what was to come. One thing for sure, we would finally be rid of Zizomila Mabhanga from our lives, God willing.

Butterfly 25

Zizo

Time has been moving faster than I anticipated. I breathe easier when Sakhi isn't around and I prefer it that way. I have even gotten used to his mother looking at me down her nose every time our paths crossed and that is every day. Because in this household they do things together. It's such a close-knit family, maybe under different circumstances I'd have loved to be a part of. Maybe I'd have moments sitting under the beautiful patio drinking

mimosa with Mrs Gabada or taking long walks in her amazing garden. Or maybe we would spend the afternoons swimming and having a laugh over a glass of wine or two. Maybe tea in her reading room. I laugh at my daydreaming. I'd rather eat grass.

My time at the office has been going well. We seem to be more productive than before. I even gained two new clients and I'm happy to say that I did a thorough vetting and they are in no way or shape connected to Sakhile and his fathers' company. To think he had me by the balls and yet he still runs his father's company! Some of us built our own with our blood and sweat maybe he should try that before attempting to blackmail anyone ever again. I'll will never forgive him for that. Well its not like he has been begging for absolution, in fact he does the opposite, expect that I should forget everything because he had good intentions. My ass! He had his ego bruised by seeing me fucking his brother and that is the truth of it. Or rather his brother fucking me well I might add. Well, I'm done being apologetic about something I had no knowledge! He can go screw himself or Gwen, whatever.

I hate it when I have to think about him. I don't know why I do it because it just gets my blood boiling. I should put my thoughts into good use. Like how to prepare for my two day get away with Luthi. He has planned a getaway after tomorrow's lunch. We have been spending a lot of time lately. Since he had been mortified at the thought of him being out and having a jolly good time in the past without me. He is determined to correct that, and I won't stop him. I welcome the distraction and have found myself enjoying the attention.

I like the Luthi post-accident. Okay I like the one before that but for different reasons. This Luthi takes charge in all aspects not just in the bedroom. He challenges my thinking with that youthful perspective and isn't really fazed by me and stubbornness. He seems to revel in it. He has been consulting with my programmers to help them with the loads of work they were struggling with and he has been doing this from home on his laptop. He has been promising to come work for me for at least three months after his surgery so that he can leave the company on a good footing. He still didn't remember his

role prior to him being sick but I had to explain why his name and code was in some of the files.

Speaking of his surgery, it is scheduled for the following week and hence his mother has organised lunch. This means that I'll have to face Sakhi again. I can't say I'm looking forward to that. The prospect of seeing him with Gwen makes me want to puke. Those two are always rubbing their relationship in everyone's faces. However, I'll brave it for Luthi. I don't want to see him hurt. I just realised that I've come to care for him more than I expect. He is alright. And lately I've been wondering what will happen when he regains his memory. Will he discard me or what we've shared and go back to Kamo? That always gives a funny feeling just below my left breast. I feel we have gotten closer and more than sex to be honest. We've talked more, shared more of our heart than I usually do anyway. The sex hasn't stopped either and he has a way of making me beg for it.

I am on my way to visit my parents. I hardly see them now that I live with the Gabada's. We speak on the phone often. I have been speaking more with my

mother. Something had shifted in our relationship. I regard her more than a timid housewife I once thought she was. I realise that all my life I have been judging her unfairly. Underneath that soft spoken and obedient exterior is a hard and wise woman. A woman who didn't see and approach life through one's achievement but looked at the heart and what it was capable of. She was more in tune with how everyone around her felt than I gave her credit for. So, I find myself enjoying her company more. I am still a daddy's girl, but I've seen my mother in a new light and I welcome the friendship that has been growing between us even with the distance. Which is why I find myself excited at seeing her.

I find her buried under a huge sunhat working with her flowers in the garden. I immediately go and look for an extra hat in the garage and join her in weeding out and all the flower pruning. Her garden not as vast and impressive as Mrs Gabada's but beautiful, nonetheless. She is patient in telling me what to do and doesn't reprimand when I mess it up. The sun is high in the sky and the heat is scorching on our backs as we break for lunch. I can feel rivulets of sweat trailing down my spine as we wash our hands in the washer not far from her

garden. Oddly though, I feel at peace and when I look at what we've achieved in the garden it gives me satisfaction.

"You did good baby," she softly says as we clean out the mud from the tools. She is thorough about it too and I realise that her tool shed is neatly organised as my house is.

"Thank you, mama, but I think I was more of a distraction for you."

"No. Not at all. I remember you used to love doing this with me when you were little. You used to tell me how you'd build your own flower garden and have horses and dogs in your big yard. Asking me endless questions. You were always the curious child." I am not sure about all that. I am not a fan of any pets and I can't believe I ever harboured such silly dreams even as a child, but I do not ruin my mother's trip down memory lane. I let her travel it as we walk side by side back to the house.

“Of course, that changed when you visited your dad at work, one of those ‘take the girl child to work’. I lost my gardening and baking companion that day. She says wistfully looking into the distance as if she could see it clearly.

“I’m sorry mama.” That’s the only thing I think to say. I feel like might have abandoned her when she needed me. Disappointed her somehow.

“Nonsense! Whatever for. You found new passion, your calling I might add and something to connect you with your father. He had been jealous of all the time we use to spend together; you know. He felt left out like he wasn’t the father he was supposed to be, but then when you showed interest it elevated your relationship to a new level. I can never find fault in that baby. He showed you what a good man was, and every mother prays for that for their kids. To learn what a good man is supposed to be from their own fathers. Besides, your brother took over your position and was more interested in the kitchen that you were.” I remember then my brothers’

love for cooking. He is quiet the chef and has grown to have an equally impressive business from that.

We find my father buried under his daily newspaper and I disturb him when I go sit next to him and ask him to fill me in on what's been going on in the news, which is always our repertoire lately even when I call him. The state of the nation address has him boiling and he spends most of the time discussing it. I'm half listening of course as I am not very political. I do follow the news that affect me and usually my opinions differ from my fathers. He is old school and I'm more for the radical approach. I indulge him because he is passionate about this. My mother calls us eventually for lunch and the news shift from politics to my brother's pending visit. The wife is about to give birth and they are visiting my parents for the birth and the first few months of the baby. It is always like this every time she gives birth, its like an unwritten rule. Of course, the grandparents are way more excited than anyone else that they get to spend more time with their grandkids.

“I can’t wait to hold yours in my arms one day,” mom says to me and suddenly as if an ice bucket has been thrown in my face, I realize with horror that I haven’t seen my period in a while. In a long while! I jolt to my feet almost toppling the dining table over. Their eyes grow wide in panic. I don’t have time to explain as I quickly grab my keys and sprint for the door.

“I’ll call you!” I shout over my shoulder already halfway to my car. The drive to the mall is fast and blurry. I need a pharmacy and I find one immediately. While walking out of the pharmacy Luthi calls me and he wants me back at his and he sounds urgent and vague about it. Even though I would’ve preferred to go back to my place for this I have no choice but to return to the Gabada’s.

I could kill him when he tells me he was just missing my company and decided to call me and wanted us to go to the movies. No one has asked me to go to the movies in a while. I enjoyed them when I was a teenager but haven’t really had time for them as I grew older. I can hardly see anything on the big screen, and I go through the emotions as we go for dinner afterwards. I make an

appropriate nod here and there and absently respond when I have to until we return home. The pregnancy test kit burns a hole in my bag. I can't think of anything but finding an opportunity to do the test. It only represents itself at midnight when Luthi is snoring the night away. I slowly slid off the bed careful not to disturb him. I fumble through the dark for my bag and when I find it, I rummage through the contents feeling them with my shaking fingers until I find what I'm looking for. I walk on tip toes to the bathroom and slowly turn the handle praying that there won't be any sounding creeks. I close it as quietly as I opened it and open the packaging. The rustle of the plastic and paper is too loud in the dead of the night and my thumping heart sounds like galloping horses. I can't help but notice my hands shaking as I open and read the instructions as fast as I can. Its simple enough, pee on the stick wait for a minute and check for the results. I follow the instruction and wait with my heart blocking my spit as I swallow. Longest minute of my life and when I do see the results. Thirteen weeks pregnant! I feel faint and grab the basin for balance even though I'm sitting down. It can't be! Yes, it can when you have raw and unprotected sex, a small mocking voice

says. I look at the stick willing the words to disappear, but nothing happens.

“Hey mami! Are you good?’ I hear his groggy tone from the other side of the door and in my panic, I pick everything and throw it in the bin. I wash my hands lost in thought and return to the bedroom. He gathers me in his arms as I slide in under the covers stiff as a board. He spoons me from behind and his even breathing fans the back of my neck and I realise he has gone back to sleep. I envy him for his sleep throughout the night until I hear the birds chirping outside and the sun filter into the room. Sleep never comes and it will never come again, I believe.

Morning is a drag for me, and I decide to skip breakfast and bury myself under the covers with the guise of a headache. That doesn’t last long though as Luthi decides to fuss over me until I claim a miraculous recovery. No one else notices my absence at breakfast and no one else notices me drag my feet throughout the day except for Luthi who keeps asking if I’m okay. If my headache is back. if I need anything. Doctor? Hospital? I want to

bludgeon his head with an axe. But of course, I don't. I fake a mile and tell him I'm alright I'm just tired. By the time we are called in for lunch I'm so strung up I'm about to burst a vein.

Everyone is in high spirits in the main house. Even Mrs Gabada isn't being nasty towards me. Nothing fazes me even seeing Sakhi walking in hand in hand with Gwen. Even when they both come towards me and greet me with no malice on their faces. I don't have time to figure what they are playing at. I sit in the lounge with my hand absently clasped in Luthi's listening to the hum of the conversations around me while my mind is swimming in what ifs and could have's.

It is during desert when an excited Luthi calls for everyone's attention by going on his feet and clanking his glass of wine. I am curious to know what has him so excited like a kid in a candy store. He has all our attention now.

“Well family, thank you for this. I know everyone is anxious about my surgery and yet we are all hopeful it will be a success. I am also aware that there is more going on that you are not telling me,” eyes dart around the table and more accusing eyes land in my direction. “But I understand it is probably for my own good and in time you’ll let me know. I have news to share with you though that will shift everyone’s attention from my upcoming surgery.” I see him dig in his pocket and comes out with my discarded pregnancy stick as he grabs my hand tighter and a broad smile spreads across his face. He waves the stick in the air as if it’s a magic wand. Confused faces stare at him in silence while something akin to bile is rising to my throat. “We are pregnant!” he announces with flourish and the room is dead quite while their faces turn ashen. “Zizo and I are going to have a baby.” He clarifies because probably in his head he expected a loud applause and a burst of congratulations and cheers. Not toady child!

Then like a bolt of lightning Sakhi is on his feet, chair laying on the floor as he marches towards me. He grabs me by my elbow and unceremoniously pulls me away from the dining room towards the sliding door that leads

to the back yard. I can feel his finger digging into my flesh and I don't fight him, I need to feel the pain maybe it will wake me up from this nightmare. Once we are out of sight and out of earshot, he turns me and has me pinned against the wall. I've never seen a man so angry and panicked at the same time. He looks wild and on the border of losing his mind.

"Who's is it?" he asks through greeted teeth. More like a growl.

"None of your business!" I lift my chin and spit the words. I'm never easily intimidated. But deep down I'm shitting my pants. This is a scary Sakhi. I don't know him. Never met him!

"For fucks sakes Zizomila!" he almost screams while shaking my shoulders. Sakhi I know doesn't swear either.

"What the fuck! Let go of her." I hear Luthi before seeing him and when I do see him, he looks like he is about to

commit murder, resemblance is glaring obvious. I look at Sakhi in panic. He doesn't even flinch.

"Not yours," I whisper at him almost begging.

"Bullshit!"

"Bro, take your fucking hands off her!" Luthi is closer now and I can see his chest heaving and hands clenched into fists on his side.

"Luthi, not now!" he doesn't finish that sentence when Luthi locks his arm around his neck from behind. I watch in horror as a fight ensues, everyone comes running from the house screaming at them to stop. They take turns punching each other and rolling on the ground until Sakhi is on top as has Luthi pinned. Of course he would. He is stronger and buffer. They both have bloodied noses or lips; I can't be too sure with the haze that threatens to engulf me.

“What the fuck do you want from my woman!” Luthi says struggling to breathe from his brother’s grip.

“She is not your fucking woman! She was mine before you two started fucking behind my back! She is not yours! She is pretending because I asked her to!” this all comes out uncontrollably from Sakhi who’s battling to breathe. Luthi’s confusion is unmissable. You can see it from the frown that forms on his forehead and then when suddenly all the fight is gone, and he turns and looks at me with a pained look that dares me to deny this. This suddenly leaves Sakhi deflated and I see regret in his eyes too as he let’s go and gets on his feet. He gives his brother a hand and Luthi absently takes it and staggers on his feet.

“You...” he slurs the words while looking at me and he collapses in a heap on the ground. Sakhi is too late to catch him and equally too late to catch me as my body drops like a sack of maize and everything goes blank

Butterfly 26

Sakhi

I watched in horror as my brother slurred his words and then dropped to the ground and then at the corner of my eye caught Zizo as she followed. My eye returned to Luthi though as my heart stopped for a second thinking that he had died. In that moment my mind went blank and my body remained rooted to the spot until my mother called for me. I went and knelt next to his prone body and watched as my mother gently held his head. My heart constricted at seeing his bloodied lip. What had become of us? We never fought, ever. I was always protecting him and as he grew older, he became my protector too. All that fizzled into dust over a woman. My father joined us and knelt on the other side of him telling us the ambulance is on the way.

“Maybe we should take him to the hospital ourselves.” I suggested. I didn’t like the way he looked. Lifeless. There was still a pulse and that gave us hope.

“No, there is a close ambulance , not more than two minutes they said.” He responded.

“Sakhi!’ I looked up at Gwen’s call and found her kneeling next to Zizo. I got up and went over to her. I felt guilty that in my concern for Luthi I had momentarily forgotten about her. “She is bleeding Sakhi, that can’t be good.” Gwen said her forehead folded in a deep frown. She had Zizo’s head resting on her thighs and when my eyes went lower, I saw the blood stain forming and getting bigger on Zizo’s dress.

“No, it can’t be good.” With the little I knew about pregnancy, blood was never a good sign. Just then the sounds of sirens blurred through our quiet neighbourhood. I looked back at Zizo’s pale face against Gwen’s hands and my heart felt a pang of regret. I caused this mess. I shouldn’t have insisted on the charade and involved everyone too. In the end I am the one who messed it up. She could lose her life, her baby and worse my brother could die from this. My mother would never forgive me if that happened.

The paramedics came rushing through following my father. Two came to check on Zizo while the other two checked on my brother, we all stood on the side anxiously looking on. Well my mother was on the verge of hysterical huddled to my father's side. I stood side by side with Gwen, grateful that she hadn't run off. I needed her quite strength and resolve, it was all that was keeping me sane even though she hadn't said anything.

Once the paramedics had done their checks, they hoisted them up on stretchers and we led them to the ambulances parked upfront. My parents jumped in with Luthi while I was left to join Gwen who was already inside the ambulance with Zizo.

"Is she going to be okay?" I tentatively asked the paramedic who was with us at the back as the ambulance whirled through on route to the hospital.

"We will do our best, sir." That wasn't really comforting. Zizo's eyes fluttered open and she was coming to, I

clasped her hand just to reassure her. My hand felt hot and clammy against her cool one

“Where am I?” she asked her voice coming out as a whisper while her eyes darted around.

“You are in an ambulance maam, we are on our way to the hospital. You fainted and you seem to have vaginal bleeding. How far along are you?” Her frown had deepened as the paramedic spoke. She tried to sit up but she was tied into tubes.

“Please, don’t try to move Zizo, we are almost at the hospital.” I pleaded with her.

‘How far along maam?’ the paramedic continued his line of his questioning undeterred.

“I don’t know, the pregnancy test said thirteen weeks. Am I losing it?” It, she couldn’t even bring herself to say baby. Okay maybe be I was a little harsh for thinking that

she didn't care. But as long as I can remember, marriage and children were never part of her conversation. The few times I brought up the subject she would brush it off as for other people not her. She would tell me I was in a wrong relationship if that was what I was expecting.

“We will know when we get to the hospital mam. Try and relax for now.” she turned her head to the side as her eyes fluttered closed. I looked up to find Gwen staring at me. There was more in her eyes, pity, disappointment or hurt I couldn't pinpoint which feelings were swirling through those fiery orbs. But the wheels were turning behind that pretty head and I knew as hell that I wouldn't like the outcome.

Once we arrived in hospital everything was a blur as we were met by Luthi's doctor with his aides and another one that attended to Luthi. They were taking them to separate units, my heart wanted to go with Luthi, but I knew Zizo had no one so I decided to follow her. Gwen was a step behind me as she silently followed me. Once Zizo was wheeled into the emergency room we were left standing outside in silence for a few minutes. I stood a few feet away from her itching to get closer and envelop

her in my arms. Reassure her. But what could I say? I felt like a heartless bastard. In fact, that would be kinder to call me that. I felt like I had been an ass, the entire time. Idiot of greatest proportion. Not only for today, but for forcing Zizo to stay with our family, hell for remaining in that relationship longer than I did. I had been a fool but not anymore.

“Did anyone call her family?” Gwen broke the silence.

“Yes, my father called her father, they know each other.” I explained unnecessarily and judging by the look she gave me; she felt the same. I wanted to say more, gauge how she felt but she stood like a brick wall with her arms folded on her chest.

“You could’ve handled that differently earlier.” She said her tone soft and even.

“Yes, I could have. I regret how it went. I just lost my mind at the thought of her carrying my child and pushing it to my brother.

“I get the circumstances; but I still feel disappointed. Why are you so adamant that the baby could be yours?”

“There might not be a baby anymore.” My heart broke at uttering those words out loud. Whether the baby would be mine or Luthi’s, its my blood, my family.

“Let’s think positive.” She moved closer and nudged me with her shoulder. Gosh, I needed even that small contact.

“I had a moment with her in my office just after my brother was hospitalised.” Her eyes widened, only just slightly. I felt my skin heating under her scrutiny.

“When you mean a moment, you are talking about sex, right.” I grabbed the back of my neck and felt myself squirming. Why was I panicked? She wasn’t even in my peripheral then.

“Yes. We had sex and that is the last time we were together.”

“So, you can’t be sure that its your baby seeing that she has been with your brother all this time even before then.” She made sense, but I would want to be sure. However, the question lingered at the back of my head, will there be a baby?

So, we waited, and I walked between two floors like a mad man. Checking on Luthi and being with Zizo. Her parents had arrived and had been sitting patiently in silence while they waited with their hands clutched together. They didn’t say a lot to me except when they had asked me what had happened on their arrival. They were even more shocked about the news of the possible pregnancy.

Luthi was undergoing surgery, earlier that expected but the doctor had to do it as he feared more complications. I couldn’t even wait with my parents because my mother lost it every time she laid her eyes on me. She couldn’t

stop telling me how childish I have been and all because of a woman. She would never forgive me if anything happened to her baby.

Gwen left after Zizo's parents' arrival. She had looked exhausted and I had called Walter to take her home before she dropped on her feet. I felt her absence immediately after she'd gone. I couldn't escape the daggers I got from Zizo's mother. I felt like I was navigating through a mine field in that hospital.

Zizo's doctors finished with her first and by the look on their faces when they walked towards us, it wasn't good news. They tried to break the news as gentle as they could. She had lost the baby and it was too late to do anything. They informed us that they had been struggling to control her blood pressure which had shot up when she heard the news. However, at that moment she was stable and ready to see a few visitors at the time. Of course, the parents went in first and I remained in the waiting room. I called my father to tell him the news and to inquire about Luthi. They were still waiting with no news yet; I could hear the pain in his tone and realised that the loss of the baby must also hurt for them. I mean

regardless of who the father is, to them it was their grandchild they lost. Could this day get any worse? I asked myself as I stood and watched the traffic through the hospital tall windows.

Butterfly 27

Zizo

My life feels like I've boarded a runaway train destined to crash into oblivion. Since I had opened my eyes earlier to find myself inside an ambulance with Ms stuck up and the asshole that has been a bane of my existence since this whole ordeal began. I honestly don't know how to feel. I had barely processed the news that I was pregnant and now I am lying in this hospital bed with the hospital staff looking down on me pitifully. They've been speaking in hushed tones for a while and I haven't really paid attention to what they've been saying.

The white doctor, a young one, he looks like a trainee really, clears his throat and my gaze meets his. "Ms Mabanga, I am sorry but I have bad news." I don't want

any bullshit; I'd appreciate it if he would get to the point. I look at him pointedly and he shifts from one foot to the other. Goodness! This will take the whole day. He looks back at me and begins his speech. "You lost one of the babies. It was already too late by the time you arrived, there was nothing we could do. I hope —.

"What do you mean one of the babies?" his gaze darts back and forth between me and the nurse that's standing still next to him as if she is afraid to breathe. She shrugs her shoulders as if to say, 'it's your show you get paid the big bucks.' The doctor's gaze returns to me.

"Well you were pregnant with twins, I thought you knew, I apologise." Twins! What the hell! Is the universe conspiring against me?

"I only found out I was pregnant last night doctor, so no, I didn't know."

"I am sorry for your loss. I will be keeping you here for a few days to monitor you. Your blood pressure is a little

worrying. We need to get that under control.” What ever else he says afterwards I don’t hear or my mind refuses to register. I keep my gaze strained on the window, from my lying position I don’t see anything but the blue sky and the occasional birds that fly by. If only I could have their freedom to just fly away.

“You have anxious people waiting to see you. Should we let them in?” the nurse speaks. The doctor is already on his way to the door. Then a thought strikes me.

“Wait!” My sharp voice even startles him. He freezes on his track with hand hovering above the door handle. He slowly turns to look at me his disposition nervous.

“Yes, are you okay.” I drag my body and sit up leaning against the huge pillow behind me.

“It’s not that. I don’t want anyone knowing about the surviving baby. Would you please tell who ever is out there that I lost the baby?” His eyes widen and I can see he is about to deny my request. “It’s not your place to

tell anyone I'm not prepared to tell. All I'm asking is for you to only tell them about the lost twin."

"You want me to lie to your family?" he can't control the bewildered look on his face. Self righteous prick out here judging me.

"Not lie, omit. "I look at him pointedly. I'm not sure why he thinks this is a negotiation.

"I .. I... I don't understand." He is flustered.

"Doctor, you don't need to understand anything. Use the patient doctor confidentiality if you have to!" my tone is hard and my eyes unwavering. He nods his head and walks out. I take a huge sigh and lean my head backwards. They both quietly leave the only sound I hear is the click of the door closing.

A few seconds later, I hear a soft knock and then the door opens revealing my parents. Their ashen faces gives me a pang of guilt, but this must be done. I can't let them

in on the secret. Not yet anyway. I don't have the energy to argue my logic. My mother immediately bundles me in her arms and rocks me back and forth as if I am a baby. It feels good to be in her arms and I soak in her comfort. It's a while before she pushes me back and hands me over to my father who holds me even tighter. I can't help but let the tears fall as I hear him sob against my throat. When he pushes away his eyes are filled with tears. My mother hands him a handkerchief.

"How are you feeling baby?" my mother asks while my father composes himself. She has taken a seat next to me on the bed while my father sits on the chair next to the bed.

"I'm okay mama." I try to smile but I don't quite pull it off and I can see by the sad look she gives me that she has seen through my tattered wall. She takes my hand and clasps it between hers.

"Baby, this is no time for you to play the strong card. It's okay to be vulnerable, to fall apart, we are here for you.

You just suffered and a great loss my baby. You don't have to be strong or put up a strong face for us." Her eyes are willing me to believe her words, to absorb them.

"I don't think I have processed it yet mama. I only found out I was pregnant only last night and then this happens." She nods encouraging me to speak and I try and explain my state of mind. An up hill battle as I haven't even figured it out myself. They ask questions of what happened, I try and tell them omitting certain parts because I don't think they would take the news of the brithers fighting over me well. They don't have to know all that. After a long while they leave promising to return with my overnight bag in the evening. I breath a sigh of relief when the door closes behind them and I'm only left with my thoughts.

What am I going to do? I don't have a plan. Is should've but here I am curled into a ball in a hospital bed with no way forward but to protect me my secret. Why should I have a plan? Children were never on my periphery even in my dreams. But there is a small voice that keeps reminding me of my sex escapades. The devil's advocate

I tell you. I feel myself dozing off when another knock disrupts my anticipated oblivion.

The person on the other side doesn't wait for my response as they open the door and let themselves in. It's Sakhi and he looks worse than I feel.

I keep my gaze on him as he walks across the room and takes the seat my father had just vacated only a few minutes ago.

"Hi." He says finally meeting my gaze.

"Hello" I respond and then it is followed by silence for a few seconds. He leans forward and balances his elbows on his thigh bringing him closer to me.

"How are you feeling." His gravel tone cuts through me and I feel my mask slipping.

“I’m okay. Considering.” I let that hang. He vigorously rubs his hair a movement I’ve come to know as a sign of frustration.

“I’m sorry Zizomila.” He looks up and his eyes have turned blood shot red. “I am truly sorry. I never meant for any hard to come to you or the baby.” His imploring me with his eyes to believe him, maybe to forgive him. I don’t know how I feel. About any of this, I feel numb but I feel the need to offer him some comfort.

“It’s not your fault. None of us saw this one coming.” I shrug.

“I didn’t need to involve you with my family after Luthi fell ill. I feel responsible for all of this.” The pain and helplessness reflecting in his eyes, gives me a moment to pause. I sit up and take his hand and squeeze reassuringly.

“We all had our part to play Sakhi. It is no one’s fault. Shit just happened. We need to move on from this. I

appreciate you coming here and saying all that even though it is unnecessary.” He nods his head and I let go of his hand. He sits up and leans back on the chair. “How is Luthi?” I finally ask what I’ve been dreading to since this nightmare began. I can feel my heartbeat picking up as anticipation builds and I feel cold finger curling in the pit of my stomach. He rubs his face with one hand.

“He went into surgery a few hours ago. It has been touch and go but we are hopeful.” The fingers turn into a fist as it claws away at my insides taking residency. The numbness gives way to terrible fear that crashes into me unexpectedly. I feel my whole body shaking. “Are you okay? You look deathly pale! Should I call the doctor?” He is already on his feet, pressing the button above me before I can even object.

“I am a little tired that’s all. A lot has happened.” He remains standing looking anxiously as the nurse from earlier walks in. She checks on me and then tells us that I need to rest. They are worried about my blood pressure which is unstable for the moment. Sakhi has no choice but to leave after that promising to return later as well.

I can't help the guilt I feel as watch him walk out. But what choice do I have? At this moment I'm not even sure about the paternity of this baby. I cannot bring that uncertainty in their lives especially with Luthi's life hanging in the balance. What do I even do with this pregnancy? I am prochoice and right now I need to make a choice for myself. Do I keep the baby and become a mother that I never thought I would become, or do I terminate? I don't think I can make any decisions that big right now.

"Sorry sister," I call after the nurse just before she opens the door to leave. She turns and gives a smile.

"The patient I came with, do you know where he is admitted?"

"He is second floor, ICU. Is he the father?" I give her a sharp look? What business is it of hers? "I'm sorry sisi, not my place to ask." She smiles apologetically. She has just saved herself from my scalding response .

“Would it be possible to go see him?”

“Not today, maybe tomorrow. It also depends on how he is?” I nod my head and look away dismissing her.

Butterfly 28

Sakhi

I needed the rollercoaster that I was strapped in to eventually stop. At that particular moment though it felt like an unending, terrifying ride of my life. Zizomila had lost her baby and Luthi was fighting for his life in surgery. My mother kept throwing daggers at me every time she came in contact with me. The twenty four hours that had passed had felt like a life time of torture.

I had some time to myself in the waiting room as my father had decided to take my mother home. She needed the rest. She had looked so fragile we feared that she would collapse at any moment. I welcomed the reprieve

from her absence. I love my mother but when she lays on the guilt she doesn't spare any prisoners. I wanted to tell her she didn't need to rub it in, I already felt like the biggest loser ever lived. My father had also asked me earlier to go home and change but I didn't want to leave the hospital without getting any positive news on my brother.

So, I parked on the uncomfortable couches, turning this way and that trying to get a comfortable spot until my body adjusted to the hardness. They were clearly not made for permanent usage only for the brief visit that we were allowed to have. I paid a lot of money in that hospital so I deserved the lee way they afforded my family. I was also grateful for Gwen, even though she was upset with me when she left the hospital, she still checked up on me, throughout the day all the way though the evening. The messages meant a lot to me. It gave me a tiny bit of hope that maybe things could still work out between us.

I was woken up by a commotion in the hallway and when I checked my watch it was already six in the morning. I

must have fallen asleep on the hard couches. It seemed to be a change of shift and a few nurses went through to Luthi's room. I needed to stretch my legs as my whole body was complaining for being folded for half the night. Once I returned from the bathroom, I bumped into one of the nurses and she informed me that my brother was awake.

Since I was the only person around, I decided to be the one to go in. when I pushed the door open I found him with less tubes connected to him and he had only what seemed like a drip attached on his left hand. He had a bandage around his head a stark contrast to his dark skin. He had his eyes closed while I softly shut the door behind me and tentatively moved towards him. Once he sensed movement in the room his eyes fluttered opened. I couldn't read the expression on his face as I sat on the chair next to his bed.

"Hey Thithi, you gave us quiet a scare. How are you feeling?" he kept his stare on me and made me uncomfortable. Did he get his memory back? I had forgotten to ask the nurse.

“How is Zizo?” he asked in his scratchy tone and immediately began to cough. I got him the glass of ice water on the bedside table and assisted him to drink a sip. I immediately regretted coming to see him without consulting with his doctor. How much did he know and what was I suppose to say about the baby? For once in my life I was unsure and second guessing myself. I didn’t recognise the person I had become to be honest. What did I say to him?

“Uh... she is also admitted here. The doctor said they were keeping her for monitoring.”

“What happened?” he frowned and then I saw him flinch.

“Are you in pain?”

“Yeah, it feels like I have been flattened by a truck, repeatedly. He nurse says its normal after the surgery I

underwent. She also told me that the pain meds she has just refilled should kick in any moment.’ He said slowly relaxing his shoulders on the fluffy pillow behind him. I could see that he was slowly dozing off and I was grateful for the moment of reprieve.

“Then you need to rest, I’ll be here when you get up. I’m sure the folks will be back too by then, they’ve been here until midnight and I had to send them home to rest.”

“You also need to go home, you look like shit!” he tried to chuckle but it came out as a strangled moan.

“You should see yourself.” I chuckled then remained in silence for a few seconds. Just when I thought he had dozed off, he spoke words that had my heart constricting.

“I’m sorry Sakhile. I didn’t know she was your girl. Had I known I wouldn’t have overstep the boundaries. Will you ever forgive me?” his eyes were closed as he dragged

those words out. So he remembers , I thought. Did he remember everything?

“I know, bro. I know.” What else could I say? After a few moments of silence I checked on him and his deep and even breathing let me know that he was asleep. I sat for a while and watched him and eventually went in search of his doctor. I found him in his consulting rooms and he made the time to see me. He told me that the operation was a success and that the threatening cloth had been removed. He also believed that Luthi had recovered his memory but warned that it might come back in stages not all at once, and if it came all at once, it might be confusing for him. He warned me against giving him any stressful news until he was fully recovered.

I went out of his rooms with renewed hope and full of gratitude. I immediately called my parents to share the good news and was happy to find out that they were already entering the hospital building. My mother greeted me with a big hug and a smile a contrast of the previous night.

I updated them on what the doctor said and their relief was palpable. They still insisted that I go home but I refused. I needed to be around when Luthi woke again and also Zizo was still in the hospital and I was interested in how she was doing. I didn't think I would get any word about her health from her parents. Hell, she'll probably never speak to me again after this ordeal.

My parents dragged me to the restaurant situated on the lower floor of the hospital. They said if I couldn't go home then at least I needed sustenance. Breakfast was a light affair with mother mostly talking about the plans she had for Luthi's recovery.

Once breakfast was over we moved back to the waiting area and found that Luthi had been moved to the recovery ward. Which was a good thing. We were directed to the room and went straight to it. We all went in and found him away watching TV that was playing sports attached high on the wall. He tried to smile when he saw us walking in but I could see there was still a bit of pain that he felt. My mother had no qualms about

throwing herself at him squeezing him until he yelped in pain. Only then did she let go. My father was no better.

Once they were satisfied of his comfort they pulled chairs and they sat surrounding him while I leaned against the wall. I couldn't sit, I was anxious and my body stiff from fatigue. My mind though was wide awake with whirling thoughts of uncertainty.

We chatted until we could see Luthi was getting sleepy and we decided to let him rest promising to return. None of us broached the subject of the baby, we seemed to be walking around eggshells on the matter. I wanted him to bring it up first, but I suppose he wasn't going to, so someone had to tell him what really happened, if he still didn't remember.

I decided to go home for a quick shower and a change of clothes and planned to return to the hospital. I first had to call the office as I walked out of the hospital building, to brief them of my indefinite absence and delegate what I could. As I went into my car I thought of calling Gwen, but decided against it. Poor woman had been dragged enough into my mess I didn't want to make it any worse

for her. But I missed her soft voice and calm spirit. I knew she would be able to put my edgy spirit at ease

I got home showered and changed. Just as I was about to leave the house my phone rang and Gwen's name flashed on the screen. My heartbeat accelerated and I couldn't help the smile that crept in.

"Hi." I was sure she could hear my smile even over the phone.

"Hey." Her soft voice came through. Followed by a few seconds of silence "How is your brother?"

"He is good since he's been out of surgery. Still in pain but he'll live." I walked out into my balcony and leaned against the rails, feeling the cool air hit my face was refreshing.

"And you, how are you?" I felt warmth spread throughout my body as her soft tone covered me like a

warm blanket. She asked how I was every time she called, like she was genuinely interested. I love my family and all and I wouldn't trade them for anything but I haven't had that 'how are you', you know. The one that made you feel like everything should stop pending the answer to that question.

"I'm okay." My automatic response. I couldn't afford not to be.

"Sakhi, really, the truth." I let out a huge sigh and sat on one of the chairs on the balcony. Then I told her. I told her how exhausted I was not just physically but emotionally. I told her how happy and relieved that my brother was okay, but also couldn't face him as he apologised knowing the role I played in the whole situation. I told her how I felt like an ass for holding Zizo responsible for something none of us had control over. For letting my anger and hurt cloud my judgment. The betrayal that I felt but couldn't really assign it to anyone in particular. I told her how I was pained and grieving the lost baby. The possibility that it could've been mine hurt to the core. I spilled it all and she

listened. Even in the silence, I knew she was on the other side attentively listening. When I was done telling her, I immediately felt lighter.

“Do you want me to come over?”

“I would love that but I have to go back to the hospital.” I felt the regret at turning her down but I really needed to go back to the hospital.

“Okay, drive safely, I’ll speak to you later.”

“Gwen,” I called out before she hung up. “Thank you for everything you’ve done.”

“You deserve it and more.” She hung up and I was left with a stupid smile on my face while I watched the screen as if she would magically appear.

I arrived at the hospital and first went to check on Zizo. I found her sleeping and I didn’t want to disturb her so I

left and went to check on Luthi. Kamo walked out just as I was about to enter his room. She seemed upset and didn't stick around for me to ask if she was okay. She only wildly shook her head and waived me away.

"What is that all about?" I asked Luthi immediately when I walked in. He was sitting up on his bed supporting his back on the pillows behind him. He looked better than before.

"I just broke things off with her man. It was long overdue, even before I got sick." He rubbed his hand over his face.

"Oh. She didn't take it well huh?"

"She is still hurt over Zizo and I, but I guess she was hopeful that when I regained my memory we would sort things out."

"Have you gained all your memory?" I tentatively asked. He let out a huge sigh.

“I think most of it. The moment I woke up memories of that day you discovered us came crashing into me. I'm really sorry for hurting you Sakhi.” His eyes were brimming with tears and I couldn't have him stress over that. He didn't know. No one knew.

“It wasn't your fault. No one's really just some shitty fate.”

“And the baby?” he was as afraid of an answer as I had been of telling him. I could hear it in shaky tone. It was my turn to sigh.

“I'm sorry man, she lost the baby.” His face turned pale and I worried for him.

“Zizo? How is she?” the question came out urgently.

“She is fine, considering” I sounded stupid quoting her exact words but they seemed appropriate. “She is still in recovery, she’ll probably be released in a day or two.”

“How are things with you two?”

“I’m not sure. We were at least civil towards each other the last time we spoke.”

“I don’t mean like that, are you still in love with her?”

“What has that got to do with anything? Even if I were. She never loved me.” I shrugged my shoulders and relaxed back on the chair. I was suddenly feeling sleepy and Luthi didn’t say anything afterwards.

Butterfly 29

Zizo

It is the 3rd day in hospital. My blood pressure is stable and has been for the past 48 hours. Last night my doctor promised me that he would release me today if nothing changes. I have been itching to go see Luthi, however I haven't found the courage to go, even though Sakhi told me that he knew about the baby. He still has physical therapy to help him adjust after the surgery. I have been hoping that he would come and see me himself but I suppose I must bite the bullet and go see him first.

Right on time the doctor comes in followed by another doctor who is introduced as a gynaecologist that I had requested. I need answers and he is the best person to tell me. I would have preferred my own by she is out of town on holiday and I can't wait that long. I need to know if I can do a DNA test before the baby is born.

The Gynae informs me that a non-invasive prenatal testing can be done. It only requires a blood sample from me and a swab from the possible father. I feel this is the best way to go however the doctor that has been attending to me clears his throat, looking at me as if he is constipated. His nervous disposition annoys me and makes me doubt his capabilities. He has been like this

the entire time he has consulted with me. Don't doctors have to exude some sort of authority and confidence? I even battle to take him seriously.

"Well," he clears his throat and a glow of red spreads from under his shirt into his face with his ears turning pinker. "There is a high possibility of stress in the process, if you do decide to take this route. You lost the other baby due to high level of stress and we battled for a while to stabilise you." He looks to the other doctor as if to ask for backup

"What are you saying doctor," I can't hide the irritation from my tone.

"If there is a possibility of tension arising from one of the possible fathers not being the father, this could cause a relapse and you might lose the baby." He doesn't sugar-coat and holds my gaze without wavering. I place my hand in my abdomen as if to shield him or her from such fate. This gives me a moment to pause. I think about Luthi and Sakhi and how they have behaved lately, especially Sakhi. I've always known him as calm and logical man but lately he has proven me otherwise. I

can't lose this baby. I'm already getting feelings I never thought I would associate with having a baby. Warm feelings.

"What do you think doctor?" I address the Gynae.

"From the procedural point of view, it's safe to do it but if there is a possibility of stress arising from these results I'd advise you to wait as well at least until the baby is born." He looks at me pointedly. He is older and I find that I trust him better than the GP, his confidence is soothing.

"Very well. I'll wait until the baby is born."

"Do you have a personal gynaecologist? You need to visit one as soon as possible to start antenatal care." I realise then that I haven't gotten a clue as to what I'm doing. It had never occurred to me that I would be pregnant as a result I know nothing about babies, even less about pregnancy. The babies I've been around with are my brother's and Pearl's, even then I was the aunt who

always brought gifts and things, never actually involved, only smiling from a distance. I frown at the doctor my confusion evident. "You and the baby growing inside of you need to be closely monitored and there are vitamins you need to take." His eyes softens when he sees my confusion and briefly explains a few things. So this is going to become a thing and practically consume my life. I need to study up on it real quick.

"I never thought I would have kids. No medical reasons but just a choice." I quickly explain seeing that his interest is piqued and he was just about to declare me a medical miracle. After answering a few of my questions, they leave. I still have more questions but the doctors won't have answers to that. What I've decided on though will sound selfish but I am going to be selfish for a while. I have been strong armed into putting others people's feeling first succumbing to their demands and that is so out of character for me. Well no more. I am going to have this baby, and then I'll deal with the Gabada family. Right now I need space from them, all of them. The image of a scowling Sakhi and sneering mother flashes in my head and I shudder. Yep, definitely need to be far away from them.

I walk with a new resolve towards Luthi's room which a nurse directed me to. His ward is more private than mine, for one he doesn't seem to be sharing whereas mine is meant to be shared with four people. Okay I was the only one in but had they had more patients I would have had to share. The rooms are spacious though and beds comfortable with the thick curtain providing some sort of privacy when needed.

I softly knock on his door suddenly feeling nervous. I turn the knob and push the door open and his bed is empty and made. Just as I'm about to turn back he walks out of the other door which I assume is the ensuite bathroom with only a towel wrapped riding low on his waist. He is still wet from a possibility bath or shower. I would say bath because his bandage around his head is still dry. But my goodness he looks yummy. I notice how slowly he walks though and I can see that he is still recovering.

"Are you even allowed to bath on your own?" I say bursting through without even him allowing me to come in. I briskly walk towards him and hold his arm helping

him to the bed. He takes a huge sigh as he rests against the headboard made of steel cushioned by fluffy pillows.

“Hey mami. I thought I could do it on my own. In hindsight, I regret not taking the nurse's offer to help me.” He winks. Then he quickly turns serious and holds out his hand to me. His penetrating gaze makes me nervous and I feel a twinge of guilt as I take his outstretched hand. He tugs me towards him and I have no choice but to sit next to him. “I have been meaning to come see you but I haven’t been allowed as much as feeding myself. I called you but your phone went on voicemail.”

“Oh yeah, my phone is off. Didn’t even bring it to the hospital.” I say feeling the warmth of his hand seeping through me.

“I’m sorry mami” the hurt in his tone gives shivers and I flick my gaze to his. I can’t stand the look in his eyes. I see all of his heart and sorrow swimming in there and the unshed tears brimming in his eyes threaten to unleash

mine. Then the lone tear escape his one eye. He furiously wipes it off but that opens the torrent as more tears start to flow. My own eyes begin to sting and I feel a clot clogging my throat. He tugs me to him and wraps his arms tightly around me and the whole damn breaks. I sob against his his neck as I feel mine getting soaked from his silent tears. I cry for the baby I lost, I cry for him and what he has been through, I cry for what I'm about to do to him and his brother. I also cry for my unknown future looming in the periphery. We eventually pull apart and he takes a tissue next to the bed and begins to wipe my face. "I'm truly sorry for what you went through. How are you feeling?" he asks after we've composed ourselves. My hand is still clasped in his.

"I'm okay considering." His eyes widen. "I need time to adjust Luthi. I'm not sure how to feel yet." He seems satisfied by that.

"I remember." My whole body heats up and I meet his scorching gaze.

“What do you remember?” my tone comes out huskier.

“Everything.” He breathes and I get shivers down my spine.

“I’m sorry.” I say

“For what?”

“For deceiving you.” I can’t escape his dark gaze.

“Do you regret being with me?” I can’t help but blink at his question. Do I regret?

“No.” His eyes soften and I can see a hint of a smile.

“However, I do regret the hurt it has caused especially with your brother.” A cloud crosses over his face.

“ I do too, especially how he found out. It was brutal.”
We sit in silence for a while. I’m not willing to go and he

doesn't seem to be willing to let me go either. But I know I must go eventually and be gone for good. "come here," he tugs at my hand patting the space beside him. I climb on the bed and sit next to him and he pulls me against him while I rest my head on his shoulder. "I don't regret what happened between us mami. Even though it came with a lot of hurt for my brother, I don't." He declares vehemently. I don't regret it either. It wasn't my intention to hurt Sakhi but what happened with Luthi was pure pleasure and maybe more.

"Me too." He curls his finger under my chin, turns my head towards him then tilts my head upwards. His intense gaze gives me goose bumps as he lowers his head towards mine. I can't escape him. The tip of my tongue snake out to moisten my suddenly dry lips and he groans and descends on my lips like a man possessed. We both fully turn towards each other, our body flushed together as his tongue parts my lips and I gladly allow him entrance. He angles my head so that he can delve deeper and I can't hear anything but the drum of my heart beat. The door suddenly opens and we both pull apart to look up. Our chests are heaving and our breathing uneven. Sakhi stands by the door with a blank look on his face.

Too blank considering what he has just walked in on. I scramble off the bed and Luthi places a pillow on his lap.

“Hey Thithi, Zizo, I knocked. I’ll go and come back later.” He turns to leave.

“Don’t leave on my account. I was about to leave too.” I say breathlessly. His brow lifts and I feel a blush creeping in. What the fuck! “I have to go.” I feel a vice grip on my wrist keeping me still. I look down in desperation my eyes begging Luthi to let me go.

“We need to talk, all three of us.” He says pointedly looking at me then Sakhi.

“I don’t think there is anything we need to talk about.” Sakhi says with irritation.

“That tone there bro is a clear indication that we have to talk. Please.” I sigh and look at Sakhi for direction. He shrugs his shoulder and leans against the wall with his

hands folded on his chest. I can see tight lines around his eyes and he is gritting his jaw. The only indication that he wants to be anywhere else but here. Luthi tugs at my arm until my ass is uncomfortable perched on the bed next to him.

“I asked you yesterday if you were still in love with Zizo, Sakhi and you gave me a vague answer. If we are to come out of this intact, we need to be honest. What happened, happened and it was no one’s fault but now feelings are involved. No matter what they are. Are you two still in love with each other?” Wait what? In love? Where the hell did that come from. Sakhi opens his mouth to say something but I cut him off.

“I was never in love with Sakhi.” It comes out sharper than I intended. “Look, we haven’t spoken about this before,” I direct to Luthi. “But then there was no proper time to. When I slept with you, I had already broken things off with Sakhi.”

“Yeah, over the phone and just a week before but ja. I know pretty well that Zizomila doesn’t love me and I don’t need to hear it again. I’m not daft. I get it.” My skin prickles with irritation at his tone. The mean Sakhi is brutal and he has a way of getting under my skin.

“But Sakhi, I never promised you anything. Why do you make it sounds like I betrayed you or something?” he puts his hands on his face and drags them through his hair.

“I know Zizo,” he sighs. “Just because you didn’t feel anything for me doesn’t mean I didn’t. I’m sorry for hurting you. Honestly my hurt is my fault and I intend to deal with it on my own. I’m not holding a grudge towards you just self-loathing. I should’ve known better that to pursue unrequited love.” He grimaces scratching his head. His poor hair goes through the most. “Look Luthi, is this an uncomfortable situation seeing you together? Yes, but I’m a big guy I can handle it and I won’t stand in your way. I promise. You don’t need blessing but you have it anyway.”

“Are you sure bro, because I intend to pursue her if she will allow me.” His hand tightens on mine. Sakhi smiles.

“Good luck with that.” He walks towards us gives his brother a hug and then a kiss on my forehead. Then he walks towards the door then he turns holding the door knob. “I came to tell you that you won’t see me for a few days, I have a conference I can’t get out of. Mom and Dad will be here though, everyday. I’m a phone call away.”

“Okay. Travel safely.” Luthi responds

“I love you Thithi. I’m so happy you are well.” His voice break.

“I love you too.” Luthi responds also choking a bit. Then Sakhi is gone.

“I feel like I keep hurting him.” He says after a few seconds. I don’t want to be the cause of any riff between them. I turn to him and before I speak, he beats me to it.

“I love you Zizo. I know we didn’t begin our relationship the conventional way. Hell, it was all sex of me and being able to conquer an older woman. But the woman that I have gotten to know especially in the past weeks, is the bomb digidy.” He smiles making him look younger than he is. “I was impressed and turned on by the boss lady but what we’ve shared recently is mind blowing. I want to explore it more.” I place my hand against his lips to stop him. His words are messing with my mind.

“Luthi, we can’t,” he opens his mouth again. “Let me speak. I don’t deny that we had a great time but it was just sex Luthi. Albeit the greatest sex of my life but still just that. You are so young and as you grow older, you’ll know the difference.” His face hardens as pain flash in his eyes. “I mean, I’m almost 10 years older than you, nothing can come from this. Well except good sex.” My stomach clenches and I harden my softening heart. Nothing good can come out of this. He is way too young

to even know what he wants. I'm sure he is just excited by the conquest who knows. Can you imagine the backlash from his family? Apart from that, I don't do relationships that have to be labelled. I also have a lot a stake than an orgasm. I pull out of his grasp and he doesn't fight me.

"So you were only happy to screw with a boy toy and nothing else." His eyes are begging me to say otherwise.

"Come on Luthi, you are a player yourself you should know that good sex means nothing." I shrug my shoulders. He grins but his eyes don't match.

"Yeah, great sex will do that to you. Confuse the shit out of you. So why do we need to stop? The good sex I mean "

"Rule no one of fuck buddies, never get emotional. You broke the rule so it can't work anymore. Frankly I'm bored by this whole conversation." His jaw drops " I need

a more mature fuck buddy. No messy feelings involved.” I say while getting up. Anger burns in his eyes.

“You are a cold bitch Zizo. You didn’t deserve my brother and you sure as hell don’t deserve me.” I shake my ass towards the door.

“You see, that’s a childish answer right there.” I look back at him one last time. His face is contorted in pain and I see tears in his eyes. My heart clenches. “ Bye Luthi, you’ll do well with women you age.” I give him a wink and close the door with a resounding thud. Seconds later I hear a loud groan and a sound of a shattering glass. I lean against the door and summon the strength to walk away. It’s the right thing to do.

Butterfly 30

A year later

Sakhi

I could hear the music from my bedroom, probably the entire estate could as well even though we were far apart from each other. Luthi just had no sense of decorum. I hurriedly took all that I needed and headed to the car. He was driving and I had earlier asked him to take the Jeep to the car wash to be ready for our camping trip. Just one of the things we've been doing together for the past year to rebuild our relationship. It had been a favour for our parents at first, who had insisted that we go on a weekend get away just the two of us, to resolve things. From that trip we made a pact that we would never let anything come between us again. We also realised that we still had a lot of things in common and didn't have a lot of friends to do them with, there began our monthly activities. Heck, I don't have friends period. Luthi's friends seemed to have drifted apart.

“Could you turn the music down!” I had to scream as soon as I got in the car. He smiled apologetically and turned it down a little. “Love on the brain? Really!” I was perplexed.

“That’s how I feel man.” He responded reversing into the driveway and driving out of the estate. I fought the urge to roll my eyes. I couldn’t fault him for his tenacity. I had been where he was, the yearning and the constant reminder in your heart of what you lost. I could have told him for free when he had cleared it with me that he wanted to pursue Zizomila. That journey wasn’t for the faint hearted.

“Still no word?” I asked fastening my seat belt.

“It’s like she disappeared from the face of the earth or something. The private investigators came up empty handed had to let them go because I was paying them but no results.” It was strange that someone could just disappear like that.

“She must have had help. Or she doesn’t want to be found. You gotta move on man.” I watched him as he navigated the Friday afternoon traffic with an intense look on his face. He was in serious need of a shave and a cut but he didn’t seem to care. But I did care, he had

recently become the head of IT in my company and he needed to set an example for his subordinates. It's not nepotism, it's a family business. That's what I told the board of directors when they began to grumble about such a jump. He didn't need a lot of experience and he was qualified for the job.

"I can't seem to get her out of my system. I've tried to date but nothing ever works out. It's just not the same." He had it worse than I did.

"What I don't understand is that, she is still in charge of her business. That means wherever she is, she is able to run it and in contact with some of her employees. But they are all mum about her whereabouts. I've never seen such loyalty."

"Don't tell me you tried to bribe them!"

"Had to do what I needed to do, it was only her PA though and the other lady that hired me" I could help but let out a loud groan.

“Luthi! Honestly, you can’t do things like that. You represent the company now.”

“Chill, it was before I joined.” I wasn’t going to win that argument so I let him vent about his feelings for Zizo and how he missed her. She must have some sort of spell for the Gabada brood. In all honesty I faired better than my brother. He was a lost cause. I must admit, at first I was a little uncomfortable with the idea of them being together. I silently celebrated when he initially couldn’t find her and thought maybe be we could still work things out with her. However, as months flew by with no word from her I started weaning her out of my system especially when her parents reassured us the one time we went to beg about her whereabouts, that she was fine but refused to tell us where she was. I even began to date different people, although that hasn’t been working out well. I realise that now people see me and thing jackpot and good life. No substance whatsoever.

We arrived at our campsite signed in, offloaded the car and began setting up camp. We had a hike planned for

the following day and I was looking forward to that. Switching off from the business world and just being one with nature, okay and my talkative brother.

“So what’s happening with you? Dating anyone yet?” he asked me as we sat on our camp chairs next to the slowly dying fire.

“I don’t have time to date Luthi. I have a business to run.” I could feel his gaze on me but I refused to acknowledge it.

“That’s a cop out and you know it. What happened to that gorgeous lady you were seeing last year? She seemed nice.” Ah Gwen. Gorgeous is an understatement.

“We are just friends.” He spluttered his coffee and looked at me like I and grown a horn.

“You are kidding right?”

“Nope. Strictly friends. Her decision not mine.” He sat back in his chair shaking his head.

“And you just let her be.” Not exactly.

“That’s her wish Luthi. I’m not about to repeat the Zizo episode with this woman.” Well that wasn’t really the truth. I remained friends with Gwen , yes. A friend who occasionally took her out on dates and bought her flowers from time to time.

“What exactly is her issue with you. You are a catch and any woman would be lucky to be with you?” I shrugged my shoulders. Not all women evidently.

“At first she thought I wasn’t over Zizo and she didn’t want to be a second fiddle. I tried to tell her I was over that, as you can see, I failed to convince her. Also she says I’m way out of her league. That we come from different backgrounds and she wouldn’t fit in my world.” It’s a lot of obstructions that she placed in our path but I am a patient man.

“Is there a reason why she’d think you are still in love with Zizo?” He asked his tone cautious.

“No. Neither should you. That ship had sailed little brother. Zizo is a great woman. Anyone would be lucky to have her but I can never get over seeing her with you no matter how much I tried. Then gradually she stopped being the centre of my thoughts. Was relegated to the background noise until I didn’t think about her any more.

“Ai. This love business sucks. Honestly I just need to get laid.” He lets out a loud yawn.

“Why don’t you? You are still young Luthi. Are you going to waste your life pining over what could’ve been?” He snorted

“Look who’s talking, old man. I need to get laid. You need to get laid. Maybe we should hit the club next weekend.”

“Clubs aren’t my scene anymore baby bro. But go ahead and knock yourself out. I got to turn in. I’m exhausted and tomorrow we have a long day. You should too.” I stood and stretched my body then bid him good night. He killed the last remnants of the fire and followed me into the tent.

I lay for a while sleep eluding me, listening to the sounds of the wild, they were soothing and calming to my spirit. In the darkness of night, I thought about Zizo and I thought about Gwen. Seemed like a lifetime ago. I sighed and turned inside the tight sleeping bag, beginning to miss my soft bed. Two different women in my life and yet they touched my life in such a deep way. Maybe Luthi was right. I needed a woman with no strings. Just free easy fun. In his words, get laid. I chuckled as I drifted to sleep.

Zizo

I can hear the cries from deep in my sleep. I want to wake up but I’m exhausted to the bone. Finally my foggy

brain and I can finally get my body to cooperate with it. The cot next to my bed is empty. The cries have subsided but I can still hear her soft moaning. My mother must have taken her. I hate every part of this motherhood crap. I haven't had a decent sleep in months. It was worse the last stages of my pregnancy. I was so big I thought I would combust.

It's funny though that I have lost a lot of weight with all the lack of sleep and multiple nappy changes , I never thought I would come near.

My door slightly opens and my mother tiptoes into the room.

"I'm awake." I say groggily.

"I took Olwam to our bedroom. I'll make her a bottle. Get some sleep my baby." I want to break down and cry right now. How did she know that sleep was all I needed? If I knew I would get my well deserved sleep when I got home, I would've returned sooner.

I left home when I was beginning to show and rented a house in Cape Town under Pearl's sister's name. My parents were against the deception from the beginning. My father even offered to do things officially by sending people over to the Gabada's but I refused. My mind had been made up, I had needed to isolate myself from that family at the time.

Pearl supported my decision a hundred percent and I was grateful to have someone in my corner. The months that followed proved that I needed all the help I could get. It wasn't easy being in hiding because I knew Luthi was searching for me. There were near misses especially when I still worked in my offices but when I moved to Cape Town, I managed to lose his investigators.

Now I am back, with a healthy baby girl and need to do right by her and a her father. Issue now, I have to do the DNA test but I need both their samples to continue. I had hoped to approach them once I knew who the father was.

My eyes flutter open and I realise the sun is already up if the rays filtering through the curtains are anything to go by. I feel well rested though. There is a knock on my door and my mother walks in with a happy looking Wam in her arms making happy sounds. She smiles and opens her arms wide when she sees me. My tummy does the flip it always does every time I look at my miracle baby. The universe has a whack sense of humour though. She looks exactly like Luthi's mother even her complexion. My mother says she has my looks but I know she is trying to make me feel better.

“Morning mommy. Did you sleep well, we certainly did.” Mom speaks in her baby voice and Wam seems to find her funny because she gives her one of her best gummy smile. I open my arms for her and she almost falls from my mom's grip, trying to get to me. I give her a squeeze and bury my head in her hair. She has the longest and thickest hair I know. It's pitch black a stark comparison to her lighter tone. Her big round eyes always remind me of Luthi or Sakhi depending on who comes to mind first. The thought of their name has my tummy clenching and tied in knots and not in a good way.

I'm terrified of their response to the news I'm about to drop on them and I'm not sure if my excuses will even stand. However my first priority is to my baby and I'll do whatever I need to do to protect her.

"Tell me baby, when do you think we should send people over to the Gabada's?" I sigh. I have been expecting this conversation since I arrived a few days ago.

"Mama, can I at least get a month just to adjust home. It's been tough and only now I'm able to get rest. I will need my wits about me when I deal with Sakhi and Luthi."

"Your father wants to do things right. He already feels awkward seeing Sakhile's father at their chess club. You can't keep this to yourself forever. Olwam has a right to know her family too."

“I know mama. She will. I just need a bit of time to have her to myself.” I am being selfish but when the truth finally comes out whoever the father is, there will be a lot of changes. None which I’m ready for.

“Come, I’ve given her a bath and fed her. Go bath and come down for breakfast. I’ll take Wam to her grandfather.”

“Thank you mama. I don’t know what I’d do without you.” And I mean it. Throughout the pregnancy my mom has been by my side, feeding my cravings, rubbing my feet and attending doctors visits with me. I never felt alone throughout the process. She was the one who held my hand through the excruciating labour pains. I’m grateful to have her in my life. Something I have taken for granted for a while but never again.

I soak for a while in the bath. It feels good to actually relax and not have to worry about listening to the baby monitor for her cries. You learn to appreciate the little things I suppose.

My phone rings as I leave the bathroom and when I check the screen, it's Pearl. I changed my numbers months ago and only a few people have my new number.

"Friend, guess who I saw at the mall?" she doesn't even greet.

"I'm sure you'll tell me." I say dropping my towel on the bed and applying lotion.

"Agh, you no fun. You won't even guess."

"Why don't I call you back. I'm about to get dressed."

"It's Sakhi. Okay maybe it might have been Luthi, I can't tell them apart lately."

"Sakhile is older Pearl. I'm sure you could if you looked closely."

“Well I didn’t hang around to get a closer look. Last I spoke to Luthi he was looking for you. I didn’t want to face him again. I don’t think I’ll be able to pull off the lying speech again.”

“You won’t have to much longer friend. I have to bite the bullet soon. Even my father is putting on the pressure.”

“Who do you want the father to be?”

“I can’t think about that my friend.”

I think about Pearl’s question long after she hung up. I never thought about the possible outcome of the DNA tests. I sort of lumped them together under the Gabada name. Never thought which of the brothers I would prefer to co-parent with. I am still not sure and I am happy to wait for the result to reveal my fate. Either way, it’s the same family, no joy will come for me.