



Ever heard of the story behind Zara and his wealth? How easy it came and how it faded just as fast?, you probably did not. No one was brave enough to say

it, or even mention it, his name even - Zara. After being warned about how using Dark magic is never a good idea, 50 years old Zara decided he was never going to let people tell him how to live his life. Laugh now, because the Joke, the joke fell right on top of his head.

The problem is, no one ever got to witness his downfall. He disappeared into thin air, rumours have it that it killed him, you know it. His thing. The one that provided him with wealth, riches, money, cars uh uh and wives. 10 wives and even though he wasn't much of a good worker in the bedroom, the money, the money made up for all of it, Every single unfelt strokes, Fake moan, oh and all the time they had to use fingers after he was done because- he just wasn't reaching ityou know? The spot? The one that makes your toes curl, your eyes face God-knows what and your mind, oh the loss of the bloody damn mind.

Zara had 10 kids, all of them were boys. The girls never, ever, ever lived to see the sun. It was

confusing, crazy and maybe, maybe even Witchcraft. The first son, he got married ,had kids and you guessed it. Never a daughter. It was suspected witchcraft again. don't tell me you believe it, not after I had just narrated the story of Zara. The rich man with low sex game, 10 wives and 10 kids?. It was it, the thing nobody knew about. It was it I tell you.

That is besides the point, amongst those sons there was one, he was different . He was only 7 when it all began, believe me...I never lie, I tell truth. It started as slow as cancer spreading ones body, the changing of eyes,the no smiles or laughter again,rumours began. It was said his father had been using him for his evil deeds.

Don't tell me you actually believe it,Zara loved his kids! All 10 of them equally!. While all the other sons where working,getting married he sat in his house,did nothing and yet was the richest. You may clap your hands in shock.This is unbelievable , it couldn't be true,it was a lie and unrealistic.He did

have a job, a well paying good job at that.It was simple,He kills and he gets paid for it.

Nobody knew about it, but he enjoyed it.

Slaughtering throats ,shooting. He loved the smell of blood and no, he did not drink nor taste it. He is human for heavens sake! And he ,himself did not have control over his own body.

Years and years down the line... He turns 30, and decides the village life is not for him and so he moves .Let me not talk about his mother, how Sad it made her feel. The honest and naked truth is he scared her,too. She was afraid on his behalf. She wished she could grab him,put him in a bottle and hold him,forever. Safe from the World and it's evilness.

One night, When the moon had just took over from the sun. The son woke up,his eyes blood shot red and he looked at his father,straight in his eyes balls and said,"Darkness can never,ever defeat light". He

said it so many times,When he was done Zara could Sing it.

Well the honest truth is , This Zara isn't Zara and he still has never met his fate. This Zara was named Boyabenyathi Bhengu and he lived in the deep deep village of Zambeni in KwaZulu Natal. Like Zara he had 10 sons and 10 wives and unlike the other Zara,he knew his way in bed. He loved all his sons from

Mkhululi,Mnqobi,Mthobisi,Mkhokozisi,Mnotho, Mbongeni, Sonke, Mkhokheli , Makhosonke and Thokozani. and his wives

MaKhumalo,Mankosi,Mamthethwa,MaNdlovu,MaS i khosana, MaSibanyoni , MaSibanyoni Jnr , Madongwe, MaJali and MaNkabinde. The very last wife and they all, lived a pretty much happy life filled with secrets and lies.

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Whenever it is Sunday, Palesa would rather work on her assignment throughout the night,than to miss

church. Pastor Molefe's Summons uplifted her and she would drag her best friend Liyana with, who would sleep throughout the whole service till they are served food.

They were different, very. Palesa was raised in Limpopo in a God Fearing Church going family, she believed she could move mountains and open rivers if she kneeled down and called on the almighty. Liyana on the other hand was raised in Eastern Cape Her grandmother owned a tavern and afterschool she had to help her sell. She was a gogetter kind of girl who would prefer grabbing two bottles of beers instead of going to church.

"Liyana Man," Palesa calls out, not too loud. Slightly pushing her friend who is asleep in the middle of a prayer.

"We are approaching exams, We need this," She whispers and Liyana shoots her eyes open, looks at her friend and closes her eyes again.

"Liyana Tsoga man!," Palesa shouts louder this time and some of the church people open their eyes to see what is going on.

"We have been praying for almost a year, isn't he going to say Amen? Yoh. Awa. Did they even cook? Andilambe! I could literally swallow the sexy pastor right now," She says, her friend palesa hits her with the bible, holding her laughter.

"Amen."

"Amen." The pastor finally says, followed by all the church members.

"Finally, let's go. We need to be on number one this time. Remember we walked slowly last week and We didn't get meat ? It was trauma ,Traumsss," liyana says, already pulling Palesa to the kitchen. Palesa is shaking her head, but her heart knows what it wants and the heart wants the meat. Liyana was right last week could not happen again, They had to get meat this time and maybe even pack some in the

little bowls they always bring so then,they don't have to cook .

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The walk back to their mini-flat is a long and hard one. They have totally killed the food and they laugh proudly at themselves the whole way.

"I was thinking we could have a girls night thing," Palesa suggests after they walked in and threw themselves on the couch.

"Let me guess, and Watch Romantic movies with tissues surrounding us and uhhh, ice cream? Lots and lots of vanilla ice-cream?," Liyana asks.

"Sounds like a good idea," Palesa says, smiling at the thought. "Oh We could watch Romeo and Juliet ," Palesa says and thinks of her own life, Will she ever meet her own Romeo?.

"I'm good with that, i'd pretty much rather watch Fifty shades of grey," Liyana suggests. "But because some of us, have boyfriends I think I will go get

Cocked down," She says, Palesa shakes her head at the thought of it. Argh Sex. She hated it.

"Is that even a word?," She asks getting up and Liyana does the same.

Someone knocks at their door and because Palesa is the doorkeeper she rushes to open.

"Thabang, hi," She greets and creates space for him to walk in. Like always Thabang looks around before settling on the small couch.

"Is Liyana around?," he asks and like the devil she walks in, still eating the meat she got from church.

"Whoever cooked this, so damn good reminds me of my grandmother. Oh Thabiso hi," she greets settling on the table.

"Thabang," Thabang corrects her.

"Argh, it's the same shit, different toilets," she responds and Thabang shakes his head reaching out for the 'special gift' he got for Liyana in his pocket.

"I got you this," he says handing her the Dairy milk chocolate he got her.

"Ohh Thank you sweetie ,that's so sweet of you ," she says and throws it at Palesa who is trying so hard not to laugh at Thabang.

"Have it chom, Zuko is outside ," she says and rushes out after giving Palesa a kiss on the cheek.

"Life ke atchaar ,yo!," Thabang says and grabs the chocolate from Palesa.

"Hao? I was about to eat that"

"She can't see me ne? Do you think I should hit the gym?," he asks , looking at his non-existent muscles.

"I think you should go for you types," she says pulling the chocolate back from Thabang. "You will break before you even lift anything at the gym," she says and laughs at her own joke.

"You are not funny, that's body shaming." Thabang says ,and instead of feeling sorry for her friend

Palesa laughs so loud and hard she feels like she is losing her breath.

Chapter One.

Thabang sleeps over again, like last night and the night before last night, Palesa doesn't mind really. Liyana is never here so she needs the company.

"Thabang," She shakes him.

"It's 12 ,We need to pray,"She says much to Thabang's annoyance . He groans and pulls the blanket over his head.

"I will kick you out if you don't wake up," She says and walks out with Thabang following her.

He is mumbling and groaning when they both kneel down and Palesa puts her hand on the bible.

"Modimo ntate,Modimo Morwa,Modimo moya ohalalelang ," she starts her prayer and Thabang is dead asleep during the whole prayer.

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When Palesa wakes up at exactly 8am , She realises Liyana is still not back home and she shakes her head at her friend's whore ways. Her phone rings, it is old. It is tired,you can tell from the way it is ringing . It has been through a lot and all it wants is to retire but how can it when it receives slaps when it tries acting weird. It is her mother, She Sighs before answering lazingly.

"Gogo," she greets . It's a black thing to call your own parents Gogo and MaPalesa hates it, if she was here she would have thrown a pot over her head.

"Gogo keMmago," she says.

"Good thing you are my mother Mapalesa," She says,and receives laughter from her mother and just like that her day or possibly even her week has been made.

"Are you up?," Her mother asks.

"Ee, I just need to bathI have late classes today."

"Did you pray?"

"Always, before I eat,sleep,bath,cook,walkout,write," Palesa says and her mother laughs. She hasn't seen her one and only daughter in months and it is pure torture !

"You are being cheeky , I have to go prepare...The ladies from church are coming over ," She says,and Palesa sighs in relief at the thought of being far from home right now. The tea making the whole day ,it was big big no.

"don't wash the windows,I know you ," She says and her mother clicks her tongue before wishing her a great day,and reminding her to pray because We need to Invite God in everything we do then bids her goodbye . When she hangs up Palesa gets up and walks out for fresh air, She realises they are moving stuff in the flat opposite hers and prays the neighbour is Mentally stable this time.

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Mnqobi snorts when he sees his little brother Thokozani waiting for him, Leaning on his car, He walks to him .

"Bafo," Thokozani greets , hugging his brother who doesn't hug him back.

"Hm," he simply says and looks at his brother, observing him- He has grown, He says Inwardly. Thokozani smiles, believe it or not Thokozani was the only one closer to Mnqobi.

"Let me help you with that," Thokozani says again taking the luggage from Mnqobi who is looking around and he nods in approval.

When Thokozani is done, He closes the boot and he gets in the driver's seat and Mnqobi settles for the passenger seat, reminding himself to get a car before the week ends.

"How was your trip bafo?," Thokozani asks . Mngqobi turns to look at him, and stays quite for a few minutes.

"Normal ," he responds and because Thokozani is used to his brother he nods. He hits the tip of the steering wheel nervously ,how does he tell him?.

"Eh Bafo, We have to pass by Mkhululi's house," he says and Mngqobi nods. He can handle that,he says to himself ,he has to see him sooner or later anyway. Thokozani sighs in relief driving faster because he has some errands to run.

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The door bell rings and Amanda, Mkhululi's wife rushes to open. Lizole walks in with a bowl in her hands.

"Hi," Amanda greets and Lizole greets back handing her the bowl.

"I made cookies for the brother," she says and Amanda almost chortles nodding .She closes the door.

"The ladies are in there," Amanda says,pointing at the dining room.Lizole moves closer to Amanda.

"Mmamoferefere isn't here right?," she whispers reffering to Mmadibuseng. Amanda shakes her head,according to her Lizole is the real Mamoferefere and she wishes she never came but she keeps her thoughts to herself.

"She is here," she says and walks away with Lizole following behind,explaining how Mthobisi ,her husband couldn't make it because he has been promoted at work.

Amanda walks back to the kitchen to prepare tea for the ladies,Mkhululi walks in and hugs her from behind.

"Mkami," he whispers and a smile curves on her lips.

"Baba," She responds without turning to face him.

His touch is doing things to her and she wishes she could snap her fingers and everyone in the house could disappear so she can have him all to herself .

"I just spoke to Thokozani, They are 5 minutes from here," he says and kisses her neck slowly.

"Uyezwa?," he asks and Amanda nods , Mkhulululi licks her neck and then plants a kiss .

"let's cancel this whole thing and just....make love," Amanda suggests. Mkhululi laughs even though he really wants this, just as much and maybe even more.

"We need to welcome Mnqobi Mkami. You know how I want to build a relationship with him," he says. Amanda sighs and pulls the tray .

"Please let me go," Mkhululi lets her go and she walks to the dining room. Cursing at Mnqobi who did nothing wrong.

When she walks in the lounge, Lizole is still talking about how Mthobisi got promoted at work and how this will change their lives forever. Thando Sibisi, Well Bhengu now is sitted quietly fiddling with her ring. Her body is here but her mind is somewhere far from earth.

Amanda puts the tea on the table .

"here's the tea ladies," she says and Mmadibuseng sighs in relief.

"Yoh,Finally. This whole Promotion thing got me thirsty, entlek I'm bored ," she says and grabs a cup.

"Only because your husband is a taxi driver, Jelouse is a a deadly desease sis," Lizole chirps in.

"Owner," Mmadibuseng corrects her . "Taxi owner ."

Thando grabs the second cup, and Amanda looks at her sadly . Her marriage is on the verge of failing and she just wants to go home and cry.

"Mxm, Fact remains my husband has been promoted!," Lizole says, grabbing the third cup.

Mmadibuseng keeps quite this time, deciding to mind her own business.

"Futhi we shouldn't be calling you a wife, you are just just a sugarmama. Mnotho will leave you," lizole says again.

"Atleast i'd still have arse, unlike someone I know," Mmadibuseng comes to her own defence ,hitting lizole where it hurts the most.

"Ye?," Lizole asks getting up and Mmadibuseng also gets up.

"The last time you stood up in a fight with me you had to go to the dentist. Do you want to put yourself in that position again?," Mmadibuseng asks.

"I was drunk, I'm sober now. I'll hit you so hard you'll start dating your age mates," Amanda gets up furiously .

"Anihlalani phantsi man!," She says. Her voice holds authority. She is the First Bhengu Makoti after all and everyone knows better than to disrespect her.

Mmadibuseng sits back down , followed by an angry Lizole.

"Ke phaphelwa keMxhosa, ngwanyana waJalajala. Never," Mmadibuseng says to herself.

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Thokozani knocks on the door , Mkhululi opens and when Mmqobi walks in after Thokozani . The wives scream "Surprise !!!"

Mmqobi huffs and looks at Thokozani who shrugs his shoulders. He looks at all of them, one by one then back at Mkhululi ,his older brother.

"Bafo," Mkhululi greets and Mmqobi nods at him.

"We thought we should welcome you egoli, properly ," He continues looking at Thokozani for some rescuing . Now that Mmqobi is here staring at him-

The speech he has been practicing the whole week just...disappeared .

"Hm," Mngqobi says.

"let's go drink gorilla, you are scaring people," Thokozani says and Mngqobi grunts, following his brother to wherever he is leading him. When he is out of sight everyone finally breaths out.

"Yo, Jesu. I can never get used to him. Never," Lizole says and everyone except Amanda nods in agreement.

Chapter Two.

'I think it's cancer , The pain in my heart . All the minutes,Hours I have spend trying to breathe. The dreams...What am I saying? It can't be cancer ,it couldn't . TB perhaps . Yes TB,I do cough out blood,Black Blood . God,no no ...Bongcolosi, what is going on?,Am I dying? I'm going to die.what am I talking about ? I can't die. What about My MaNkosi?

' Mngqobi stops reading, cleanching his Jaws then puts away his glass.

His phone rings on the table,The Song by his all time favourite Maskandi Singer Mtshengiseni plays,He takes a quick glance at it then grabs it from the table. He looks at his brother's name on the screen and snorts annoyed before swipping green.

"Bafoza," Thokozani's voice sings out at the other end of the line, He has always been a jolly bird .One would swear he was as innocent as one who can never even kill a fly but Mngqobi Knew better.

"Mmh," He murmurs loud enough for his to hear.

"Woke up in a bad mood huh?," Thokozani asks. "I woke up with a banging headeach ,and getting my cock sucked. Best feeling ever.Not the headache the-"

"Ufunani?," Mngqobi cuts him off,uninterested in how he woke up with a pink penis.

" I thought we could have a housewarming party ...You know to welcome you to Johannesburg,the city of lights. How does it feel like?Watching Television for the first time?," He asks. Mngqobi forces out a chortle.of course they had electricity in KZN and he was very farmilia with Johannesburg. "And you need friends, so Why not a house Warming party? We will make another one when you move to your house next month. I'm coming to fetch your card ,yilungise," He says,and awaits for his brother's response.

"I don't need Friends," Mngqobi says.

"Do"

"don't "

"Do"

Mngqobi huffs and hangs up . He finds the cookies Lizole made for him ,and eats one.It tastes like Shit ,He splits and drinks water before tossing all the cookies with the bowl in the dustbin.Shaking his head. So far Amanda is the only good cooker in this

family and a good dick rider too it appears.

Mmadibuseng does it in her own special way and Lizole, He never heard his brother talk about how Lizole does it or Thando for that matter. Good, He remembers all their names. He takes his phone and calls Thokozani, who answers in the third ring.

"Uze nokudla," He says then hangs up, not caring if he heard him or not.

In a few minutes Thokozani is here, He opens the door without knocking .

"You don't lock your door when you sleep?," He asks.

Mnqobi shakes his head and grabs the plastic from him, walking to the mini kitchen.

"This is not KZN Gorilla, They will -," he stops in the middle of the sentence to think of a word that might frighten him. "Butcher you," he says and Mnqobi shrugs his shoulder.

"I butcher people. People don't butcher me.," Mnqobi says and feels like he said a lot in one

morning or the whole day. He eats the pap and meat he got from Thokozani.

"Where is the card?," Thokozani asks and Mngqobi points at the table, He takes it and walks out.

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Liyana looks at Zuko, before clicking her tongue.

"Do you hear me?," Zuko asks and she rolls her eyes.

"LIYANA," He shouts this time .

"No, it's kind of hard hearing a man with my little brother's voice ...Could you try again?," She says picking up her clothes from the floor. She puts on her clothes.

"Your clothes are even small Zuko. What kind of a man wears size 26?," She clicks her tongue . "Are you taking me home or will you uber me?"

"None. We sit and talk like adults," Zuko says but his words fall onto deaf ears.

"Have it your way then," Liyana says grabbing his wallet and takes out all the money there.

"Heee wena ,Uphambene? This is money for groceries!"

"Kiss your money for groceries goodbye Zuko. We are done, da de di do du. Done. don't call, text , think about me or even dream about me," She says and walks to the door, After she opens the door she chortles in disbelief .

"Little dicked son of a church going whore," she murmurs. Before running out leaving Zuko still putting on his trousers.

"Liyana! Liyana!," Zuko shouts running after her while struggling with the Zip on his trouser. Liyana realises Zuko is running even faster now,What did she expect? . She spots a man sitted alone on the bench right outside the hotel , typing something on his phone. He looks unapproachable but this is the only shot at being Zuko free ,She is pretty sure Zuko will run for his life when he sees this man.

"Sir ! Sir!," She rushes to him, Breathing in and out. Zuko is running even faster,for his grocery money.

The man stares at Liyana,and watches as she breaths in and out.

"I need your help," she says "please," as an after thought.

"Mh," The man says, awaiting an explanation.

"He is my ex, he ...he...he...he wants to hit me!" Liyana says and Zuko arrives just in time.

"No I don't , Uxolo bhuti man. My Girlfriend has a loose screw," Zuko explains, pulling Liyana but Liyana holds on to the stranger's T-shirt.

"He is lying , I don't even know him," She explain.

"I thought you said he is your ex," The stranger says.

"Was , I mean yes..no...I forgot him . I don't know him," She lies.

"Liyana stop being dramatic, Sibadala man."

"I don't know you Zuko man, Leave me alone. It's over," She says yanking her hand off him and hugs the man she met 2 minutes ago.

"I'm with him now. And I love him. Hamba," Zuko stares at her.

"Okay, atleast give me my money ke."

"I think it's best you leave. You heard the lady. She is with me ," Zuko walks closer to him.

"Look at me ,then yourself . You look like a smart kid I'm sure you know how to pick your battles," He says and Zuko moves back ,clicks his tongue and walks to the hotel. Cursing at Liyana.

"Thank you," Liyana says.

"You were lying," the man says . "I can see liars from far and you lied "

"It's good to know that it is your pleasure sir," Liyana says walking away but the man pulls her hand.

"Where do you live? I might offer you a ride." He asks.

"Do I look like I need a ride?," Liyana asks rudily trying to yank his hand away.

"Actually yes, you look and smell like shit. When was the last time you took a bath? ," He asks her . "Are you sure you want to walk all the way to taxi rank in that?," liyana looks at herself. A ride wouldn't hurt right? She shakes her head and the man leads her to his car .

"Where do you live?," He asks.

"In the apartments down newtown."

"Uhhh, I'm actually headed there, and We have a Welcoming thing for my brother....Please do join us?"

Liyana looks away.

"Ngbheke phela, ngiyabukeka," he says again and Liyana laughs. She is so humble she shocks herself.

"Uyeza?," She asks and Liyana nods.

"I don't understand sign language ..." he says.

"Yes ."

"Great, Anyway I am Thokozani but you can call me Sthandwa Sami."

Liyana looks away, all blushy.

"Liyana," He looks at her and Smiles, before bringing the engine to life.

"So Liyana, Do you have a boyfriend?," He asks, taking a short glance at her. She shakes her head then remembers what he said.

"No"

"Well you have one now, His name is Thokozani. Uyezwa Sthandwa sakaThokozani?," Liyana looks away blushing.

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The clock finally hits 7pm , The brothers and their wives just arrived much to Mnqobi's annoyance. Liyana finally managed to convince Palesa to come

with her and she finally agreed only because Thabang would tag along . They knock on the door and Mngqobi opens, staring at them.

"Hi sir," Liyana greets and he nods. Thokozani appears and slightly pushes him away .

"Hey SthandwaSikaThokozani and friends ," He greets and moves from the door creating space for them to walk in.

"Excuse My brother," Thokozani says and turns to look at Mngqobi ."He is not a people's person."

Palesa looks at him, He has this weird aura around him. A dangerous one, Suddently Palesa feels like praying.

"Help yourself with some drinks, Come here," Thokozani says and pulls Liyana and they dissappear to God Knows where.

Palesa and Thabang move to the couch, grabbing glasses of juice on the table. Mngqobi sits on the

opposite couch and stares at Palesa while drinking beer making her feel all sorts of uncomfortable .

"Please God, Help me," She whispers to herself. There's a knock on the door instead of Mngobi getting up .He stares at Palesa still until Thokozani appears again and opens the door.

Mkhokheli walks in after Thokozani ,with a lady nobody knows.

"Eban, Jeso kresto .Mkhokhi Who is this?," Mmadibuseng asks and Mnotho looks at her dissapovingly .

"Yo Mnotho , We have to ask phela. Who is this?," She says ignoring her husband's stares.

"Yo ngeke phela, Tell us. Or should we call Thando...YOUR WIFE?," Lizole Chirps in.

"This is Tebello, Tebello Monyago...My..." She looks back at Tibello and sighs "MY...."

"Cat got your tongue huh?," Lizole asks.

"Ask him," Mmadibuseng also chirps in and for the first time ever they are a team.

Amanda on the other hand stares at Mkhululi for some Saving, She is tired and being pregnant isn't really helping.

Chapter Three.

"I'm Tebello, His side chick," Tebello says , Her confidence on the very last level, Which is Level 10 I'm assuming.

"Heeeeeeeee! Jeso Kresto!," Lizole shouts clapping her hands. Mmadibuseng's mouth hangs in shock it could fall at anytime. Mngqobi on the hand is still staring at Palesa and Thabang is sitted there like he is lost .

Mkhokheli Smiles.

"I think I like this whore," Liyana whispers at Thokozani . He looks at her for a while then back at Mkhokheli without saying a word.

Palesa moves closer to Thabang , and locks her hand in his hoping it will help with the staring but Mngqobi is still staring as if there isn't drama going on in his house.

"Yes, This is Tebello We have been dating for a while and I'd appreciate if you show her some respect ,"
Mkhokheli says and ignores the deadly stares he gets ,If stares get someone Killed Mkhokheli would be drinking Umqhombothi with the Bhengu ancestors maybe with a few more friends as we speak.

"I've heard it all , Mabhengu omkhulu aren't you going to say something?," Lizole asks and everyone ,well except for Mngqobi who is still looking at Palesa turn to look at Amanda,awaiting an explanation or a lecture.

"Mkhokheli ,Do you know how much this will hurt Thando?," Amanda finally decides to say something.

"She wants to dirvoce me musu," He defends himself.

"You know why?," She asks and Mkhokhele thinks for a minute, Searching for an answer but finds none .

"Namnguni is asking you a Question, or Awsezwa emadlebeni?," Mkhululi asks his little brother.

"Ngiyezwa," Mkhokheli says .

"Silalele ke, Stop shitting on my Wife. When she asks you answer. Ngokshesha futhi." Mkhokheli nods.

"Angazi," He says. He prays Mngqobi finds a wife so he can tell them off when they demand Questions from his wife someone needs to help them off their high horse.

"Let me tell you why," Amanda says.

"Why involve yourself in other people's business kodwa?aren't you married to him?," Tebello asks pointing at Mkhululi.

"Thula weSide-chick," Thokozani says and Tebello does just that .

"I Love Tebello and I want to make her my wife," Mkhokheli says.

Tebello turns to look at him.

"Wife? As in Second wife? I won't settle for second place Mkhokheli. I'm very beautiful ntebelle ," she turns around so Mkhokheli can look at her for who she is, A beautiful woman with meat in the right places and dololo brain cells.

The night continues nevertheless. The ladies are in the kitchen cooking up a storm and the men are chilling outside ,drinking beer.

"So , What's your name?," Lizole asks Palesa.

"Palesa, " Palesa says ,Washing her hands.

"Are you dating Mnqobi?."

"Who is Mnqobi?"

"Who do you know here? Are you like this cheap side chick , just coming to parties you aren't invited to?," Mmadibuseng asks. Palesa thinks for a while. Is she? Of course she is not and besides according to

her being a side chick doesn't mean you are cheap ,it just means you like it with a ring.

"Liyana," she says and points at Liyana who was just called by Thokozani and they are sitted by the door,chatting.

"The lazy one , can't she see we are busy cooking?," Lizole also asks.

"She isn't much of a cooker," Palesa says . That is all she could say.

"None of us are ,like Lizole. She cooks shit,and her baking skills are horrible,The only skill she has is bragging about a promotion that isn't even hers and Spending Mthobisi's money," Mmadibuseng says.

"Oh Please! Atleast I spend real money not ichange ye Taxi driver," Lizole comes to her own defence.

"No no Skat . Taxi Owner, Change is the one he gave to Mthobisi last month when he couldn't afford to pay rent ," That hits a nerve,Lizole stares at her and closes her mouth. Mthobisi lied.

Everyone is ready for whatever comeback Lizole brings, but instead she sits down and closes her eyes. Her mind trailing back to what had happened last month. She thought she was over it but now that someone had scratched the already healed wound, she realises it wasn't healed.

She was only 3 months pregnant and she thinks of how she just lost the baby one night. How she was looking forward to holding her baby girl. She hoped it was a girl.

Mthobisi walks in as if he was called still laughing at whatever joke he heard outside. He spots his wife and walks over to her worried.

"Kwenzekalani?," He asks Lizole, but keeps his eyes on Mmadibuseng.

"Lizole? Baby?," Lizole turns and throws herself at him. Mthobisi hugs her back and closes his eyes also, rubbing her back whilst whispering 'it's okay' in her ear.

"Can we go home? Please?," Lizole asks after breaking the hug. Mthobisi nods several times.

"Sure, Let me tell the gents."

"I'll pack you guys some food ," Amanda says and stares at Lizole sadly. They nod and walk out.

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The evening was ruined just like that, but they ate and almost everyone had left. Mmadibuseng knew she was going to receive a lecture from Mnotho and she wasn't looking forward to that , Amanda was already missing her kids at home and couldn't stay any longer.

Mkhokheli wasn't in the mood for Thando and her endless tears so she remained behind with Tebello and the others. Tebello was different ,She was always up for new challenges and Thando was stuck up in the same thing. Same routines, Same drinks, Same food in restaurants and same Sex positions.

Not to mention that Tebello had her own money,cars.

Palesa was dying to leave. She just wanted to leave and go make out with Thabang or just sleep. She was bored almost to death here and was starved,Sexually. Mnqobi gawking at her wasn't helping either

Thabang looks at her and points at the door with his head. Palesa nods. They both get up twice.

"Niyaphi?," Thokozani asks.

"I need to go rest , I have an early class tomorrow ,"
She lies.

"No , You don't . You can't leave me here,alone.
Thabang can leave." Liyana says.

"Yes, You can't leave her here alone." Thokozani chirps in , agreeingly . Palesa turns to look at Mnqobi and she swears she sees him Smirk,but like it was never it dissapears ,He sighs loudly and

relaxes on his couch that looks to small for a big man like him.

He looks like a 20 year old kid being punished for stealing candy, that is how big he is for the couch.

Thabang looks back at Palesa ,he brings himself closer to her and plants a kiss on her cheek. Taking both Palesa and himself by surprise . Why in the world of onions and tomatoes did he kiss her?.

Palesa clears her throat uncomfortable ,of course they have kissed and had sex a few times but...it meant nothing. It was like friend helping another.

"Be safe," Thabang whispers and Palesa nods. Thabang soon leaves and Palesa sits back on the couch alone.

"Can you sit over there?," Tebello asks. She looks sweet,Palesa thinks to herself but she looks at the only spot left,near him. The man who has been gawking at her,making her feel all sorts of uncomfortable.

She clears her throat .

"Please, I just want to sit with Mkhokheli. Please."

Palesa swallows and nods before walking to him, like always his eyes are glued to her and she feels like she is dragging . The couch is barely even 7 feet away. Finally after what feels like a year and a half she gets there. He moves a little because they can barely even fit together on this couch.

He smells like he is fresh from the shower and he had put on some Cologne. Expensive cologne.

She unexpectedly breaths in and flashes in embarrassment when she finds him looking at her.

"You like it?," he whispers. That is the first thing she has ever heard him say."the cologne ," as after thought. She shrugs her shoulders and looks back at everyone.

"Let's play cards," Thokozani suggests.

"We'd love to but I have to take Tebello home safe ," Mkhokheli makes up an excuse fast and stands up with Tebello.

"Thanks for the lovely evening ," Tebello says and grabs her bag.

"Thanks for being my brother's side chick." Thokozani murmurs they don't hear him so they walk out.

"So Palesa,How are you?," Thokozani asks.

"Fine," she says and her phone beeps indicating a message.

'Still safe in there?,' The message from Thabang reads.

"Boyfriend?," Mngqobi asks again,Amazed at himself.

"No, not really ," She says and swear at herself for telling the truth.

"No but we ...he-"

"Good." Mngqobi interrupts and continues with his drink.

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Side note: Apologies, but I am still not well , This is unedited. Remember 3 chapters a week . We will meet next week. 😊

Chapter Four.

[This chapter was sponsored by Thando Sibisi ,the write of Deeply obsessions]

Thokozani and Mngqobi had to clean up the very night before Mngqobi went to bed and Thokozani went to meet the boys for a few drinks or so he said . The next day, as boring as it was for Mngqobi the sun was shining brightly and happily like always. He grabbed a bottle of beer and sat on the couch and like the whole of last night,her innocent face invades his mind. He stared at it for a long time so he would never ever forget it.

His phone rings from the table, he eases out a loud, annoyed Sigh and reaches out to grab it. It is an unsaved number but he answers still.

"Mr ..B. hi," The man on the other end of the line greets.

"Mh?"

"This is Joshua Scott. I am calling to confirm our meeting today. 2 pm . I'll send you the location ," he says and Mngqobi hangs up.

He has seen, heard and Questioned a lot of things in his line of work but he keeps it to himself, always. Last year he had someone ask him to kill his baby momma because he couldn't pay maintainance but was a rich idiot. Anyone who could afford to hire him was rich. He didnt. He knew if he would have killed her and he would have spent the rest of the week, or possibly even years trying to forget the daughter's loud sobs,screams.

He dials Thokozani and sits back on the couch drinking his beer.

"Bafo," Thokozani greets.

"Joshua, Joshua Scott," he says then hangs. Thokozani knows what he has to do.

He looks around for his packet of ciggarates and lights one. He loved the smell, the puffing and pulling. He started smoking when he was in high school, and never stopped even though his father, Boyabenyathi and His MaNkosi were against it.

His phone beeps, it's a message from Thokozani. He reads it, looks at his pictures and goes to take a shower.

When the clock finally hits 2p.m . He steps out of the car fixes his t-shirt and walks to the place he was told to go to. He looks around for a man in a black suit and finds him, he takes slow steps towards him and sits.

"You must beB, Joshua," He reaches his hand out for a handshake and Mngqobi accepts it. They shake hands.

"So," He pushes an envelop towards Mngqobi's direction . Looking around to see if anyone sees him.

"His name is Dave ,Dave Daniels . He works at a company called Daniels Logistics. He is the CEO ," Mngqobi opens the envelop and scans the pictures with his eyes. Before pushing the pictures back in the envelop.

"He lives with his wives and two kids, I have to warn you though he might have security but I trust you to get the job done . You-," He stops when the waitress walks towards their table. She smiles at them.

"Gentleman, What will you be having?," she asks

"Nothing as of yet , Thank you," Joshua says and the waitress hands Mngqobi the menu since Joshua had it. Mngqobi nods at her and she walks away after telling them she would be back to take their orders.

"As I was saying you come highly recommended and so I trust you to make a clean job," Mngqobi nods.

"You don't talk much do you? Well, The address and everything are in there. I want you to kill everyone and everything you find in there. The husband,wife,kids,dogs,cats,rats ,Maid ,Everything!," Mngqobi nods and gets up.

"As soon as you walk out you will receive your R250 000 and the rest when the job is done." Mngqobi nods and walks out.

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The clock hits 8p.m Mngqobi is done with his rituals and set for the road. He has been in it for long that he isn't nervous ,if anything he is happy. Finally, A Real Job. He pulls his hat to cover his face before lighting the impepho telling his ancestors about where he is going and asks for their protection.

He closes his eyes and when opens them ,He sees her ,Her innocent yet daring eyes. A part of him

wants to knock on her door and just look at her again and another to forget her. She is not for him, or is it the other way round?. He would break her, not intentionally but he knew he would. He decides to listen to the first part so he grabs the car keys and walks over to the flat opposite his, exactly where Thokozani said they live .

He knocks on the door and prays she opens the door and because he is God's favourite child she opens and opens her mouth in shock when she sees him.

"Uhm, hey ," She greets ,Mnqobi nods and they keep quiet while he looks or rather stares at her.

"Do you want to come in?," she asks hesitantly and he nods. Palesa creates space for him to walk in and when he does Palesa finally breaths out.

"Would you...uhm...like some tea?," She asks and he looks at her ,Shaking his head.

"Uhm,Okay. How can I help you?," she asks unable to hide her fear.

"Sit," Mngqobi instructs.

"Excuse me ?"

"Please," Mngqobi says and she sighs and does as he asks. He looks at her before asking -"What do you want?," Palesa looks at him confused.

"What?," She asks, maybe her ears were deceiving her.

"Ufunani? Teddy? Pizza?," he asks .

"Uhm, Chocolate," She says hesitantly . Why was he asking?.

"Why do you ask?," She asks.

"I'll bring it. I'll come back with your chocolate," He says getting up. He turns to look at her before saying "lock the door, it's not safe." Then walks out.

"Freak," Palesa says before locking the door.

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He looks at the chocolate he got Palesa and sighed,
He takes out his guns and looks at them before
picking the one he would use.

When he is done, he walks to Dave's house.

Like the paper had stated , Two bodyguards at the
gate. He shoots them and walks in . Two at the
door,and he says it's safe, he shakes his head and
shoots them before walking in . It is already dark
which means everyone has gone to bed, he switches
the light on and walks to each room shooting at
everyone and everything. The dog ,kids, everyone.
When he is satisfied with himself and is about to walk
out he finds another woman walking in. Shouting
"madam,madam" he takes out his gun again and
points it at her.

"Please, Please don't shoot me. I have kids. 5,
please," When he is about to say something,
someone shoots him from behind . He turns
groaning and shoots back at the person.

"Please don't kill me, I won't say anything. Please," he looks at her , clinches his teeth together before walking out .

"don't you need help?," the woman asks and he shakes his head walking to the car, looking at his shot arm.

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Palesa sighs. Closing her laptop.

"Finally!," She says and Liyana giggles on her phone like always.

"I'm going to bed," Liyana says and she nods even though she knows sje can't see her.

"Liyana, Ever since you met Thokozani you hardly have time for me," Palesa complains.

"I met him like a day ago nje," liyana says laughing at her best friend for being dramatic, Palesa gives her that 'oh really now' look and she puts her phone down sighing.

"Fine, anyways you and THABANG?," Liyana asks wiggling her eyebrows.

"Nothing going on there," Palesa Quickly says .

"I saw how he was looking at you. I think he liked you," Liyana says and her phone beeps.

"That must be Thokozani , didn't you say you are going to bed?," Palesa asks.

"didn't you say you miss me?"

"I was joking ,please go sleep."

"So you can invite Thabang over for a quicky?,"

Liyana says and when someone knocks on the door Palesa thanks God getting up.

"I wonder who could that be so late at night, maybe Thabang came for his quicky . Let me not disturb you,shout if you need me,I highly doubt you will though," Palesa throws a pillow at her as she runs to her room giggling and she goes to attend at whoever is at the door.

When she opens she is met by the freak again.

"Hi," she greets and like always he stares at her making her feel uncomfortable .

"Your chocolate," he says handing it to her .

"Uhm,Thanks ," she grabs it and stares at it and her hands.

"Youyou don't like it?," he asks.

"No, I mean I love it ...it just has blood all over it. Are you okay?," she asks him and he nods.

"Nothing I can't handle." He says and turns to leave "bye then" he says again and palesa watches as he walks to his room . She debates with herself on whether she should follow him or not and she decides she will see him tomorrow.

Chapter Five

The next day Palesa is late like always. She wants to check on the Freak but hesitates and instead of knocking she takes deep breaths and walks away .

When she gets to school she is met by Thabang like always.

"Palesa," he calls out and Palesa waits for him at the gate.

"Hey T," They share a short hug and when they let go Palesa clears her throat .

"So , How was the other night?," Thabang asks making Palesa think of him,the freak. She barely even slept last night all she could ever think about was him,What kind of a person is he ? .

"Well, We ...It wasn't that bad," Palesa says and shrugs her shoulders as to show she really isn't really interested or nothing interesting happened.

"That big guy? He scared the shit out of me. When you see him ,run. I don't trust him," Thabang says. Palesa wants to tell him about her plan, how she is

going to check up on him but shoves the thought in the nearest bin.

"Why?," She asks and Thabang looks at her like she has grown pink horns.

"Because he looks dangerous ,Duh."

She nods , He does look like he could strangle you for not doing what he says you should but he is beautiful , A beautiful scary man. Him being Zulu is a big cherry on top. Palesa quickly shakes her head,What the hell ?

"You are right, I need to stay away from him," She says .

"You sound like you were planning on keeping him close," Thabang says looking at Palesa. He receives a Cold shrug and decides he needs to change the topic to something more fun.

"Who is that other scary one? The one that was with Liyana?," He asks and for the first time in the whole day Palesa lets out a soft yet carefree laughter.

"Get over her shame. He snatched her," She says shaking her head. "Lately it's Thokozani this,Thokozani that." As an after thought.

"I am , I think I like someone else," He says and stops to look at Palesa. Now that he decided to look at her as beyond just a friend,She really is breathtaking. Literally,He is holding his breath at the very moment.

"Good for you ,See? I told you . It is easy really ,just forget Liyana," Palesa says and looks back at him. She notices how he is looking at her, differently but shakes it off with a shrug.

"She is different, I don't know how to approach her," He confesses and Palesa chortles taking a short glance at her watch.

"Yo, You never know how to approach any girl," Palesa jokes and they both share a short laughter "So, What kind of girl is she?," She asks.

"A church going girl. " he says and looks at her again . "How can a guy approach you?," He asks her and she laughs looking at her watch.

"By turning back and never looking my way," she says jokingly and attempts to walk away but Thabang pulls her.

"Where are you off to?," he asks.

"Class, I'm 10 minutes late ," She says and he watches her run off.

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[Liyana]

She clears her throat and continues with her drink. A friend told her the best way to get rid of hangover is to drink some more.

She huffs annoyed when someone knocks roughly on her door. She went out last night after Palesa went to bed.

"Yo ha.a you will break my door , This door isn't R50 ," She says and drags her feet to the door . She rolls her eyes when she sees him, Zuko.

"Hi Stranger, How may I be of your assistance this lovely oh lovely Tuesday ?," She asks.

"Ngcela imali yami joe," Zuko says and pushes her walking in.

"that's good to know oh lovely sir ," she says after taking a sip of her wine.

"See this thing in my hands? Mali yakho le bhabha," she says and drags herself to the couch again.

"I'll beat you up , uyandiphambanela !" Zuko shouts angrily .

"I'd watch it if I was you . My man, the man that doesn't wear size 26 is right there. Opposite room . I shout his name his cute arse walks in here," She says and raises her bottle.

"Glass of the finest Red wine?," she gets up again and moves to get Zuko a glass . "This is your money , it's only fair you get a glass" she says and hands him the glass. He clears his throat and throws the glass in the sink.

"Uphambene ? Ye liyana? Uphambene?," He shouts louder this time.

Thokozani walks in as if he is model for some Fashion Show.

"And then?," He asks and looks at Zuko.

"Ufunani la?," He asks and turns to look at Liyana. He notices the wine in her hands and looks at her then back at Zuko.

"E Awhambe baba, Leave my wife alone," He says and Zuko clicks his tongue walking out.

Liyana walks to him and he moves.

"Go sober up, I hate drunk people,mangbuya la angifuni nokbona ibodlela ," He says before walking out.

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When Palesa gets back she doesn't even go to her mini apartment. She walks straight to his apartment

,The freak and knocks nervously . Taking in deep breaths as she waits to be invited in.

The door opens and Thokozani stares at her in shock.

"Palesa, right?," He asks, She nods shyly.

"Come on in," He says moving from the door. Palesa nods walking in.

"Are you here for me? Is Liyana alright?," Thokozani asks. She shakes her head.

"I didn't really go to sign language school," Thokozani says.

"No. " she says and wishes he could stop frying her with endless Questions.

"No what?."

"No I am not here for you," She says .

"Oh "

"Is F...your brother here?," She asks , He nods .

"Follow me. He isn't well though," he says and turns looking at the chocolate in her hands.

"Is the chocolate for him?," He asks, annoying Palesa even more.

"U...yes."

Thokozani chortles.

"Mnqobi doesn't eat chocolate ," he says holding his laughter.

He walks in his room.

"Bafo?," he calls out.

"Mmh," Mnqobi huffs annoyed at his brother. What now?.

"Ulele?," he asks.

"Hmm," Mnqobi grunts again pulling the blanket over his head.

"Someone is here to see you," Thokozani says and wiggles his eyebrows even though no one can see him.

"Please don't wake him. I'll see him some other time," Palesa says, As soon as Mngqobi hears the farmilia voice he pushes the blankets off and gets up .

"Ngvukile," he says and Thokozani chortles.

"Relax gorilla. Let me give you some space," He says and gets up. "Change your bandage ," as an after thought.

"I'll bring you another bandage ."

Mngqobi nods and turns his attention to Palesa as Thokozani walks out smiling at them.

"You didn't eat your chocolate ?," He asks glancing at it. She nods looking at the floor shyly.

"I ...I thought we should share it," she says looking at the bandage.

"let's Share it then," He says and feels he already said a lot in a day.

She smiles at him and opens the chocolate and as they both share it .Thokozani walks in and stares at Mngqobi in shock.

"I thought you hated chocolate," he says.

Mngqobi shrugs his shoulder picking another piece.

"Ngcela upiece?," Thokozani asks. Mngqobi shakes his head pulling the chocolate even though he hates it.

"We will see who will help you with your wound," Thokozani says and puts the water with the bandage on the side table.

"I'm not alone ,Am I? ," he says taking a short a glance at Palesa who swallows hard.

Chapter six

"I'm not alone ,Am I? ," he says taking a short glance at Palesa who swallows hard. Nodding.

"Oh Well Let me go see my wife," Thokozani says walking out after wiggling his eyebrows at the scared Palesa. She regrets ever setting foot here.

"Ubuyaphi?," Mngqobi asks in his hoarse and rough sounding voice. Hearing him speak sends shivers down her spine, and still like the very first time she had laid eyes on him she feels the need to pray.

"School," She says shakingly.

"No , I mean where are you originally from?," He asks and hands Palesa the water .

"Mpumalanga ," she says and looks at him then back at the water before taking the water from him. "At Mashishing , That is where I am from . How about you?," She asks and receives a cold shrug from Mngqobi who tries taking off his T-shirt with his one hand but struggles.

Palesa heavies out a loud Sigh and helps him after putting the water back on the side table.

Mnqobi nods at her as a thank you and she nods back .

"Shit ,I hate this," He murmurs loud enough for Palesa to hear then grunts.

"Needing help?," She asks . Mnqobi looks at her then back at his wound as if she never asked anything.

She sighs, and takes the water back from the side table.

"Uyajola?," He asks. Palesa laughs at how he asked his question before shaking her head.

"Mm, Ngoba?," She asks and looks at Palesa as if she is a book written in his home language and he can read her perfectly. Of which he can maybe.

"I haven't found someone yet," She says and Mnqobi nods and looks at her as if waiting for more.

"I...I haven't found the man who you know...," She says and looks at Mnqobi who is still staring at her.

"I don't," he says.

"The man who will make my heart beat, dance or whatever the heart does when it meets its other half. A man who I will love without him following me around, I want it to be natural. I want a man who will drive me crazy, who makes me want to kiss

walls, be around him every chance I get. I want to feel the gap when he isn't there and feeling it close again when my eyes land on him," She closes her eyes imagining this playing in her head, all of it. Her running to the man of her dreams, hugging him tight and him spinning her around.

Mnqobi chortles at her day dreaming.

"Novels," he says and takes off his bandage. She clears her throat and moves closer to him to give him a hand.

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Liyana is woken up by kisses on her cheek. She smiles.

"Mm," she says after opening her eyes. She stares at him, He has blue jeans and a white T-shirt on .

"Mkami," he utters kissing her cheek again.

"You don't look okay," he says and pulls the closest blanket he finds covering her by means of her keeping warm.

"Period pains," she says, and holds on the blankets.
"Kubhlungu" As an after thought.

"Askies SthandwasikaThokozani. Let me take you to the doctor," He says and before she can protest he carries her to his car.

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"Let me get going," Palesa says getting up. She grabs her school bag that was on the side table and throws it at her back.

Her phone rings from her pockets , she pulls it and takes in deep breaths before answering.

"Mmago Pale," she says and sits back down.

"You will not believe what I just heard," She says.

"Ee?," Palesa murmurs uninterested.

"Your cousin, The one that is in grade 8 . Pregnant. Buuu Mpa ngwaneng," As much Palesa isn't interested in this ,Her mouth hangs in shock.

"Heeee.eee!," She shouts forgetting Mnqobi's presence.

"Mafra , I have heard it all. All We have to do now is put our problems to God. I have no idea how these kids know that the usb cable goes in the hole. Eish. We really need God's mercy right now," She says and Palesa laughs.

"Usb cable mama? Really?," She asks laughing. Her mother sighs, taking this as the perfect time to finally have that 'convo' , It is the hardest thing a parent has to do or say but because she is a woman who always grabs a good opportunity when she sees it she decides to swim into it fearlessly.

"Palesa, Is...Is the USB cable getting in the hole?," She takes a leap of faith.

"I'm lost,What hole?," She asks.

"Your hole palesa. Does the USB get in your hole?," She repeats louder this time and when Palesa finally catches on what she actually means she chokes on her own Saliva.

"MA!," She says loudly by means of reprimanding her Mother then looks at Mngqobi in embarrassment , Of course he heard everything ,Her phone is soo loud she swears even Thokozani and Liyana heard.

"We have to talk about these things Pale. Do you know it?," her mother asks and Mngqobi looks at his legs laughing silently.

"Ma, This is really,really not a good time," She utters.

"It is Pale , Trust me. We need to talk about these things so you don't come back home with a big belly . Resaitse situ a black mamba ," Mngqobi Laughs out loud.

"Who is that?," Pale's Mother asks and Palesa shoots an annoyed look at Mnqobi who is back to his usual self.

"Mama, This is really not a g-"

"Palesa! "

"Mama hle yoh, Thabang just arrived We need to study. I love you bye,bye," she says and hangs up .

Her phone rings and she answers .

"P, I am here . Open."

"I'm coming T," she says hangs up and bids Mnqobi goodbye not forgetting to make sure to promise herself to never,ever step in this apartment ever again.

She finds Thabang waiting for her at the door.

"didn't Liyana open for you?," She asks , pushing the door.

"No, I have been knocking but no luck. What were you doing in there?," He asks looking at Mnqobi's door as if he will walk out.

"Nothing much," she says dismissing him.

"I didn't know we had a study session tonight," Palesa says and looks around for books in his hands but nothing.

"We don't ," Thabang says and as soon as he walks in after Palesa he pulls her causing her to look his way then pushes her to the door attacking her with a kiss. Palesa pulls out catching her breath.

"Woah Tiger , What was that for?," she asks and Thabang pulls her again and kissing her. Differently . With love and Palesa feels it too. The kiss, The emotions that it carries,the touch. She feels how he is suddently gentle .After a few minutes she pulls out again.

"T...," she says out of breath. "W..W"

Thabang runs his finger on her lips and mutters "shhh" taking off her T-shirt.

"I...Love you P," he says and looks at her waiting for the look on her face and when it stays emotionless .He pushes her to the couch.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

The wise old man with no teeth once said , there is no place like home. You can live in the biggest house , but you'd still miss that 2room house you grew up In -it is completely normal . Palesa packs her bag , the is no need really because she has plenty of clothes back home . it is not like she moved out , but you know the old phrase 'women will always be women.'

She spend the last week doing the usual oh usual , going to school . come back. Do nothing. Only this time she was on a avoid Thabang mission . The last time she had seen him was yesterday , after her last class when he was calling out to her and she pretended to be a deaf woman walking her cat to the

park and the freak, although she hates to admit it she had been thinking about the freak and the last time she had seen him was when they were eating chocolate together .

‘leaving already?,’ she is slightly startled by the voice but she turns and smiles briefly at her best friend .

‘yes,’ she says , and puts the bag on the floor. ‘I want to see my parents before the exams ,’ as an after thought. Liyana nods understandably and gives her friend a hug, a short hug.

‘You do know I’m coming back in 2days right?,’ Palesa says , laughing at her friend’s drama. Liyana joins in seconds later.

‘Do you need a ride to the mall?,’ she asks , Liyana knows donald, Palesa’s cousin the one who will be driving with her home. She knows he would never , not even a single day. Not even when the sun is green would he ever fetch Palesa from the flat. He should be there by Tito’s side. He knows budget

more than he knows the size of his own underwear.
He is the one who should be minister of Finance
.Palesa nods gratefully at her friend .

‘me and ...Thokozani are going to the mall to get a few things ,’ she says and helps Palesa carry the bag.
‘still on that you and Thokozani need to go to the mall topic, What is going on between you guys?,’ Palesa asks and wiggles her eyebrows playfully. She receives a shrug from Liyana and a wide smile , Probably the widest she has ever seen ; her teeth are all out in the open,all of them!

‘don’t . I already know the answer. Such a wide smile;’

‘a girl doesn’t kiss and tell,’ Liyana says and closes her mouth with her hand dramatically .They help each other carry the two bags and walk to the door opposite theirs.

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Mnqobi lights the cigarette walking slowly towards the spare room. Thokozani follows from behind holding his beer, nothing can ever separate him with his beloved beer. If God really knows all his children then he sure as heaven knows this.

‘Mnqobi man , come on . think about this,’ Thokozani pleads , still following him. Mnqobi shrugs his shoulders without looking at his brother. ‘Yoh!. One would swear I’m the older one here,’ he lies. You can tell he is younger than Mnqobi by just listening to him talk. If the municipality collected rubbish that comes straight from someone’s mouth they would have to collect at least 4times a day from Thokozani and probably not even once from Mnqobi.

‘You really need to start thinking things through man. This is not KZN. You don’t just do things,’ Mnqobi looks at him, for a few minutes . Thokozani knows he is thinking about his offer then he puts the cigarette back in his mouth.

‘Your house is almost ready , two days you might be out of here but I don’t think we should to a house warming party your brothers and their wives,yo yo yo,’ Thokozani decides to change the topic and laughs thinking about what happened the last time the wives got together.

‘I will not be moving out , not now anyway. Kunezinto ekumele ngizilungise,’ Mngqobi says and his mind trails to Palesa, The innocent girl living right opposite him.

‘what kind of things? And besides you are not going back to KZN You are just moving to a different house,’ Thokozani says.

‘I know . ngifuna ukuhlala la.’ He says and his brother knows there is nothing he can say or do to change his mind.

‘and then ? what is going on?,’ Thokozani asks looking at the bags in Palesa’s hands .

'my dad is requesting for me at home ,' she says , and looks anywhere but the freak's eyes, but she feels them piercing through her skin.

'so she is asking for a lift to the mall , that is where her cousin will meet her,' Liyana says.

'I'll take her,' the freak offers or rather says . His word is final .

'great , let's go baby ,' Thokazani says and before Palesa can decline the offer they are out of the door like they were never even there.

'There is juice in the fridge , I'm going to take a shower ,' Mngqobi says but Palesa pulls her bag .

' there's no need really , I'll take a taxi,' she says and prays he agrees but her prayers fall into deaf ears.

'Abafazi bakawa Bhengu abagibeli itaxi,' Mngqobi says , locks the door and goes to the bathroom leaving Palesa with mixed emotions, she is not sure if she should smile, laugh, cry, blush or scream at this and she finally decides to keep quite and let him be.

Mnqobi spends the next 30 minutes in the shower , Palesa called out until she finally made peace with the fact that she will have to hitchhike or take the bus. After the 30 minutes which felt like a year and a half Mnqobi walks out of the shower looking handsome like always.

‘took your Precious time huh?,’ Palesa says slightly annoyed.

‘yeah , I had to refresh . Mashishing right...yes Mashishing is far,’ he says.

‘What do you mean Mean by that?’ Palesa asks .

‘just that , I am taking you home,’ he says and helps carry the bag .

‘look Fr, I mean ...’

‘babakwami,’ he says and Palesa looks at him in questioning look.

‘ my name is babakwami,’ he says and palesa lets out a soft laughter before rolling her eyes without Mnqobi noticing .

'I thought I told you my cousin will be fetching me ,'
Palesa says.

'is your cousin a he or a she ?,' mnqobi asks.

'a he'

'I am a cousin too and I know what I did to my
cousins,all of them' palesa laughs and hits him
playfully. What the hell?

CHAPTER EIGHT.

Palesa looks at him, not knowing where she gets the sudden bravery to look straight into the eyes of the very same man she had been praying God to protect her from. Mnqobi stares back ,walking closer to her – so slow you'd think he isn't walking towards her. Palesa wants to move back but her stubborn legs stay rooted on the same position, She wants to swear at them call them names such as betrayer, back stabber, Rat , two-timer, traitor, double-crosser but she knows it is all her.

“So , Are you ready to go?,” Mnqobi asks and Palesa nods.

“mmh,” Mnqobi murmurs and carries the other bag.

“sure ,” she says , even though the voice inside her is screaming ‘No No No mmmhh’ in full chorus mode. “I am ready to go,” She repeats, this time trying to convince both Mnqobi and herself.

Mnqobi nods taking the bag Liyana put on the floor and the one in Palesa's hands. When his hand touches hers ,they both look at each other. Again but this time Palesa clears her throat uncomfortably and moves her hand fast, unfamiliar with the sudden racing of her heart, trembling of her knees and the sudden movement in her stomach. The feeling like she ate full chicken and it decided it needed a good dance,a friendly dance.

Mnqobi smirks , She felt it too, he says to himself and like A friend's father it Vanishes like it was never even there.

“Can we go now?,” Palesa asks impatiently , Her heart already yearning for some motherly hug and to hear her father’s voice. Mngqobi nods at her, and indicates that he is right behind her with his hand. She again, clears her throat and sighs walking out-carrying nothing . She feels like a Queen, but her Queening moment is short lived when Mngqobi opens the boot then closes after carefully putting the bags there and goes to his own door leaving her there like a Queen who isn’t a Queen anymore. She shakes her head and walks to the backseat.

“Usuyagula?,” Mngqobi asks looking at her from the mirror. She shakes her head and because she knows what he is talking about she gets off the car and walks to the front seat. A tail in-between her legs.

Because they have nothing to talk about , Mngqobi switches on the radio and like always,Maskandi plays boring the heck out of Palesa. She looks outside the window and silently prays God sends his Angels in the car so they can just switch the damn thing off but

because God is way too busy listening to prayers while drinking tea to be attending to her ridiculous requests it doesn't happen. It is her cousin, Donald .

“Motswala,” She greets ,still looking outside the window (Cousin). It looks like it is about to rain anytime from now ,she notices and smiles at how she is going to be indulging on fresh wet soil when she gets home without her mother noticing of course and before stocking on white soil from her Zimbabwean Friend Oneza. She has read about the dangers of eating soil but assumes she only eats it once in a while so it is no big deal if not a deal at all.

“Where are you?, I waited for an hour and I left when I couldn't see you,” Donald says. To Palesa, God , gods ,The Mohoto ancestors 's surprise .

Donald never, even on a green day when it is raining with sweets explains himself to anyone. Not even to himself.

“oh, it's no problem ,” Palesa says and to be quite honest she would rather ride with the freak,and his

annoying Maskandi music than with her cousin and his cool Piano music.

“okay, good. Are you in a taxi?,” He asks again.

“Yes. I mean no. I’m not, but I’m on my way home,” She says. “and I’m okay,” she says and turns to look at Mnqobi who is looking ahead, looking serious, like always. “and safe.” This time, Mnqobi turns and looks at her with a smile on his face and when he turns again it is like it was never even there.

“ That is not why I called you,” Donald says, Palesa hates it when he says that.

“oh”

“Look Pali, I really can’t wait to see you,” he confesses. “like I wish you were here now, with me where you belong.” Palesa looks at Mnqobi and sighs. This is a reminder, she knows her place and now whatever thoughts she had of her and Mnqobi would be erased like they were never there.

“m...me too,” she murmurs. Mngqobi is waiting patiently for her to hang up so he can turn on the radio again, plus the next song is his favourite. He hates loud music but Maskandi isn't just music. Maskandi is a part of him.

“Good, I will see you then,” he says and then hangs up.

“ucedile?,” (Are you done) he asks and receives a nod from Palesa.

He notices the change of mood but decides to mind his own business like expects advice.

.

Even though they did not talk much but Mngqobi huffs annoyed when he notices that Palesa is asleep. The only reason he decides to drive her was because he wanted to spend more time with her, to look into her eyes and for her to shyly look into his. He loved every moment of it. He parks at Sasol

garage and debates if whether or not he should wake her and he does.

“mmh,” Palesa utters ,and opens her eyes.

“ulambile?,” Mnqobi asks and palesa shakes her head before closing her eyes yet again . Mnqobi shakes his head and walks out of the car.

When he comes back he takes his energy drink and puts the plastic at the back. Driving away,and the only thing talking is the white woman directing him through the GPS.

After a few minutes, Palesa wakes up rubbing her eyes. She looks at Mnqobi who is driving and looks unbothered.

“ai ngeke uyakgona ngane yomuntu,” he says and Palesa laughs still rubbing her eyes. Mnqobi turns to look at her then smiles turning back.

“loPlastic osemuva owakho,” he says and Palesa turns and takes it.

“I said I’m full,” she says but still reaches out to open the plastic. Mnqobi shrugs his shoulders .

..

Finally they reach the Mohoto household and it is exactly the same as she has last seen it , still painted in green , her mother’s favourite colour. The yard still neatly swept like always. She smiles and looks at Mnqobi excitedly .

“where can I find a hotel here ?,” he asks making Palesa feel guilty .

“ There’s a guestroom not far from here, just drive straight and you will see a board,” she says and looks at him “ God , I feel guilty . Can I talk to my dad so you can sleep over here?,” she asks .

“ uyagula wena , I’d rather drive with you to the guestroom , spend the night with you...,” Palesa chortles and thanks him before walking inside still blushing from the proposal by Mnqobi .

.

Thanks to google and the white woman from GPS Mnqobi arrives at the guestroom safely. She books in and within minutes he is in his room . His phone rings and he huffs when he realises who is calling . Boyabenyathi , his father he hasn't heard from him since he arrived in Johannesburg .

“baba ,” he answers .

“ yah Mnqobiwezimpi,” he says .” How is Johannesburg ? how are the dreams?,” he asks . One thing about Boyabenyathi is that he would go to hell and back for his family, barefoot at that.

“ much better , it's fine,”

“ I think the problem is at home ,” he says as after thought , his father sighs.

“ your 6th mother is pregnant ,” he says more scared than happy.

“ and It's a girl . never will she ever see her child . She will vanish like she was never there. Sacrificed

so you can stay rich ,” mnqobi says “ angisho?” he asks louder this time. Boyabenyathi sighs loudly.

“ ngingubabakho njalo, you seem to be forgetting that lately. You might scare the whole family but you don't scare me uyezwa?,” Mnqobi grunts and hangs up .

Mnqobi is like his father, they act the same, look the same and do things the same way, they love and when they love ...they love hard , harder than they should.

Mnqobi goes through his phone's gallery and finds the pictures Thokozani took on his house warming party , He passes the pictures and finds the one he is looking for. A picture of Palesa , unfortunately with Thabang. He crops him out and puts the picture on his wallpaper then murmurs “ this is where you belong, with me ,” he says . “

abanenkinga basho ngibaphe ulift oya kaHell,” then switches off his phone sleeping.

.

The next morning when Palesa wakes up she does the usual , whenever she was looking for a reason to not go home the house chores will bring themselves to the table. MmaMohoto wants her yard, house and everything else cleans by 6am in the morning and it's her way or the highway.

“ You should be resting , “ her father says and she yawns . Her father will always be the early bird of this house, by 5am he is up and outside for his morning tea. Palesa walks towards him smiling.

“Your know your wife wants her house clean . I will rest during the day ,” she says and they look at his cows.

“ mmh, How is school?,” he asks.

“ School is okay, “ she says hoping he doesn't ask any more questions.

“Let me introduce you to someone,” he says and holds her hand as they walk to the kraal. “ I named it Shosholoza,” palesa laughs at her father's horrible naming skills, This is part of the reason family

members call him so he can name their cows. He might have horrible naming skills but he always, always has a name for everything and anything.

“ Shosholoza is a very troublesome cow, almost like your brother,” he says looking at Palesa who looks at the floor.

Pontso, He was 17 when it happened. A boy with passion you could see it in his eyes, how he knew he wanted something , how he'd follow it.

“ I have some things to do,” Palesa says and walks away, wiping her tears with the bag of her hand .

She thought she was over it , his death . she thought she was okay with it , that she was healing .

Her phone beeps indicating a message , it is from Donald . she switches her phone off and rushes to Pontso's room.

CHAPTER NINE.

Have you ever been woken up at exactly 6am in the morning by your mother asking you to drive her to town because your father is way too busy staring at his cows to be driving his wife to town. You being the good Samaritan you are, agree. Part of the reason being her promising you that you will not, never have to walk in any shop ?. To make matters worse she makes sure to remind you that she is in a hurry and so you wear the closest things you find .Two minutes later after parking she stares at you with the widest look because you refuse step out of the car – Parents , backstabbing smooth liars , Well that is the exact situation Palesa is in , and now more than ever she feels like the world could just open up and swallow her,For fifteen minutes at least . just until her mother stops giving her the look . The one that screams ‘ I gave birth to you Palesa, now you decide to stab me in the heart’ , Parents!.

“ And besides Pali you don’t look THAT bad ,” she says and looks impatiently and annoyed at her

daughter who has her head rested on the steering wheel. Not willing to even get off the car.

“come on pali pali ... “ and that sweet talk is the reason why Palesa is in here , spar. Looking out of place . like a hobo, a clean hobo.

“pick the red pepper,” Mamohoto , the two-timer says . walking like a Queen , while Palesa picks the food, pushes the trolley and will possibly even have to do other things like having to offload when they get to the till. While Palesa pushes the trolley her mind takes a little walk to the land of imaginations, the first person she thinks of is the freak. How he towers her up like a tent, his voice- so quiet yet holds authority . How he commands respect by just getting up or looking into your eyes. For a second it's almost as if he is there, with her .. giving that sly smile of his , that gorgeous smile that he quickly wipes off as fast as a thought it was never even there.

“PALESA!,” She turns to look at her mother who is pointing at walking towards her.

“ I said we need to get Fanta grape because your uncle loves it,”she says and receives a puzzled look from Palesa.

“ uncle? , he is coming over for dinner ? ,” Palesa asks , unable to hide her annoyance. It is not the fact she will have to cook or help her mother cook that annoys her . it is the thought of him possibly bringing Donald , his annoying son with. The thought of it makes her skin crawl .

“ Yes , with your aunt and Donald ,” she rolls her eyes without her mother seeing her , She hates Donald, with possibly every single inch in her body.

“ Pali look, it’s Ntombi . Your best Friend,” her mother says already pulling the trolley towards Ntombi’s direction,Palesa scoffed annoyed at her mother. Why can’t parents ask if you want to speak to someone or not?. Palesa follows anyway, pushing the trolley while her mother pulls from the front.

“ Hello nana,” MaMohoto , the flyist is the first to greet. Ntombi recognises her because well , she sees

her almost everyday. They shake hands and ask each other how life has been . Palesa's job is to roll her eyes , dance to some boring song playing in the background and picking things.

“oh no no , I'm with palesa ,” MaMohoto says and turns to look for Palesa who is picking a tin of bins while dancing to those boring Spar songs. “ pali.” She calls her and Palesa rolls her eyes before walking to them with the fakest smile ever.

“ oh Jeso! This is palesa? I wouldn't recognise her if you didn't introduce her ,” Ntombi says and offers her hand for a handshake which later turns to a short and emotionless hug . “long time man . you have lost some weight,” she comments again, looking at palesa from head to toe. Palesa rolls her eyes at 26 years old Ntombi, who graduated at university of watch palesa's weight in 2014. She is currently unemployed because she chose minding other people's weight job instead of going for

proper jobs such as being a Doctor , lawyer, accountant just to name a few.

Palesa fakes a smile, now ready more than ever to bid this weight looker goodbye and never, not even once look back.

“why don’t you girls go out? For fresh air?,” MaMohoto asks, winking at Palesa who has her eyes wide open . The goddess in her shouting ‘what in the world of potatoes and onions?’ . She fakes a smile at Ntombi who seems happy and eager to out with her ‘friend’.?

“That sounds great,” she says looking at Palesa still wearing that fake smile she has been wearing since she heard the name Ntombi.

“It does, but mama you said we are in a HUUUUURRY,” she says, trying to signal to her mother that she would rather mop the whole of atlantic ocean than go out with Ntombi but because her mother is her mother and she is Mamohoto she shakes her head.

“no no , it's okay . I can drive myself home,” she says, Traitor! Palesa scoffs again this time disbelievingly . “you will have to take a taxi home or better yet maybe Ntombi might drive you,” she suggests and the weight watcher is more than happy to drive Palesa back home . She promises to take good care of her and off they drive to Ntombi's all time favourite – KFC.

“KFC? , You never change,” Palesa says not caring if she sounds offensive or not. Miss Weight watcher isn't offended because she laughs .

“no no .not when it comes to food,” she responds and they debate on what to order . The queue isn't long because it is still very much early. After a good 10 minutes they finally order, and they go take a sit and wait to be called.

“so , How is Johannesburg ?,” Ntombi asks and receives a shrug from Palesa.

“Okay,busy but Okay,” She says.

“ORDER NUMBER 002,” The other lady shouts and Ntombi looks at the slip in her hands before lazily saying “that’s us” she says and gets up to take the order. When she comes she finds Palesa busy on her phone.

“Are you okay here?,” she asks and Palesa shakes her head, looking outside for empty tables. “let’s go outside,” she suggests and Ntombi nods raving about how she loves the fresh air outside.

“So, Any luck with finding a boyfriend?,” the Weight watcher who also turns out to be a love life specialist asks, taking a piece of the hot wings from the table.

“no,” Palesa says and hopes she asks no more questions, but again, because God is kind off held up at the moment her prayers fall onto deaf ears or rather busy ears.

“Why? , I mean rumours have it man in Jozi are super hot, and do die for !,” she says dramatically

fanning herself with her hand to show just how hot Jozi man are.

“rumours lied , and besides ... I Know what I went to Johannesburg for and it is definitely not Jozi men,” she says, not caring if she comes across as rude or whatever. Ntombi laughs “ You have always been goal driven ,” she says and Palesa nods.

“anyway , What is going on in your life?,” Palesa asks , changing the subject . Talking about your own life is exhausting .

“ oh nothing much...” she says , drinking her coke but Palesa isn't ready to let this just die down . As much as she is uninterested in her , she would rather have her talk about how she woke up , had a cup of five roses and all that.

“Oh Come on! There has to be something !,” she says and Ntombi smiles thinking of telling her about her husband.

“ There’s nothing much a married woman can talk about really !” she says and watches as Palesa opens her eyes wide in shock , maybe Breakfast with Ntombi the life expect isn’t so bad after all.

“ you don’t say! ,” she says . “ I actually noticed the ring but was scared to ask ,” she lies. She didn’t care enough to ask . “ who is the lucky guy?,” she asks again, taking a sip of her cold drink.

Ntombi hesitates at first , thinking of how She would take the news.. before slowly uttering “Sbusiso.” Again, Palesa opens her eyes wider, in shock and possibly even hurt this time. Sbusiso is that one crush that is uncrushable.

“Sbusiso?,” she asks just to be sure. The goddess in her says ‘she wouldn’t and besides there are plenty of sbusiso’s in this world’ but Palesa blueticks her like that one person who annoys you but keeps texting.

“ which sbusiso?,” she asks and when Ntombi gives her that sorry look , she knows it is him – The sbusiso that is hers!.

“The head boy Sbusiso ,” and there it is confirmed, Palesa nods and takes a sip of her drink again.

“I guess Congratulations are in order,” she says smiling at the girl that used to be her best friend.

“Thanks,” Ntombi says and sighs . “When was the last time you saw Donald ?,” she asks and Palesa clears her throat . “what? You still think he raped you?,” she asks a little louder this time .Palesa shrugs.

“I don’t know Ntombi but why don’t you get on this table and scream louder so everyone can hear you?,” she asks and Ntombi mouths an “I’m sorry”. Great that is going to fix everything. An I’m sorry is enough.

“I just want to forget about that night okay ? but he is right here Fucken reminding me,” she says before

sighing. "I hate him, I hate my cousin," as an after thought.

"oh please! You are just being pathetic ..he didn't rape you . you agreed" nombi shouts as if the coochie was hers. Reminding palesa of why she is no longer her friend. Palesa shrugs reminding herself that some battles aren't meant to be fought and arguing with some people is pointless.

"can we talk about something else ?," ntombi asks and Palesa shrugs. She sure as hell doesn't want to be here anymore.

When Ntombi realises just how bored Palesa is , she decides to start another topic . "your body has really changed," she says and palesa nods. "From size 40 to this, you really have changed,"she says.

"38 ," palesa corrects her. "size 38 ," as an after thought.

"but you still need to lose more weight,"She says .

Palesa keeps quite waiting for her to say more but realises that Ntombi has gone dead quite and hopes it stays like this till she finishes her meal and gets out of here.

“palesa...” Ntombi whispers , coming closer to palesa. “There’s a man on the table opposite us , he is staring at us ... I think we should call security...,” she says palesa turns to look .

“no , not this side..,” she says ...”oska Jumpisa .” but Palesa turns and then , Her eyes meet his. The Freak . When he sees her looking at him she gets up still looking into her eyes and walks slowly towards her.

“mkami,” he greets and makes himself comfortable on the chair next to palesa’s.

“Hey,” Palesa says , her voice no longer as audible as she had hoped it was.

Mnqobi smiles at her and turns to look at Ntombi as if reading her, making her feel nervous and uncomfortable. “I don’t like you.” He says loud enough for her to hear before taking palesa’s drink.

“hayi,” Palesa says and looks at Ntombi . “Please excuse him... he is ...uhm..,” she tries to find the right words to describe him but none comes into mind.

“NO , NO ...I understand,” Ntombi says and Palesa sighs in relief. Mnqobi’s order is called and he gets up to collect and when he comes back he finds Ntombi and palesa still quite.

“anyway , let’s go Palesa ,” Ntombi says getting up.

“hamba wedwa sisi ,” mnqobi says and pulls his chair so he can sit properly. Ntombi looks at Palesa who is just seated there not knowing what to do.

“her mother”

“ungazi khathazi, she is safe, with her husband ...wena Hamba,” Mnqobi says and turns to look at the nervous Palesa.

CHAPTER TEN

Palesa sits on the bed and looks around .

“i actually never been here,” she says even though nobody asked her. The room is beautiful , not big enough but very beautiful .

The colors are neutral so they accommodate both males and females , not to mention the tidiness. It is so clean , Palesa fears touching anything.

“mmh,” Mngqobi utters , and closes the door. “Udlile?,” he asks palesa and when Palesa nods at him he nods back , before disappearing in the bathroom. He comes back a few minutes later and sits close to palesa, way too close.

“so , What kind of movies do you like?,” Mngqobi asks .

“Romcom,” she says and when she turns to find Mngqobi starring at her she knows she has to give reasons why. “I think it’s because I’m a sucker for romance .I just love those nice, love scenesthe kissing the touching ,” she says and smiles at the thought of the same thing possibly happening to

her too. “I think it is every girl’s dream to find a prince charming you know? , that man who will sweep you off your feet. Buy your flowers everyday, all that,” she says and Mnqobi nods.

“mhh,” he says, only he knows he could listen to her talk the whole day, it might annoy him but he likes the talkative Pali better .

“I remember in grade 12 , me and my friends talked about finding love and all that, I was always the loudest when it comes to those kind of topics only because I Love Love , the moments you feel like you can’t breathe when that special someone is not closer to you. I want someone I will age with , like,” she stops and thinks for a while ..” my mom and dad,” she says and looks at Mnqobi again .

“ Are your parents married ?, she asks .

“yes, ,Mnqobi says then sighs “my dad has 10 wives ,” he says and if Mnqobi had a phone in his hand he swears he would have taken a picture. Her mouth hangs in total shock.

“10?,” she asks for reassurance and when Mnqobi nods at her she almost chocks on her own spit , What in the world of banana’s and apples did he just say?. 10 wives?, that is double all the brides in her family.

“oh my God , that’s a lot ,” she says and finds Mnqobi still starrng at her , like always. “Are you a polygamist ?,” she asks and regrets it almost immidiately , not because of the the look on Mnqobi’s face . no , Because she wants to swear at her voice for sharing her thoughts out loud . At this moment she comes to the realisation that ever since she met Mnqobi ... Her body just keeps betraying her like it is the holist thing to do.

“Do you want me to be ?,” Mnqobi asks and Palesa laughs , What is him being a polygamist have to do with her ? . Palesa believed that you must never worry about people’s opinions on your life , Like now ...Mnqobi should not care about anyone’s opinion based on his life, according to Palesa that

is. "It doesn't matter whether I think you should or shouldn't be," she says .

"I think it does," Mngqobi says and Palesa shrugs her shoulders . "How does your father handle so many wives?," she asks and Mngqobi shrugs his shoulders too, before lazily falling on the bed . "I think he has some sort of timetable in his phone ," he says and Palesa laughs. A timetable, she utters to herself . she knows she would never handle polygamy even if it was her calling .

"what do you think of polygamy ?," she asks and Mngqobi heavies out a loud sigh .

"i don't ," he says and closes his eyes ,he had a long night of no sleep.

"i mean what are your thoughts on it ?," she asks.

"I have none , " he says his voice getting lower , he yawns this time and turns so he can sleep on his side.

"Did you get some sleep last night?," Palesa asks .

“mmh,” he utters , annoyed maybe . He wants to sleep that he knows , and he wants to sleep in her presence even if she is not holding him , but he wants her here.

“Aren’t you taking me home ?,” Palesa asks , regretting ever leaving with Mnqobi but it felt like a better thing to do than riding with the unqualified weight watcher. Mnqobi shakes his head. She wants to ask why but keeps to herself.

“uh...Should I go take a taxi?,” she asks , and her heart crosses fingers . hoping he says no. She just wanted to be there with him, as wrong as it is.

“Usuyahlanya? [Have you gone crazy],” he asks and that is a no . Palesa wants to lay on the bed too, rest her head a little but the thought of being close to the freak, lay near him. She couldn’t , she wouldn’t . she gets up and takes a little tour around the little room and nods smilingly .“Wozala,” she hears Mnqobi say in his sleepy voice , she shakes her head. “ngiRight la,” she says and moves to the

widow The view is so breath taking she feels like it would fit her perfectly if she had a glass of wine in her hands .

“I wasn’t asking,” the freak says , and she takes in deep breaths . This is it . she can say no , she should but her voice holds a silent protest at the corner and her legs drag her to where he is sleeping. She smiles nervously and looks at him , he still has his eyes closed and has turned to sleep facing upwards . she takes off her shoes and instead of laying on the bed , she sits at the far and stares at him admirably .

“hmm hmm,” mnqobi mutters. “asilale, just five minutes,” he says and she lays on the bed, far from him. He pulls her towards him and she fights the urge to bring herself closer so she closes her eyes instead , enjoying her safe heaven. In his arms.

.

If there’s one annoying sound in the whole world , it would be the sounds of an alarm . Pulling you from

a dream . The song by whoever continues and as it's not enough the phone vibrates helping the already annoying alarm , but this, this is no annoying alarm . It's the sound a phone ringing,Palesa's phone. Before she reaches out for it wherever it is . She hears Mnqobi huffing annoyed. "cima,cima," he says and lets go of her.

She rubs her eyes and answers the phone without even looking at it. "WHAT?," she utters before yawning.

"Palesa, What is this?, Where are you?," her mother shouts angrily at the other end of the line.

"Ma, lunch with ntombi, remember ?,," she says .

"which ntombi? Because the Ntombi I stupidly thought you are having lunch with came to check if arrived home safely after dissapearing with a scary man?. Ke dilo mang tse? Is this the things you do in Joburg when no one can see you Palesa?," Palesa sits back on the bed. Her eyes wondering around the room,while her mind thinks of the perfect reply. Her

eyes land on the watch hanging on the grey wall. It can't be. '20;30,Sart .'

"shit," she curses unexpectedly . " ma, I can explain,"as an after thought. What would she say ?

Mom,I met my neighbour and we went to his room...he held me in his broad arms and we slept. Mom I felt safe, like I am meant to be here. Uh uh did I tell you he is here because he drove me here? No?

"Explain my foot, I want you here in exactly 15 minutes . It is bad enough that your cousin and his father are here and you are no where in sight . what the hell Is this I hear about you not driving with Donald ?," she shouts , Louder this time. " I want you here now , now PALESA !," then she hangs up .

"F...," She shakes Mnqobi a little . One thing she has finally accepted is she will never ever know his name.

“ please take me home ,” she pleads and Mmqobi groans .”5 minutes,” he utters.

“That was my mom, she wants me home now,” she says and Mmqobi mumbles things only known by him and his ancestors before getting up . He has never slept so peacefully and for the first time in 30 years ,he had a dream. He gets up , putS on his sneakers and grabs the car keys from the side table before lazingly saying “ngikuguge na?” and Palesa shakes her head, following him.

“Why didn’t you wake me?,” Palesa asks , panicking . The thought of her father possibly being as mad as her mother makes her want to ask Mmqobi to drive back to Johannesburg there and then. “My dad is going to kill me,”as an after thought.

“No one is going to kill you,” Mmqobi says and when Palesa sees Donald’s car outside her yard she almost pees on herself.

“They really are here,” she murmurs and takes in deep breaths. She is freaked out,no doubt.

“letha ucingo lwakho la ,” he says and Palesa hands it to him without protesting .Mnqobi hands her back her phone .

“ that is my number,Call me if you are in trouble ,” He then turns to look at her “ngiyosuka ngo180,” he says as an after thought and Palesa laughs.

Palesa stands near the door, taking in deep breaths. She can see Mnqobi’s car still parked the exact stop he dropped her off. His one window is open and he is waiting for Palesa to get in the house like he said he would.

After taking a few deep breaths ,she steps in.

“Dumelang Baholo,” she greets and when they greet back he sneaks in the kitchen. She finds her mother dishing up with Donald’s mother.

“thobela,” she greets and receives a wide, friendly smile from her.”Palesa , How are you?, you have grown ,” she comment . of course I have grown ,what? You thought I’d remain five till I die?, palesa says silently before smiling at her Aunt. “ee, I’m

okay ...you?," she asks uninterested in her aunt's well being.

"aii same old palesa, same old. And You?, Are you ready for marriage?," she asks. MARRIAGE?!

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Silence finally.

Weeks later, Palesa's life is back to it's usual boring self. The exams are finally done, and like they all say. Real life begins. Job hunting , and everything else. No more busaries to pay for your rent,feed you, cloth you- it's officially done.All that is left is for her to find the independency she had always been yearning for. She takes out her laundry and throws it in the washing machine before settling on the chair and responding to a few massages on her facebook.

When she finds it uninteresting like always, she puts her phone on the table and proceeds to cleaning up the small flat including Liyana's room which is

clean, like always. She takes out frozen meat from the Fridge, and puts it in a bowl full of water. Her phone rings a few minutes later, as she does her final touches which is just wiping the tables and sighing a hundred times, she throws her hands around in annoyance when she sees who is calling, not HER. She answers anyway and puts the phone on loudspeaker while throwing her now clean clothes in the laundry basket.

“Ma,” she greets, and gets busy on the other hand.

“Pali, Are you done with your exams?,” she asks, no
How are you nothing.

“NO,” Palesa lies and throws her phone on top of her laundry and grabs the laundry basket while walking outside.

“Why?, You are usually done by this time,” she says and Palesa rolls her eyes before grabbing the phone from the laundry basket and plugging in her earphones.

“It’s not the same ,” she lies , yet again. “We need to relax this is probably the last time I right exams and I think they want us to study carefully ,” ANOTHER BIG FAT LIE on top of Mamohoto’s head and Palesa’s excuse is ‘she deserves it’.

“When will you be done ?,” Mamohoto asks.

“I don’t know Next of Next year maybe,” Palesa says underneath her breath before sighing .”I’m not quite sure,” She says.

“I feel like you are dodging me somehow,” she says . Palesa sighs yet again as she hangs her favourite underwear on the washing line, Not even a week passes without this baby being worn but she holds on tight and doesn’t seem to mind.

“Aowa, Why would I?,” she asks and her Mother sighs.

“Pali, You know how your father respects the wishes of the dead,” Her mother says. Ahh of course that is all that matters - the dead, rituals, passing on dry and boring traditions.

“I said I understand ,” Palesa says ,but regrets it. It is not her mother’s fault.Even her sister was married off to her cousin, it’s the Mohoto tradition . “dikgomo dibowela shakeng” as they say .” I understand ma. It is tradition and my feelings don’t matter,” Palesa says and when her mother keeps quite she thinks of the most stupid idea ever . “ma?,” she calls out for her.

“yes pali?,” Mamohoto responds in a low voice. She is ashamed of herself and the fact that she can’t do anything to save her daughter from this ancient and still very much practiced tradition.

“What if I want to marry?...Someone else,” she utters .”now,” as an after thought. Her mother gives it a thought. “then you can’t be forced to marry Donald , I don’t like him anyway he has a big head ,” Her mother says and she chortles. “Great , I know just the perfect guy,” She lies . She knows no one fit to be her husband even if it’s for a few years .

“it better not be Thabang,” Her mother says. “And your dad doesn’t seem to like Donald’s head either . I’m sure he won’t mind. You know your happiness is our number one priority ,”Her mother says.

“MA, what’s wrong with Thabang?,” she asks . “I thought you liked him,” as an after thought.

“I do like him. As a FRIEND of yours other than that no, no,” she says and they both fall into deep laughter.

“it’s not Thabang,”she says. He was just there in the list of options but has officially been scratched , He gets too attached anyway.

“Mme , I will have to call you later to give you an update on err, Find a husband mission,” Palesa says and her mother laughs .

“I shall look for a husband for you this side ,” Palesa laughs and before she could respond her mother calls out her name.

“why shout ?,” palesa utters in a low voice.

“KGOTHATSO!,” She shouts.

“what about Kgothatso?,” She asks. She would marry kgothatso -he is perfect .

“he is back, he is perfect ,” mamohoto says already smiling from ear to ear. Kgothatso is the perfect candidate. “he is back?,” palesa asks before sighing .

“ I will search him on facebook,” palesa says and her mother couldn't be any more happier . As long as she marries someone she loves.

“yohhh, I am so excited . but pali you need to pray about this ne? God will see you through everything,” palesa nods in agreement before uttering and inaudible “true,” they both say their Goodbyes before hanging up.

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She dials Kedi's number and listens to the song by lucky dube play. She puts the phone on loudspeaker while staring her pot. The meat is perfectly cooked and so is the pap.

After a few rings she hears a “ehhh mehlolo.

Modimo ophala baloyi kare mehlolo,” and she laughs out loud.

“hi to you too kedi,” she greets. Moving to the nearest seat.

“Who died?,” kedi asks.

“Me , heeee it has started ,” palesa tells her sister.

“what started ?,” kedi asks before shouting “wena hlogo yatatago [your father’s head] wash those dishes,” and sighing “one advice sis. Don’t have kids. BALEKA,” SHE SAYS dramatically and palesa tells her she is not planning on having kids anytime soon, music to kedi’s ears.

“ware what’s cooking?,” kedi asks.

“i am officially done with va-va (varsity),” she says. “and you know , I have to marry as per the mohoto tradition . now the problem is I have to marry the cousin,” she says.

“i know. I’m not going to say anything shame because I married my cousin and ereng happiness mo ngwaneng ?,” palesa laughs.

“Are you saying I should just go ahead with it ?,” she asks.

“you literally have no choice , none,” she says. “Who is the hubby?”

“isn’t it a bit obvious?,” she asks and she hears her sister say “uhhh, no it isn’t,” and she is sure she rolled her eyes.

“Donald ,”she says .

“the rapist ? donald the RAPIST? Not happening,” she shouts.

“kedi,” palesa calls out calmly for her sister.

“Palesa for an educated girl you are stupid. Donald raped you,It doesn’t matter if you agreed at first but the moment he tries taking off your panties and you say no and he countinoes then he raped you. No means No . Stop means Stop . I still don’t know why

you didn't have him arrested. He should be in jail by now serving as older man's sex slave. Let's have him killed, hire a hitman ,” palesa laughs.

“you are being dramatic ,”

“bona Pale I will call you later,” she knows she is lying but agrees anyway and hangs up. She walks to the couch and decides to lay there while searching for kgothatso on facebook.

There is an annoying knock on the door and Palesa huffs getting off the couch and going to open the door. She finds the Freak leaning on the door with both his hands buried in his pockets.

“er... uhm, hi,” she utters before clearing her throat.

“May I come in?,” the freak asks and Palesa nods moving from the door and he walks in and like always, Looks around before settling on the couch.

“You look beautiful,” he says in his bold voice.

Palesa smiles .”Thanks you too.” The freak looks at her like he has gone nuts and shakes his head.

“It smells nice in here,” He says. Since when does he do small talk?.

“oh yeah , I cooked and I was about to dish up. Do you want some?,” she asks . Mngqobi nods and relaxes his head on the couch like this is his house and nobody is going to tell him anything.

Palesa shakes her head before walking to the kitchen. She grabs a bowl and puts on water in the kettle for him to wash his hands before eating.

When she is done she puts two plates on the counter and starts dishing up for both him and herself forgetting the actual plan was to dish up later at night, before she finishes up she feels cold hands on her waist and she takes in his scent . She should push him away and tell him about her non-existent boyfriend but she doesn't instead , she turns her head like a possessed woman. What is he doing to her?, Why does she feel something...Things she has never felt .

“Freak,” she calls out for him , and The freak holds her tighter.

“umuhle,” he whispers in her ears and she smile like a whore after getting a fat ass pay cheque-that wide!

“I-,” before she can say anything else he turns her around gently and puts his lips gently on hers but doesn’t kiss her,and instead waits for her to push him away but she doesn’t instead she initiates the kiss, and throws her arms around his neck. He is so tall she is literally standing on her toes. The kiss is slow, not rushed. It is like they have all the time in the world ,Together.He carries her size 36 self and gently puts her on the counter ,The kiss deepening ,going faster. He smiles at her and like always within a few seconds the smile disappears.

“You are my wife,” he tells her before helping her off her Shirt and she nods.At this point she doesn’t care what she is agreeing to as long as he is doing whatever he is doing to her.

“Ngiyakuthanda uyezwa,” she hears him say while he plants soft kisses on her neck and to her bra, He unhooks it with no hesitation like he was born for unhooking bras .She nods still and throws her head back with both hands at her back giving him access to her body.

“Are you sure you want this?,” he asks for reassurance and she nods impatiently at him before throwing her head back again.

“Ngilambile,” she hears him say again before he lets go off her and disappears to the where he comes from. She sits there her mouth hanged in awe before uttering “He did not, He did not just do that.” and then pinches herself to make sure this isn’t a dream.

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Unedited!

CHAPTER TWELVE

Mnqobi gets up panting after his usual exercising routine ,He wipes his face with the towel that hanged carefully on his neck. He then throws his heavy self on the couch and puts his legs on the table trying to relax and like always , the trick works .A few minutes later, right before he falls into deep sleep his phone rings on the table and like always , he huffs annoyed before reaching out to take the phone.

The number is an unsaved number but he answers anyway,then keeps quite.

“Tyma ,” the voice he recognises almost instantly says at the other end of the line.

“mhh,” he murmurs before moving back to relax on the couch.

“uphilele?,” He asks, He knows he doesn’t care so he chortles. “How much do you want Nhlanhla?,” He asks and his son laughs .

“What makes you think I want money?,” The son that thinks Mnqobi is the whole FNB bank says.

“hm,” Mnqobi utters again , this conversation will lead them no where,they both know it.

“okay ke tyma, I saw these snickers at sports scene,” Mnqobi shakes his head. Regretting almost thinking Nhlanhla , The whole Nhanhla would call to check on him.

“Futhi?,” he asks.

“Yes, I need to blend in ,you know?. Follow the street cred,Not disappoint the homies ,”The 16 years Nhlanhla explains.

“Hmm,”that’s all Mnqobi says.

“So , Will you be sending the money?,” he asks . Mnqobi sighs.

“No,but you will get the money. I will talk to Bab’Mahlangu to see if he might have a job for you ,” He says .

“Bab’Mahlangu the farmer ?,” Nhlanhla asks and

Mnqobi utters a “yes.”

“If you want the sneakers you will do as he says, You work for money . it doesn’t grow on trees .Even if it did you’d have to go all the way up the tree and get it and that’s work, now go give your Mother the phone ,” He says, His word is final. Nhlanhla knows it so he agrees and rushes over to give his Mother the phone.

“Shongololo,” She greets and Mnqobi smiles as if she sees him.

“uphilele?,” he asks.

“Yes, I hope Nhlanhla wasn’t asking you for money ,” she says.

“He was,” He says.

She sighs “I don’t know who taught him money honestly. Manje uthi uyosibona nini?,” She asks and Mnqobi sighs.

“I don’t know , I will make time this week,” he says already adding it on his to do list.

“You don’t visit us anymore,” Nonhlanhla complains.

“ngiseGoli,” He tells her.

“oh, You should have taken me with,” she says .

“Hmm,” he utters before saying his goodbye and her telling him she loves her. After the call disconnects he calls Bab’Mahlangu.

“shongololo Omuhle,” Bab’Mahlangu and Mnqobi chortles.

“Hlangu,” he says . “Nhlanhla will be coming there ,give him a job. Make it hard,” he says.

“May I ask why?,” Hlangu asks.

“No,” Mnqobi says and sighs. “And make the job hard Hlangu ,I will pay,” he says .

“of course. .When will you come back to your wife and son Shongololo....they need you. Nonhlanhla has needs,” Mahlangu says and Mnqobi stops himself from laughing.

“i will come and fulfil all her needs, and beyond. Do your part by taking care of the farm,” he says and hangs up shaking his head before closing his eyes and resting his head on the couch.

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When he wakes up he darts his eyes towards the watch on the wall, he remembers he had promised himself to pay Palesa a short visit. He takes a short shower and settles for a pair of brown brandwood pants and a T-shirt. He closes his eyes and grabs his phone and his flat keys from the drawer. He calls Nhlanhla on his way out and tells him about having to go to the farm first thing he comes back tomorrow.

“i have a match tomorrow , Will you make it?,” he asks, Mngqobi sighs.

“I ...no, I can't ,” he says and he keeps quiet .

“BABA?,” he calls out for him and Mngqobi smiles.

“Shongololo.”

“I texted him telling him about the match,Do you think he will show up?,” he asks.

“No,”Mnqobi tells him honestly,He has grown now and sugar coating things won’t do him any good.

“but I might..no scratch that I am coming,”he tells him and Nhlanhla screams on the other end of the line.

“Really?,” he asks and Mnqobi smiles ,“Yes”

“Ngiyakuthanda,”Mnqobi says to his son.

“ahhh tyma, you are making this awkward .I have a girl and all now,”Mnqobi shakes his head and hangs up.

He knocks on Palesa’s door and he hears her mumbling things only she knows he smiles while leaning on the door with his hand buried in his pockets. She opens the door in her Black leggings and a long T-shirt and like always stares at him in shock.

“err...uhm,hi,”she utters and clears her throat.

“May I come in?,” he asks and she moves from the door and walks. She looks at him then walks away with him staring at her behind and he swears he felt Dlabazane moving a little and he smiles before whispering “behave.”

“you look beautiful,” he says after gathering himself together. It is going to take a lot for him not to do things to her .

“thanks, you too,” she says and he looks at her he too can’t figure out then shakes his head.

“it smells nice in here,” he says. He just hungry and it smells like food. He holds his fingers hoping she offers to dish up from him.

“Oh yeah, I cooked and I was about to dish up. Do you want some?,” He nods and secretly thanks his ancestors before relaxing on his ‘woman’s couch’.

After debating with himself for a while he stands up and walks over to the kitchen to asks for water and before he says anything he stares at her putting on the kettle. The buttons on her T-shirt are loose and

he swears he saw her boobs,He licks his lips before going from behind her and before stopping himself he finds himself holding her waist,like he had the right to and no one was going to say anything.

[THE LAST PART OF CHAPTER ELEVEN].

[PALESA]

She gathers herself and clears her throat unable to mask the smile that makes it's way on her face. She will never get over what he just did there.The things he made her feel ,How her body responded to his touch,how she felt tangles in her stomach.

She picks up the plates and walks to the dining area and puts the plates on the table,she feels his eyes piecing through her skin but she ignores him and moves back to the kitchen . She pours the water in the bowl and looks for cleanest Cloth she can find.

She sits on the floor exactly how her mother taught her before bringing the bowl forward and Mngqobi washes his hands still staring at her.

“Thank you,”he says and Palesa nods looking anywhere but his eyes.

“Aren’t you eating?,” he asks. “I am ,”she sits on the opposite couch.

“When you are done please freshen up I want to take you somewhere,”she smiles nodding.

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Thankfully , by the grace of the living God.Mnqobi doesn’t play Maskandi on their way to God knows where,instead he plays the radio and they drive in silence with his hand resting on her thigh.

“You changed cars?,” Palesa finally asks,after they have driven for what feels like an hour.

“no, I was using Thokozani’s car so I got mine weeks back,You like it?,” Palesa smiles.

“Yes,” she says and looks at him for a while. He kisses her hand and she blushes looking out of the window. This man is a dream, remove the trousers and he is just perfect.

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She feels someone carrying and she opens her eyes.

“where am I?,” she asks and Mngqobi looks at her without putting her down and carries on walking with her in his arms.

“sleep,” he says and she nods, resting her head on his shoulder. It felt damn comfortable. He puts her on top of his bed and helps her off her shoes then jeans.

“wait,” she utters and gets up. “Where am I?,” she asks and he clears his throat.

“home,” he says and brings himself closer to her. He puts his lips on hers and this time, kisses her and she kisses back without hesitation. She falls to her bed and he follows her still kissing her.

“ukahle?,” he asks and she nods several times before bringing her lips closer to his. He smirks in between the kiss and helps her off her jeans which were stuck somewhere on her legs. “ungasa cqoki lododi,” he whispers in her ear and she nods in agreement even though she is not planning on it.

The kiss deepens and he takes off her shirt, slowly then her bra.

“i like these,” he whispers yet again, his voice huskier than before. “I hate them,” she says honestly and he stops kissing her and looks at her with his serious face.

“You shouldn’t...” he says and kisses her neck. “you are perfect ,” he says and this time sucks on her neck. “You will always be perfect in my eyes,” She smiles and he looks at her with a smile on his face .”always,” he repeats and then he moves from her and takes off his brand hood trousers along with his T-shirt before helping her in the blankets then joins

her. He hugs her from behind and she brings herself closer, closer than she should.

“too close,” he whispers and she giggles.

“Sorry” she turns to look at him thinking he is asleep.

“You have beautiful eyes,” she says and he smiles.

“and a beautiful smile,” he frowns.

“Don’t,” he says and helps her get on top of him.

“Why not?”

“I don’t like it,” he says and turns so he is on top of her.

She breaths in faster and she feels his hands in her panties. “freak...,” she utters, slowly and Mngqobi looks at her confused.

“I, we can’t . I don’t even know your name,” Mngqobi nods and gets off her.

“I am Babakwami Bhengu, the father of your 7 kids and your husband,” before she can say anything else

her phone rings and when she answers Mngqobi leaves the room.

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When Mngqobi comes back he finds her asleep,he kisses her cheek and writes a note .

‘ngifuna ukuk’fica la bengibuya

BABAKWAKHO’

Then puts a few hundred rands near the letter before leaving for his son’s match,A match he wouldn’t miss for the world.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

[MNQOBI]

Mngqobi huffs in annoyance when Nhlanhla misses the goal and looks at Nonhlanhla who is laughing and giving Nhlanhla a thumbs up as an encouragement and Nhlanhla shakes his head and continues running around the field.

“You are still impatient ,” Nonhlanhla says to Mngqobi who shakes his head. “I will never change,” he tells her and looks for his phone in his pockets.

“That is one thing I like about you. Not wanting to change,” she says . “But you need to want change sometimes. Change is not always a bad thing,” she says as an after thought.

“Mhh,” Mngqobi murmurs before darting his eyes back on the field.

“How have you been ?,” she asks . Turning to look at him straight in the eyes.

“I’m okay,” he says and then looks back at her
“you?”

“I have you, I’m okay,” Mngqobi heaves out a loud sigh .

“And I will never leave you. You are here because of me ,” he says honestly then plants a kiss on her left cheek , leaving her smiling.

“Is that the only reason why you are here with me ? because I am here because of you?,” she asks and watches as Nhlanhla finally scores. Mngobi smiles and throws a thumbs up at his son who smiles proudly back at his father.

“awwww Shongololo,Ushongololo lo. Shongololo Omuhle,” his mother shouts among the already loud crowd fighting the urge to run in the field and hug her son.

“No,” Mngobi says to her when everyone cools down and go back to their seats.

She smiles and turns him to look at her. “Thank you,”she says before putting her lips on his. She plants a soft kiss on his lips and then let’s go off him.

“No,thank you,”he says and turns to look at Nhlanhla who is running among the boys.

“When are you going back to Johannesburg?,” she asks.

“Yini?Wangicosha . Ufaka indoda Kwami NaDlamani ?,”he asks his voice back to it’s usual Dominant self. Nonhlanhla laughs.

“No,We go to a hotel,”she says.

“it’s Hlangu isn’t it?,”he asks jokingly and Nonhlanhla nods laughing.

“Ngivele ngabona nje sekuthiwa ye ye needs,needs,wife,wife,”They both laugh.

“You seem happy,” Nonhlanhla states the obvious.

“I am,”he says .He has no choice but to chat till he can’t when he is around his mini-family.

“keep it that way,Who is she ?,”she asks . “I know it’s a woman,”she says when she sees the look on his face.

“She is ...Perfect,”he says .

“Do you want to marry her?,” she asks and Mngqobi clears his throat and nods.

“Will she agree to be a second wife?,” she asks and Mmqobi laughs. “She has no choice, It’s me or staying single her entire life. Wami loya,” he says already imagining her innocent face. Nonhlanhla nods and fakes a smile “Kuhle makunjalo, just don’t say that near her, she will think you are obsessed,” she says and Mmqobi shrugs his shoulder before simply saying “I don’t care.”

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The board is changed from one to two and the man dressed in green finally lifts a flag and shouts “time up” there. The final score is Two--Two and a draw. The teams exchange greetings and some shoulder hump each other. The men sitting at the far corner bring their heads together and decide that they will add at least 5 minutes and if none of the teams score then it is a draw. Nhlanhla runs to his team and when the man blows the whistle they all chase after the ball. Attempting to score a goal. After the five minutes .None of the team have scored a goal and they have decided they will both share the money. It

was a great match indeed,both couches agree and after that decide to communicate for a re-match.

Nhlanhla rushes to his parents after him and his team go their separate ways,but they all agree to meet again the next day to discuss how they scored a draw against one of the best teams in KZN.

“Nidlale kahle,”that is the first thing his mother says to him then brings him close for a short hug.

Mnqobi nods his head in agreement .

“You might be the next Makaringe ,”Mnqobi adds to Nonhlanhla’s compliment.

“More like Messi ,or Ronaldo,”he says and they share a short laughter.

“Makaringe is just as good,”Mnqobi says .

“Yes ,but he is not Messi. He is just Fortune Makaringe who plays for Pirates . No world recognition ,nothing,”he says . “But Messi,that’s the main man. I mean who doesn’t know Messi?,” he asks.

“Me,” Nonhlanhla says and Nhlanhla laughs.

“I bet you don’t know Khune ,Kaizer chiefs’s goal keeper. One of the most famous goalkeepers in South Africa ...or Lorch,” he says and Nonhlanhla laughs.

“Hai suka , I know Simphiwe Shabalala,” she comes to her own defence and Mnqobi and Nhlanhla laugh before they step in the car.

“This is a car, Umshini baba ,”Nhlanhla says stepping in the front seat. Nonhlanhla nods in agreement even though she holds no knowledge for cars. “even Mom agrees ,” he adds and they laugh yet again.

“Am I not supposed to agree kanti?,” she asks.

“Come on Mom ,All you know is that Maize Meal is R60 ,”Mnqobi laughs and drives off.

“You are taking the wrong route ,”Nonhlanhla says but Mnqobi shakes his head.

“I’m talking you out for lunch,”he says.

“But I cooked, You can’t be wasting money like this Shongololo,” she says and Mngqobi looks at her and then back at the route before clenching his jaws angrily.

“Yoh awa mama, We get tired of your food,” Nhlanhla complains. “Even Bab’Mahlangu avoids coming over for dinner these days,” he adds not knowing he is adding fuel to an already burning fire.

When they arrive at the mall which is full because it is a Saturday and who doesn’t want to go to a mall on Saturday?. Mngqobi parks at KFC and searches for R100 in his wallet before handing it to Nhlanhla.

“Awuze nolce-klim lapho (go buy ice-cream),” he says and Nhlanhla is happy to step out the car which went from chatty to being awkward .too awkward for him. The moment he steps out Mngqobi turns to look at Nonhlanhla .”Woza ngapha,” he says and opens the door for her. She steps in as soon as she can because Mngqobi’s word is final.

“Have I ever failed to provide for you and Nhlanhla?” he asks and Nonhlanhla shakes her head.

“Udakiwe?,” he asks. “Did I speak to you in sign language?” he asks.

“Cha,” she says with her head slightly bowed down.

“I don’t like people shitting on me, If you didn’t know ,you know now. Whatever is going on with you and Hlangu I want it far away from Nhlanhla,siyezwana?,”

“yebo,” she utters,

“Phuma,” he says when he spots Nhlanhla approaching.

“I respect you, If I didn’t I would have brought Palesa with because leaving her alone was the hardest thing I had to do this week . Respect me enough to not bring your boyfriend in my house ,” he says.

“I am sorry,” she says already opening the door and stepping out. “It won’t happen again,” she utters.

“You damn right it won’t, I am a Bhengu and if you think I am any different from Boyabenyathi then You are stupid. I am my father’s son. Your husband’s damn son,” he says

“I am sorry,” she utters wiping her tears.

“sula lododi,” he says and a few seconds later Nhlanhla walks in with the ice cream and they listen to him talk about how he felt after scoring the goal.

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[PALESA]

When she wakes up she taps on the other side of the bed and finds it empty. Her eyes scan around the room until they land on the paper with money on it’s side. She reads it and sighs feeling like she

was used and tossed aside like a tissue. Her phone rings and she smiles thinking it is the freak only to come to the sad realization that it is only Liyana, the friend that hardly spends time with her anymore.

“Hey,” she greets and like always liyana shouts “girl, girler, girlings,” Palesa heavies out a loud sigh because she really isn’t in the mood.

“How can I be of your assistance Lee,” she murmurs loud enough for Liyana to hear.

“Is it the 15th ?,” Liyana asks and keeps quiet for a while .”yup, it is definitely the 15th . It is that time of the month,” she adds,

“I am not on my periods ,” Palesa says,

“Oh But you will be. Do you have Buddy bear there with you?,” Liyana asks.

“I am at home,soooo yes,” she says before rolling her eyes.

“Where?Which home? If you were home you would be with me in your room, watching Before you with

lots and lots of ice-cream . Crying because that bastard decided to end his life and leave the poor girl alone and miserable ,”Liyana says.

“For a good reason though,”Palesa says.”and she wasn’t miserable,”she adds.

“Do you remember how we cried when that scene at the beach played.Where he told her he would continue ending his life even after she begged him not too?,”She says.

“I want to come home,”Palesa says already tearing the letter in pieces.

“Uber home so you can tell me where the hell is your single arse at .” she says.

“I don’t even know where I am,”she says.

“Send me your live location and an uber will be there in a few because I am your heroin. Then a voice note explaining WHY THE HELL DON’T YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE,”Liyana adds before hanging up leaving Palesa in stitches.

When she is done, she takes a hot,short shower. She searches through the wardrobe and finds T-shirts which would be too big for her and Brentwood trousers. She wears the clothes and laughs at how stupid she actually looks and feels.

When she walks in the kitchen she finds a woman who looks like she is in her late fifties cleaning. She clears her throat and the lady looks at her before smiling. “madam,” the woman utters.

“no,Palesa,” she corrects her and the lady smiles “okay, Mr Bhengu said I should make you breakfast and keep an eye on you,” she says. A car hoots outside.

“don’t worry yourself Ma,” she says. “But please do tell Mr Bhengu thanks for the money,” she says already walking to the door . “oh and er..When he gets here tell him I said this,”she shows a middle finger at her.

“sorry ma the finger is for him,”she says.

“what?,” The woman asks confused,.

“When he walks in here tell him I said thanks for the money then show him the middle finger and tell him I said he should LICK MY ARSE,” She says and the car outside hoots.

“he must relax, I pay him,”she says and bids the confused Marriam goodbye.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

[MNQOBI]

He stops the car ,presses the remote and the gate opens. He drives in and presses another remote and the garage door opens,He parks his car and instead of walking in the house he takes his phone from his pockets and calls Nonhlanhla.

“Shongololo,”she answers.

“NaDlamini,Nilele?,” he asks.

“Yebo. Today was fun,” she says and Mngqobi is sure she is smiling wherever she is.

“Good,” he says . “I need to go ,” he says . “ But I might call you before I head off to bed .” he adds already hanging up . He is not a fan of goodbyes Nonhlanhla knows and understands that so she doesn’t mind him hanging up on her.

He walks in his house , The thought of finding his innocent Pali curled up on the bed or the couch ,wherever as long as she is in his house . As long as he feels her presence as he walks in. He unlocks the door and smiles at the sight of his house clean. He mentally thanks Mam’Marrium and Thokozani for recommending her. He looks at the couch but doesn’t see Pali. He walks to his room and still he doesn’t find her so he concludes she is somewhere in the house.He has never walked as far as the kitchen or the room but he decides he has to , For Palesa.He Searches in each and every room,Scanning his eyes around until the very last room and still doesn’t catch not even a glance of

Palesa. He shakes his head and walks back to his room where he finds his letter in pieces on the floor.

He dials Palesa's number and waits.

"Hello,hi, You have reached Palesa Mohoto. I am busy ignoring someone so if I don't get back to you then hahaha,Chiao. At the tone please record you message then press hash or hangup," he shakes his head and calls Thokozani. Who answers in the third ring.

"Bafo," he greets.

"Awungiphe inumber yalogogo lapho," Mnqobi says and Thokozani heavies out a loud sigh.

"Ugogo?,"he asks. "Are you okay," as an after thought. Mnqobi huffs annoyed.

"You never exactly called me at night asking for elder woman's phone numbers,"Thokozani adds.

Mnqobi grunts and rubs his nose with his thumb In annoyance.

“The cleaning lady, Send me her number ,” He says.

“Now,” as an after thought before hanging up.

Within a few his phone beeps indicating a message.

He dials the number and after the forth ring he hears an almost silent “Hello.”

“Yebo,” He says. “It’s Mnqobi....Mnqobi Bhengu,” as an after thought.

“Oh , Yebo Mkhwenyana,” The lady greets properly this time, Her voice a little more audible.

“Yah. Where is the lady that was here?,” he asks.

“she left in the morning, said I should tell you thanks for the money and likases,” she says.

“licka ini?,” Mnqobi asks. “likases,” the lady says again.

Mnqobi shakes his head. “Yini loko?,” he asks.

“angazi, she said I should show you a middle finger then say lickases,” she says, Mnqobi chortles in disbelief.

“Sibongile Ma, nilale kahle,” he says and hangs up. He looks at the time on his phone.

‘19;40’

He sighs and sets an alarm for 30 minutes before falling on the bed.

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[PALESA]

As promised when she gets home she finds ice cream in the fridge.

“liyana,” she calls out to her, looking around for absolutely nothing. Liyana walks in lazily. She looks at her and laughs out loud.

“where were you again?, Big Zulu’s house?,” she asks laughing before taking Palesa a few photos.

“something like that,” Palesa says and throws herself on the couch. “You look ridiculous ,” liyana says.

“thank you, oksalayo I might have found a boyfriend while looking this ridiculous ,” she says.

“Who? Big Zulu?,” Liyana asks joining her on the couch.

“hahaha, very funny. No, the cab driver. He looked so damn hot,” she says.

“What? It’s about damn time!,” Liyana half shouts.

“What’s his name?,” as an after thought.

“Bongani,”Palesa says. “He said I look like a Taxi driver’s wife. A zulu taxi driver,” she adds.

“And you still gave him your number?,” Liyana asks.

“that hot ,huh?,” Palesa looks away smiling.”Wena?Aren’t you supposed to be with Thokozani Bae?,” Palesa asks wiggling her eyebrows.

“We had an argument ,”Liyana says and sighs.

“Apparently Mr Nkabinde Bhengu does not like the way I dress,” She chortles as if she is still very much in disbelief. “He said that , I , Liyana . Dress like a whore,” She adds. “That time he found me dressing up like a whore. Told me he loved me yereyere. The way I am . Few months in whatever shit we are doing I dress like a whore,”she says and Palesa walks to the kitchen to get both of them some ice cream.

“He might be right,You do dress up like a whore. A horny one at that,” Palesa says when she sits near Liyana In her Brentwood pants which are big and just as big T-shirt. Liyana playfully hits her and grabs the spoon from her.

“But he has no right to tell you what to and not to wear,”Palesa says. “I hate how men think they can control us like wear this,Wear that. I want to find you here when I get back,Kiss me ,Sex me,”she says and Liyana nods in agreement.

“I could do with Wine and Pizza,”Palesa says.

“I have wine, grabbed a few bottles when I left today,” liyana says.

“I’ll order pizza. They give us money after ordering us around,” Palesa says already reaching out for her phone. Liyana nods walking to the kitchen for the wine and glasses.

“So ? Aren’t you going to tell me about your Zulu taxi driver?,” Liyana asks pouring Palesa a glass of wine.

“All I can say is. He ...I don’t want to see him again,” she says .

“What did he do?,” Liyana asks.

“Left me in bed Alone. Hasn’t even called I mean , Look at the time.” she says and shows Liyana her phone.

“It’s still early,”Liyana says. “Thokozani hasn’t called me either, That handsome arsehole. I’m going to have have a hard time getting over his arse. Worse

he gave me mind blowing Sex,"she says and Palesa laughs.

"Thank the good lord freak hasn't sexed me yet,I've seen the dick print though and ...Woah,"she clears her throat and puts her glass on her lower lip.

"Who are you and what did you do to my church going roommate and best friend?," Liyana asks.

"Don't act like you don't know this side of me,and besides God knows we have needs,"They laugh and watch Before you with Pizza,wine and vanilla ice-cream.As planned,They even decide to switch off their phones ,incase the 'men' decide to call again.

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"I think we should go clubbing," Liyana suggests throwing herself back on the couch.

"No,We have church to attend tomorrow,"Palesa says,She had missed church so much she is surprised

the pastor's wife hasn't called to ask what is going on.

"Argh Come on ,"Liyana says. "And besides,We might be going our separate ways For like ever,"Liyana says. "I will go on and do what journalists do,and you my dear will go on and do what shrinks do,"Palesa smiles.

"In a few weeks , We will have degrees attached to our names,"she adds to Liyana's statement.

"We never dissappoint the feminists sisters,"Liyana says finishing off the last bottle of wine.

"And guess what?,We will be single and happy,"Palesa says .

"And besides Men are absolute trash, I'm talking trash in capital letters. Give us good sex,Call us whores and...Argh What an insult."

"wait , wait...there's more. How about leave you alone in their bed with a lousy boring letter and Cash like thank you,you prostitute. I can't believe I

let him suck on my lower lip. Hold my waist like that and cuddle me. Do you know how I love cuddles ? huh?," Liyana nods in agreement.

"Here my Friend is to being single...For life,"They click the empty glasses and laugh at how drunk they really are.

There is a loud knock on the door,More like a banging sound.Both Palesa and Liyana stare at each other.

"Okay, I will get the door and you dial the cops when I say ahh you make the phone call,"Palesa says already grabbing a knife from the Kitchen. Liyana nods her head in agreement, I mean it's easy .Ahh then the cops. Simple. ABC,123.

Palesa walks to the door taking steady steps.

"ke mang?," she asks.

"Open the damn door!," A voice shouts and she hears someone grunt. Okay,It is definetely the freak,only he can grunt like he went to school for it.

She sighs in relief,atleast it is not robbers and opens the door. Thokozani walks In slightly pushing palesa ,Mnqobi grunts again and Thokozani couldn't even give a swimming pool.

“Where is Liyana?,” he asks.

“Oh , The whore?,”Liyana asks,walking in the room.

“The whore is right here. Dressed like a whore like always,”she adds and before Palesa settles on the couch Mnqobi is already pulling her to his car.

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He gently helps her in the car and helps fasten the seatbelt.

“What is this?,” Mnqobi asks her,Showing her his middle finger.

“Finger,” she says.

“Reminds you of anything?,” he asks and Palesa shakes her head,Of course she remembers .

Everything. The middle fingers,Lick my arse. Every single thing.

Mnqobi chortles shaking his head before closing the door. Palesa sighs “God,I know. I haven’t been praying...but save me,” Mnqobi opens his side and looks at her before bringing the engine to live.

Mnqobi switches on radio,and like always Mtshengiseni plays-Boring Palesa to the core.

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Palesa looks around for her ringing phone,It can only be her who sets ‘Alicia Keys’s If I ain’t got you’ as her ringtone. It is an unsaved number but she answers anyway.

“Mhh,”She answers.

“Hi. It’s Bongani.” she smiles.

“Hi,”she greets.

“Are you good?,”He asks. “Yes.” she says and looks around the room. It is not her room that she knows and she has a pounding headache.

“Yes,you?,” she asks and starts to wonder why and how the hell did she agree to coming here?With the freak?

“I am also good, I was just checking up on you . Do you mind if I call you later?,” she asks.

“No, Call me anytime,” she says and after they bid each other goodbye she pushes the blankets off and notices the red stains.

“No,” she says to herself. “no ,no. God please don’t do this to me,Not here please,”she utters and when she realizes that she is in only her panties and they are red she almost faints.

“Oh God!,” she says and blinks away the tears. Blood stains on the freak’s bed. As if on cue the freak walks in,In his usual Brentwood trousers ,A boring T-shirt and some chain. He looks like a Taxi driver,A crazy one that always insults passengers.

“Haibo. Ukhalalani?,”Mnqobi asks crawling to the bed, Palesa pulls the blankets .

“I am sorry,” She says.

“Woza la,”he says, Opening his arms out for a hug. She sniffs.

“I feel so stupid,”she utters . “Please forgive me.”

“i forgive you,”Mnqobi says even though he has no idea why she asking for forgiveness.

“Let’s go,you need to eat,”he says.

“I can’t,”she murmurs. “I...it’s that time of the month and I ...the ..” Mnqobi looks at her in confusion. She sees how blank he is,She clears her throat and throws the blankets off her,darting her eyes to red blood stains. Mnqobi follows her eyes and murmurs and almost silence “Oh.”

“Ngikugeze?,”he asks.

“No,I need Pads,”she says. “You do know pads right?,” she asks and the clueless Mnqobi clears his throat.

“Just go to clicks and asks for pads. I don’t even have toiletries,”she says. Mnqobi hands her the plastic and gets off the bed.

“Let me go get the Pams,”

“Pads,”Palesa corrects him.

“Yes,THAT.”He leaves the room shaking his head.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

[LIYANA]

It has been passed on to parents by parents of parents and from parents of parents of Parents,It was made Okay and acceptable for men to tell women what they oath to wear or not to wear. Men have been given the right to feel they “own” women. That women were made to follow their lead,do what they tell them to do at the time they tell them to do it. Liyana crosses her arms and stares blankly at Thokozani who has his one hand on his head.

“I...I am sorry,”he utters,and raises his head to look at Liyana . “I shouldn’t have called you names.” As an after thought.

“What names Thokozani? Say the names...Whore. Say it ,”Thokozani clears his throat.

“Yes,that , I’m Sorry,”he says and Liyana shakes her head.

“Just so you know I will not change myself for you. I am Liyana and I wear bum shorts and Crop tops,it is who I am . I have always and will always be that girl.If you don’t like my type of girls you go to Kwazulu Natal and find yourself a Yebo Baba girlfriend ,”she says and both her and Thokozani share a short laughter , trust Liyana to say that.

“Ngiyakuzwa Mafaku,”he says and Liyana blushes .

“How have you been?,” Liyana asks and Thokozani sighs,moving to lay on Liyana’s breasts.

“I am not Okay,”he says ,and Liyana brushes his head.

“Why ?,”she asks. She loved this side of Thokozani, the cute side. The side that lays on her boobs after a long day.

“Played FIFA with Thabo and he beat me,”he says and heavies out another loud sigh as if it is a big deal.

“What can I do to make it better?,” Liyana asks, holding in her laughter.

“Play FIFA with me and let me beat you,”Liyana lays her head back and laughs so loud,she feels the neighbour will come in and ask her to share the very funny joke.

“How about you call Thabo, Ask for a rematch and I will make sure you win,”she says and Thokozani nods before uttering . “it hurts,”Liyana brushes his head.

“I know,”she says.

“It’s going to take years to heal,”He says and raises his head to look at Liyana. He never understood

it,Why he couldn't really function well when he did not talk to her. Liyana pecks his lips.

"I will kiss it better."

"I think I might need a therapist too. Thabo just beat me,"he utters and Liyana laughs.

"I am sorry . Wait,Where is Pali and that scary brother of yours?," She asks,looking around as if they will appear out of no where and shout Here we are.

"I honestly don't know. One minute they were here and the next Gone,"Thokozani says .

"Let's go, I'm sure they are fine. I need talk to Thabo so he can meet us there,"he says and gets up.

"Wait,What if ...What if Pali and your brother.."
Thokozani cuts her off.

"Let's mind our own business, and don't ask Mnqobi he will tell you where you can buy cheap ropes so you can hang yourself. He hates people asking things about his personal life,"he says.

“And you think Me? A Xhosa woman...Will be told where to get off by A man?,” Liyana asks and Thokozani chortles shaking his head.

“Try him,” he says and walks away chortling. Mngqobi is not for the weak. He literally does not babysit anyone’s feelings.

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Right when Thabo is about to score Liyana stands in front of him and again,he loses yet another goal.

“Ai, Ngasho Thabo ngathathi Phuma emabhozeni,”Thokozani says getting up.

“You cheated musu,”Thabo comes to his own defence.

“Ngikuhlulile,” Thokozani says . “now,leave my house Thabo,”as an after thought.

“HAO?, Not even a plate ? I am hungry,” Thabo says.

“No,go,”Thabo gets up. “Wait till I get a girlfriend ,”he says then walks out leaving Liyana and Thokozani laughing.

“He will never get a girlfriend,”Thokozani says.

“We will never know,” Liyana says and sits on top of Thokozani . “Ngiyakuthanda ke Toto,”Liyana says.

“Don’t call me that,” he says.

“Okay Toto.”

“Mxm, You are indirectly asking for dick,” he says.

“Maybe, “Liyana says. “Am I getting it right?,” she asks as an after thought.

“You might. If you let me beat you in FIFA,” He says and Liyana gets off him.

“Yeah I get the message, No dick for me today,” she says and walks away leaving Thokozani laughing

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[MNQOBI]

He darts his eyes around as soon as he walks in. He has never in his whole 32 years of living been so

confused. A lady walks towards him, A smile on her face.

“hello,” she greets and when Mnqobi nods at her she nods back. “Do you need help?,” The lady asks.

Mnqobi sighs in relief, before nodding.

“Okay,” the lady says and smiles friendly at the man who isn’t even showing even a bit of teeth.

“I need to get my wife pams,” he says and the lady stares at him.

“Pams?,” she asks. “I have never heard of Pams,” as an after thought.

“Those things you use man,” he says and shakes his head dissappointed in himself. That is the only thing he could come up with !.

“Ohh Pads!,” she says and laughs. “Please follow me,” she says and mnqobi nods. Great ! He had to say pams again.

“So , What kind of Pads will you like ? Always?Care free?Kotex?Maxi?,” she asks confusing Mnqobi even

more. “Do you want ...,” she sighs. “How much is your wife bleeding. Light, or Does she use Regular pads for normal blood flow or..” Mngqobi huffs in annoyance.

“Angazi, Phatha okukodwa kukho konke sisi(I don’t know, Grab one of each),” he says in annoyance and the lady looks at him like he has lost his marbles.

“One of each?,” she asks.

Mngqobi nods and the lady does as told.

“What else is needed?,” he asks.

“Follow me. Does your wife know how lucky she is?,” The lady asks. Walking around the shop grabbing a few things.

“mmh,” he utters. When she is done she helps him pay, give him his plastics and he walks out there .ignoring the stares he gets.

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When he walks in his house, he walks to his room where he left Palesa. He finds her laying on the bed.

“here,” he says and puts the pads on the bed.

“Thanks,” she says. “Let me go change and ...wait,Why did you buy so many pads?,” she asks ,searching the plastic.

“I didn’t know which ones you want.”

“You should have called,” she says and Mngqobi shrugs his shoulders. His phone rings,he answers.

“Hello,This is Abraham. I received your number from Joshua,”the person greets.

“Hmm,”Mngqobi murmurs and walks out.

“Can we meet in...say about an hour?,” Mngqobi grunts in annoyance.

“hmm,” he says.

“I will see you in a few Mr...err,” Mngqobi shakes his head before hanging up.

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Mngqobi walks in the resturant and scans the room,looking for a man in a black shirt and

whatever else he said he was wearing. He finds him with his eyes, at the far corner. He sighs and walks to him.

“Mr errr,” Mngqobi nods, settling on the chair opposite his.

“i need the job done tonight,” he says and Mngqobi nods at him. He slides the envelop to him.

“The address , pictures. I am a good man MR, so please leave the kids, and the wife. Just kill the man,” he says. Mngqobi nods.

“I will transfer the money . HALF before and the rest when the job is done,” he says . Mngqobi nods yet again.

“You know. You might not care at all but I don’t want to do this,” he says. He is Right, Mngqobi doesn’t care. “and , I am a church going fella, Who had things working out perfectly for him. The life, The dream job, the wife Melisah . The love of my life, but

he came and took it all,"he says,Mnqobi nods even though he really isn't interested.

"I Love him too,I mean he...he made me feel things.Strange things,then left me for that bitch,"Mnqobi sighs and positions himself properly on the chair.

"Tell him how you feel,"the noisy waitress says,and puts her hands on the table.

"You will call me when you know what you want,"Mnqobi says but the man stops him before he gets up."wait," he says.

"what would you do if you were in my shoes?," Mnqobi shrugs his shoulders before uttering an almost silent "nothing".

"ever heard of privacy ?," the man finally says to the waitress. "I am sorry,"she utters and walks away with a tail in-between her legs.

"Mr ..What's your surname again?," Mnqobi shrugs his shoulders.

“I am tired of the pretence , Open that envelop ,” he says and Mngqobi sighs,opening the envelop and scans through the papers.

“What is this?,” he finally asks . “Why am I here?,” as an after thought.

“because Mr , I want you to work for me ,”Mngqobi chortles .

“I don’t work for people ,” he says .

“Oh but you will want to work for me. I have information on you,” he says.

“And you might not even reach your car with whatever you think you have on me. Pick your battles correctly Mr Moses,” he says.

“Abraham ,” he corrects him.

“Abraham , Gabriel,Jesus. It really doesn’t matter nonke niku bible,” Mngqobi says and his phone rings.

“Ma,” he answers. Staring at the suddently nervous Abraham.

“uthi ukhalelani?,” Mngqobi says already getting up.
“I’m coming,” he says then hangs up.

“We are not done talking,” Abraham says

“Oh but I am. And besides Mr Abraham...I am needed in more important places,” he leaves while dialing Thokozani’s number.

“BAFO,” Thokozani answers.

“You got it?,” he asks.

“sure.”

“Remove him, He is trouble,” then hangs up.

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Palesa turns around, Lays on her stomach, then again on her back.

Mngqobi walks in , and sits at the far end of the bed.

“What’s wrong?,” he asks.

“period pains,” she says .changing positions yet again.

“Yini loko?,” The clueless Mngqobi asks.

“You will not understand ,”that’s all palesa says before groaning in pain.

“Who created these things?,” he asks.

“God ,” Palesa says laughing.

“Ukuphi loGod? Makabanjwe. No one hurts my woman and gets away with it,” he says and Palesa laughs.

“You can’t say that.”

“Why?,” he asks , bringing himself closer to her. He gets on the bed with his shoes on.

“Because, first of all you need to take off your shoes, secondly you can’t insult God like that, thirdly I am not your woman,” Mngqobi raises his eyebrow.

“You are my woman,” he says and pulls her in for a hug. “you have always been my woman,” Palesa smiles.

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UNEDITED!

CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

When the clock finally hits 6 am Palesa opens her eyes and sits on the bed. Mnqobi is still laying next to her. Before she can even say anything or leave the bed even her hands travel to his perfect face,caressing it. She smiles ,the thought of him calling her his rushing in her mind. Why would a man like him want to be with her?. Mnqobi groans,probably in annoyance before slightly opening his eyes.

“Hi,” she greets him,removing her hand from his face.

Mnqobi grunts,darting his tired eyes to the clock hanging on the wall and when he sees the time he huffs turning to look at Palesa.

“It’s 6 in the morning ,” he states the obvious. Palesa nods.

“ yes , I saw that,” she says and when she is about to get off the bed Mngqobi pulls her towards him.

“Let’s sleep,” he begs ,with his eyes even.

“I have to get to the flat so I can put on some clothes then go to church,” she says , holding her breath.She hasn’t been to church for so long it’s not even funny.

“What church?,”he asks not hiding the annoyance in his voice.

“What time does it start?,” he asks; bringing her even closer.

“9,” Palesa replies , her heart beating out of her chest ,literally.She feels like if she was to take off the T-shirt she is wearing it would drop to the floor.

“mmmh, “Mngqobi murmurs and then lays back on the bed. He hasn’t slept this good in a while.

“Can I go take a shower?,” Palesa asks and Mngqobi let’s go of her before attending to his ringing phone.

He grunts when he sees who it is then takes in deep breaths.

“NaDlamini,” he answers, watching as Palesa stares at him then at the floor shyly.

“Shongololo,” Her warm voice greets, She would make a perfect wife- Mnqobi thinks to himself If was patient enough to wait. Isn't that what they say ?- Love is patient ,Love waits,Love has no boundaries and many many more of their usual love speeches.

“I have been waiting for your call,” she says.

“oh ,”That's all Mnqobi says. What else could he say ? I found my woman not home and I had to go get her after that I was busy running around stores like mad man buying pads,and all that.

“It's good to hear that you are still well,” she says and when she hears Mnqobi sigh she cannot help but do the same.

“Will you ever find it in your heart to forgive me?,” she asks,holding her breath. Of all people she had

ever stumbled across in life ,Mnqobi was the hardest to talk to.

“I’ve long forgiven you,”he lies, and when hears the water running he smiles to himself.

“You seem to forget that I’ve known you long enough to know when you are lying ,” she says.

“Will you ever forgive me?,” she asks again.

“Why are you calling me this early anyway?,” He dodges the Question,before pushing the blankets off him.

“You are usually up by this time,”she says.

“hmm .”

“I have to go take a shower,Sizophinde sikhulume,”He says and hangs up almost without even listening to whatever else she had to say.

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“Please, Let the choir lead us in a very soothing song,” The pastor requests. The Choir obeys, reminding Palesa of the time loss, the number of services she had lost, but she was there then, alone this time. It was her and her God together, alone. The others didn’t matter, she felt herself reconnect to God. Like she could tell him how how she felt about everything.

After a good 3 minutes of singing the pastor raises his hand and the choir goes in to a stop, he smiles thankfully at them and turns to look at the hundred pair of eyes staring back at him.

“Time,” he utters, looking in to each and everyone seated in the front row along with Palesa.

“Nako. Have you ever felt like you should be in a certain place at a certain time with certain people?,” he asks and everyone nods in agreement.

“Me too,” he says.

“We all have, We all feel we have to be somewhere where we are currently not. Don’t you feel you were meant to be there in that other company not this one? Or you feel you deserve the job more than Maria?,or you want kids,NOW! Or your age mates are married and you are not. It is like that,it will always be like that.That feeling will be there,always. But TIME,”He wipes the invisible sweat on his forehead.

“He said WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT,I ,THE LORD YOUR GOD,WILL MAKE IT HAPPEN!. so cha centia, you are not stuck. You are not stupid,You are wrong-God loves you. He hears you,your sobs in the middle of the night with your hand pressed on your lips to surpress your loud sobs ,he hears you. And all those times you knelt down and instead of saying anything you broke down in tears,he was there and he heard the unspoken words in your heart. You are enough, you are more than enough. You are worthy,Deserving ,Blessed,Gifted,Important and you see that job,that job is yours! Say AMEN if you

believe, Say AMEN if you believe he heard you!"
"Amen!," Even those who do not believe shout.

Raising their hands in happiness.

"So No Siphokazi," he darts his eyes to Siphokazi, then Palesa. "I said NO palesa. It will not happen. Go slaughter that goat, drink holy water, muthi anything, EVERYTHING- But it will not happen Vusi, and you know why?," vusi shakes his head and the pastor lets out a smile.

"because the time, is not right!" he utters. "it will happen, ngiyazwakala lapho emuva?. ngithi mina IT WILL HAPPEN...When the time is right. You are not stuck peter, you will never be stuck. Sihamba ngeskhathi la- and your time, your time hasn't come yet. God is cleaning the route for you. The five years you stayed at home, looking for a job will be covered in a month," he sighs yet again, moving back to his table, wiping his nose.

"Aningizwa kahle nina, when the lord shows up .he shows off. You will be shocked Palesa. You will be

shocked Peter ngithi mina YOU WILL BE SHOCKED MZALWANE. You will keep looking at yourself in the mirror and say is this really me? Is this Siphokazi? Is this Vusi? When and how did I get here? God shows up to show off. All you can do now, here is sing...AKEKHO UMHLOBO!," He sings and everyone gets up joining in.

"Onje ngaye,
Ongikhathalela njalo..."

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When they stand in the cue Palesa's phone rings.

"H...hello," she greets.

"Niphumile {Are out out?}," Mngqobi asks.

"Yeah," she says.

"hmm, I am coming," he says.

"Okay,bye," Palesa says and quickly hangs up when she hears someone call her name, she turns only

to spot MamProphet walking her way. Her phone rings again. "hello?"

"bamba kancane, I need to hang up," mnqobi says leaving palesa laughing shaking her head, and then hangs up.

Mam Prophet finally arrives, in white like always. She offers Palesa one of her friendliest smiles and offers her hand for a handshake, Palesa takes it smiling back nervously at her.

"Long time," MamProphet says, looking at her straight in the eyes still with her hand clinging on hers.

"exams," she says, MamProphet is naturally an intimidating woman.

"You did well," she tells her then turns with her hand still in hers. "Walk with my Pali," She says, and Palesa nods in agreement.

"Before there's light, there's darkness

NaMankge,that's why they say there's light at the end of the dark tunnel,"Palesa smiles at her,even though she is lost.

"You will do just fine,"she says. "My door will always be open. For you."and as if on cue,Mnqobi appears ,he parks the car near them and steps out. "and him,he will do fine," Palesa smiles and nods at her.

"Saubona,"she greets Mnqobi , who greets back.

"Mnqobiwezimpi ,"she says to him and offers him a smile. Mnqobi looks at her confused but brushes it off with a shrug.

"You are making the right decision ,"she tells him,puts her hand on his shoulder and leaves them still standing there in awe.

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Palesa smiles admirably at the room. She has visited this house 4 times and she has never been in his room, The curtains are white with a little bit of black, and there are a few papers covering parts of the room as to show they are still working on the room. The tiles are white also and they are sparkling clean like the rest of the house.

Mnqobi stands behind her, when she feels his presence she breathes in, taking in his strong scent. She turns and raises her head to look at the man towering over her. He wore a plain look on his face like always.

“You like it?,” he asks referring to the room, Palesa moves her eyes back to the room and smiles.

“yes,” she utters. He smells like cigarettes.

“You smoke?,” Palesa asks and he shrugs his shoulder moving to the bed.

“What kind of a person are you?,” she asks staring at him. “You, You are so intimidating “ she confesses then chortles to herself.

“Your presence,it...,”she stops to search for the right word to describe it but none comes into place .”You scare me,but...I...you...make me feel safe...,”when she sees him staring back at her,she drops her eyes to the floor.

“And by the looks of things even your own brothers fear you,”Mnqobi shrugs his shoulders.

“I’m a bad person ,Palisa,”he says, pronouncing her name wrong like always.

“I will always be a bad person,it will never change. I was born and so I will die me,”he says.

“And if you want to be with me just as much as I want to be with you then you have to understand that I am a bad person and I will never stop being a bad person ,”he says and shuts his eyes close.

“Being with me will bring you more sadness than joy. At some point I might even have to marry another wife,”he confesses and then looks at her. She looks shocked.

“You will...we will have to do things we don't want to do,” then he gets up and holds her hands.

“You are the one Palisa,” he says and brings his face closer to hers. He puts his lips on hers, and sucks on her upper lip while her, on his lower lip.

“you will always be the one, but-,” Palesa shuts him up by softly putting her lips on his. The kiss is slow and if we were to mention in the world where people could fly and snakes could walk-we would say it was magical. His hands travel to her behind, aggressively grabbing it, Palesa moans in response bringing herself closer and wrapping her arms around his neck, Mngqobi is so tall he has to bend down a little.

He helps Palesa lay on the bed and balances his hands on her sides, still proceeding with the kiss, as a matter of fact, Deepening the kiss. The once was slow and love pouring kiss is fast, aggressive and yet feels, Magical still. Palesa moves back, laying on the cushion. She brings her head up and lifts her hands

up so Mngqobi can help her off her dress. Thankfully the dress is not tight. Mngqobi looks at her in nothing but lust, He connects his lips to her neck, blessing it with short and soft kisses.

“Are you sure?,” he asks when his lips travel to her ear, biting it.

“Yes,” she says and feels him smile on her cheek. He blesses her cheek with another soft kiss and moves back to the neck. He lustfully licks it, down to her bra. He kisses her cleavage and that one boob that always disobeys by finding it’s way out of the bra, always. His hands move to her back, helping her off the bra, she lets him like the first time.

Palesa lays back ,She was in another world, her breathing was evident and he hasn’t even touched her there yet! He throws the bra on floor and moves back to her boobs. He cups them, and gives both of them soft kisses.

“Our baby will suck on these,” he says and circles his tongue around her one nipple, and then sucks on it.

Palesa moans, slightly moving. He does the same with the other twin, and sucks on it.

Palesa impatiently helps him out of his shirt, and like Mngqobi throws it somewhere on the floor. Mngqobi slid his hand in her panties, cupping her vulva roughly, then rubs on it slowly.

“Mhh,” She moans, opening her legs wider. She impatiently moves up. Her hands finding their way to his trouser, grasping his cock softly brushing on it.

“Shit,” Mngqobi utters and lays her back on the bed.

“Patience,” as an after thought. He goes back to cupping her breast that are, like every part of her body longing for his strong yet gentle touch. He seemed to be focusing on the wrong part of the body, she could feel her vulva getting wetter and vibrating in nothing but pure lust!

Finally, after what feels like a year, he kneels on the bed and takes off his trousers with his underwear. Palesa swallows and looks at Mngqobi who has a smirk

on his face and like always it disappears like it was never there.

He kisses her panties then raises his head to look at palesa who has her eyes closed.

“Take them off,” he commands and the horny bitch in palesa just refuses to tell him to ask nicely. She quickly does as told. Trying to keep her eyes on his and like always it is nothing short of a dismal failure.

Mnqobi kneels on the bed, and looks at palesa’s face to see if she regrets anything at all and he finds is lust, lust and nothing but lust. He smiles to himself and positions himself right near the honeypot. Palesa brings herself closer and Mnqobi shakes his head pushing his member in her.

“AH,” she shouts and gulps for air. The room suddenly feels small and like it has no space for breathing at all. He thrusts in slowly as Palesa holds on to him, every stroke feels right about right. It makes her legs weak and she thankful she isn’t standing.

“F....F, FASTER,” she says begingly , Mngqobi obeys. He thrusts in faster and harder . Palesa feels as though if he would go any faster her belly will shift to her back.

“Jesus! Oh God,yes!...”

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Mngqobi sits at the far end of the bed,waiting for Palesa to finish taking a shower. In less than five minutes she walks out,already dressed in the same clothes she was wearing when he fetched her from church.

She smiles when she sees him ,and feels butterflies in her stomach.

“Are you sleeping over?,” he asks her.

“I don’t know. Do you want me to?,” she also asks ,smiling friendly at him. He seems down,like he did not just thrust his cock in his woman.

“Are you okay?,” Palesa asks, scanning him from the bed. Mngqobi smiles at her, and opens taps on the bed.

“Please sit here,” he says and Palesa fails to ignore the sudden beating of her heart, like she should expect bad news. She obeys nevertheless .

Mngqobi sighs and lays his head on her thighs.

“You are the best thing that has ever happened to me,” he says. Palesa doesn’t say anything instead she brushes his head gently.

“But you being with me, will hurtyou,” he says.

“And will complicate your life,” he says.

“I am married, Palesa,” he confesses , gets up to look at the look on her face, she opens her mouth to say something but keeps quite.

“And, We....,” he sighs.

“ngiyakuthanda,” Palesa looks at him, glasses filling her eyes.

“so, you used me?,” she asks. “All you ever wanted to do was get in between my legs and I let you.” she utters .

“no. I really do love you, and I want to be with you... hold my hand if you want to be with me too Pali...please,” he says.

“And she will disappear ?,”she asks.

“it is not like that....She,We...please hold my hand pali. Tell me you will fight this ...with me.”

Palesa gets up ,looks at him in the eye and utters ,slowly but loudly . “I wish I never met you,” then pushes him off her way.

5 Months Later...

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

[UNEDITED]

It had been months after the graduation and the Job hunting had began for Palesa, She walks back in the

house after yet another phone call. She rests her head on the couch and sighs loudly, trying to hold her tears.

“What did they say?,” Her mother asks. She sighs.

“They want experience ,” she says.

“It has only been three months. You will be fine,”she sighs. “I hope so,”she says,sighing yet again. She gets up for a cup of coffee, her all time favourite or better yet her recent favourite.

“I’m going to make tea,”she announces just in case someone else wants tea.

“I’d love a cup of roibos ,” MaMohoto says and Palesa nods and turns to her dad.

“just water,” he utters, and let’s out a loud cough.

“and my pills on the top drawer please,” as an after thought. Palesa nods again, ignoring her phone that vibrates in her pockets. She pulls the corner of the jersey shivering. Why it decided to be cold today is a mystery to her even. She rubs her hands together

trying to keep warm and it works like a charm, surprisingly. She pours water in the kettle and sighs, leaning on the counter. Life was being a bitch, like always. It only made sense when Mngqobi called, which was 4 times in a day at least. Palesa told him every chance she got how much it annoyed her really but, it was all a lie- a lie he didn't have to know, like they all say what they don't know won't hurt them. Well, in this case it would make him happy but still, he doesn't have to know it. Like Palesa's aunt that divorced three times said - Men don't deserve anything. She never misses an opportunity to say it, and sing it sometimes.

She takes the cups, puts the teabags and the other, coffee.

When the water has boiled she takes her mother's tea to her and takes hers to her room. She sits at the far end of the bed, and watches nothing on her window. Limpopo was okay, she misses it till this day. She sighs yet again, and sips on her coffee. Her

phone vibrates from her pockets, she huffs when she sees who is calling but answers anyway.

“You are getting to much now, Call your wife,” she says, Hoping he ignores the statement.

“I am,” he says, she blushes and hides her face as if he can see her. She stays silence for a while, listening to him breath. She misses him, a lot but the ‘know your worth ‘girl in her just won’t let her admit it. “I miss you,” Mngqobi says.

Palesa smiles “You shouldn’t,” She replies darting her eyes around her room looking at absolutely nothing.

“hm,” that’s all he says, and he hangs up after holding for a few more minutes. Palesa heavies out a sigh and throws herself on the bed- that was weird , like all the time he has called. He should just stop calling, for his and her sake.

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Palesa wakes up after her all time, Nap. What do you do when you are fresh out of varsity, unemployed and ,have issues with a married man? Sleep is the right answer. She puts on her sleepers and hits her head hard with her hand, thinking she is probably going nuts. It is probably the after effects of stress and whatever else she was going through. She listens yet again , attentively this time and she hears it again,Kedi's voice.

She gets off the bed, more like jump off the bed and rushes to the door ,pulling it roughly and right when she takes the corner she sees her-Kedi. She jumps on top of her,and Kedi laughs.

“Polony,” she says, hugging her. “You look beautiful,” she says. Palesa rolls her eyes because well she looked horrible and she knew it.

“hahaha,” she fakes laughter and gets off her looking around ,” and then ? where is your pre-school ?,” she asks, Kedi laughs.

“Went to their grandmother , yoh phela,” she throws her hands in surrender. “Not only do they have big heads like kutlwano they are just as stupid and loud ,” they laugh and her mother keeps a straight face.

“Kedi!,” She reprimands .”You don’t say that about your husband ,” as an after thought.

“yoh MaPalesa, times change. My husband is my best friend, I say what I have to say and he gets it and besides he said I have no butt,” they laugh and like always Mamohoto misses the joke.

“Ai , You don’t respect your husbands,” she says in her usual serious voice. They laugh at how she actually matches her age, She is indeed a 51 years old woman.

“anyway, I have to head back tonight, I just came here to take my sister out for lunch,”Kedi says, looking at Palesa. They hardly talk ever since she got married.

“I would love that!,” Palesa says, finally a chance to escape home and just go out. “Let me go take a bath,” she says already running to plug water.

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“Where to?,” Kedi asks. Palesa smiles looking at her.

She is glowing, she has even gained weight. Whoever said something about happiness making one glow deserves the best in life.

“McD ,” she says excitedly.

“Still a sucker for their Mcflurry?,” Kedi asks, Palesa smiles.

“Now more than ever, It is a great mood changer. Whenever you are sad just buy a Mcflurry and let your problems Flurry away!,” They laugh, looking at each other for a few seconds until Kedi turns back to look at the road.

“I am surprised you didn’t go for advertising ,”Palesa laughs at her sister. “Nope,Radiography is for me,”she says laughing.”My best friend and roommate always said I am a shrink. She just doesn’t get the difference between a what I was doing and being a psychotherapist,”Kedi laughs.

“she is stupid,”she says and parks at the nearest parking space she finds right near McDonalds.

Palesa smiles,walking out of the car - She has a lot to tell Kedi,a lot.

After they get their order they settle at the nearest table.

“So ,How have things been?,” Palesa is the first to ask,drinking her Fanta grape,her favourite cold drink.

“Well, Me and my husband have been doing great.He has been promoted that’s why I’m taking you shopping after this,” Palesa giggles happily. Then looks back at her . “And?,” she asks.

“Well, We are happy. I am happy and the kids are happy. Happiness matters more than anything in this world motase. The moment we grow apart or he makes me cry more than laugh I’m out of that marriage. I will not settle for anything less than I actually deserve.and I deserve happiness,love. I deserve a man who will literally lie on the floor and be my carpet . Someone that will jump up and down and do everything to see me happy and best believe I will return it, Times hundred so far Kutlwisto is doing a great job,” She says and studies her sister closely. “You?,” she asks.

“Donald is everywhere, boring me. Just last night we went on a dinner and tonight I have to go out with him again. Getting to know the future husband vibes,”Palesa says,rolling her eyes.

“He is a rapist that one, I hate him and you know what ? I’m willing to buy you poison for tonight,”Palesa laughs throwing her head back. Trust and believe Kedi to say that. They fall into

comfortable silence after that. Each one of them eating their food.

“So,” Kedi breaks the silence . “ Any boyfriend?,” she asks and Palesa laughs a little , shaking her head.

“You lie!,” Kedi shouts a little.

“Well, there’s this man. And please note the MAN, not boy but Man,” she says and her mind trails back to him,the freak.

“hehe is everything and more and he doesn’t put in effort. It Is like he was born to love me,” Kedi pulls her chair forward smiling admirably at her younger sister. Even a blind could see the love in her eyes, it is hard to miss. It doesn’t speak but if you were to listen closely you could actually hear it.

“He makes me feel so special sisi, like a woman. I had sex multiple times with Thabang and I felt like a girl but with him,God help me!,” Kedi smiles.

“But he is married ,”she says and Kedi opens her mouth in shock. “Chineke! Run simba, run and never return ,”She says dramatically and they both laugh.

“I wish it was that easy, but he is in wautlwa? He is already in the heart and every time I am like I need to forget him He comes for me. He even calls me 4 times a day . I am surprised he hasn’t called me yet,” Kedi laughs .”You have it bad.”

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She puts the white wide leg jumpsuit on, it is plain but she isn’t planning on having fun, at all.She matches it up with her White all star tackies and a small blue backpack and inside she throws in the white soul she bought a few weeks back and makes a note to buy more tomorrow.

She sighs,and looks at herself in the mirror at least the new weave Kedi bought her makes her look like she wants to be there.

When she walks out her mother smiles at her and she smiles back , darting her eyes around for her father, and when she doesn't see him anywhere in sight she sighs.

“You took a bath pali,” She says and Palesa laughs.

“Thank you mom,” she says and plants a kiss on her cheek, Parents!and walks back towards Donald who has a stupid grin on his face.

“hi,” he greets her,bringing his hand forward and when Palesa gets ahold of it he kisses it.She fakes a smile.

“You look beautiful ,” he says smilingly. For an asshole he had a beautiful smile. No wonder he had girls falling on his feet when he was in school - both primary and high school.

“Thanks, you look good too,” she says honestly,he looks like he spent an hour starrng at his woardrope until he came across this outfit- A pair of jeans and a shirt.Simple enough. Plain enough.

“So shall we?,” he asks offering his hand to Palesa and when she comes closer he hooks his arms with hers and they look at Palesa’s mom who is looking at them blankly .Donald smiles at her and she fakes a smile nodding her head and the very second they step out of the house she rolls his eyes and shakes her head.

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“Did I mention that you look beautiful,” Donald says ,Palesa smiles.

“Only two times,haha,” she utters slowly. Checking her watch. Great just great . They have been here for only 10 minutes.

“What time did you say we leave again?,” she finally decides to ask.

“I think 8 o’clock is okay,” Donald says raising his eyebrow.Palesa sighs, that is in like an HOUR,60 MINUTES AND PLENTY OF SECONDS !

“How are things? You know with the job hunting ?,” he asks.

“Okay,” she lies. Job hunting is like being assigned to work at a pre-school. You give your best but get served shit, which you have to pick up. Palesa rolls her eyes.

“I like your scarf,” he says . Palesa fakes a smile. “I like it too,” then finally, because God is working night shifts he keeps quite ! . Palesa’s phone rings, she searches through her bag and smiles friendly at Donald . “Must be my mom,” she utters and when she ahold of it she answers without looking.

“I like your outfit Mkami,” Mngqobi says at the other end of the line. Palesa smiles.

“Who are you?.”

“I don’t like my wife going on dates with other men, I give you 10 seconds to move or I’ll come there,” He says.

“What? Where are you ?,” She asks looking around and she doesn’t spot him.

“Go,” Mngqobi says calmly before hanging up.

“This one is crazy, thinking he’ll say jump and I will scream how high? Feed me your ...Whatever it is you are having,” she says and Donald laughs even though he has no idea who she is talking about. He takes his fork and feeds her. Palesa turns to look at the door and she swears her whole world just stopped,He really is here!.

“I need the toilet ,” she says already getting up,and rushing to the toilet.

When she steps in she takes in deep breaths and the door opens,Mngqobi walks in and stands behind her. She inhales taking in his Masculine scent,he really is a man. Someone’s man. He holds her waist and instead of resisting Palesa puts her head on his shoulder.

“That’s better?,” he asks and Palesa nods .She felts safe , and for a second she forgot he belongs to someone else.

“Uphilile?,” Mngqobi asks, still hugging her.

Palesa sighs, nodding. Then turns to looks at him .

“You?,” she asks.

“I am now,”he says and holds her tighter, Palesa wraps her arms around his neck and sighs. A woman stares at them and shakes her head.

“Sir,this is ..”

“We can read,” Palesa cuts her off and she leaves.

“Let’s go,”Mngqobi suggests.

“I can’t leave with a married man!,”Palesa says.

“I’m not married,” he says,

“But- You are so damn confusing !”

“I will explain,”he says. “At the B&B ,”As an after thought. Palesa sighs, whatever spell this man was using on her, was working wonders!.

“even if I do want to leave with you, Donald is right here. In the next room,” She says . Mnqobi looks at the window.

“What?,” She asks looking back at the window.

“No!” she half shouts.

“Yes,” Mnqobi says.