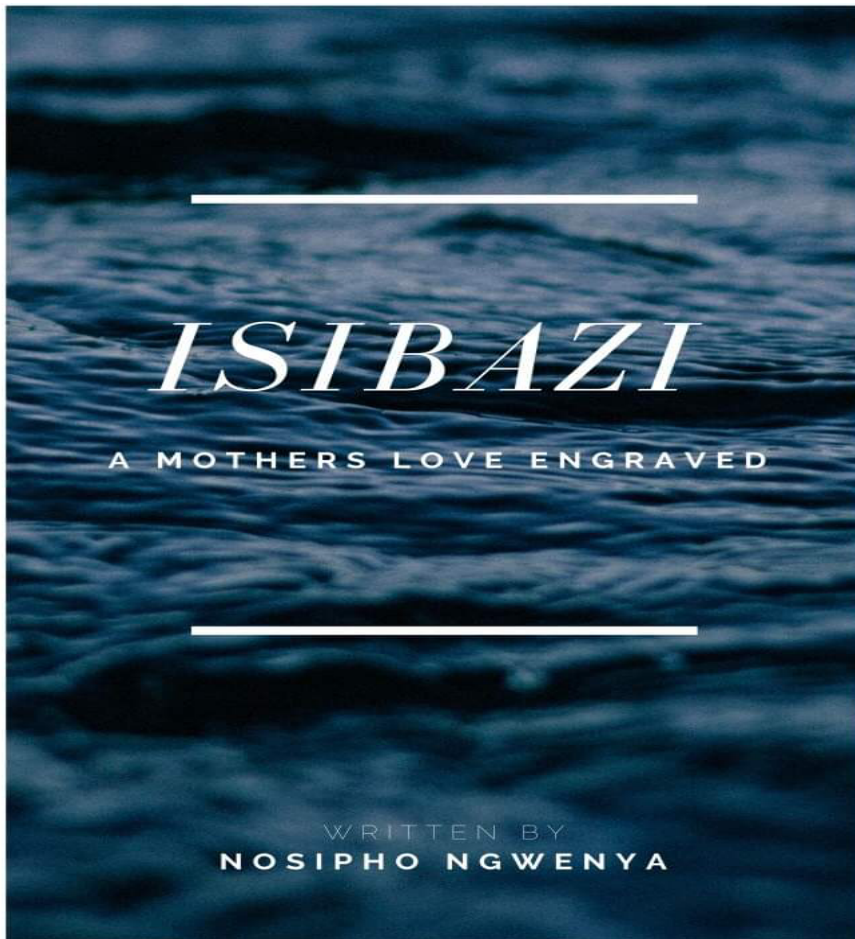


[10/20, 20:21] o: 01



ZABELO

“We Mkhulu mina vele ngishilo lisa lele leli Vila” Azamahle shouts



making her way in, she jumps on the bed and pulls the blankets sitting ontop of me.

“What is wrong with you” I ask.

“Goodmorning Ncane” she says sweetly.

I look at her with a straight face and not say anything.

“I am sorry I didn't mean to call you lazy even though you are” she says with a straight face.

I frown still looking at her surely she doesn't think that was an apology.

“Vuka MaG” she says.



“Go away” I say.

I would shout but knowing Aza she will shout right back at me.

“Goodmorning princess” I look at the door and my father is standing there.

Azamahle looks at him and tilts her head.

“Which one” she asks.

He stifles his laugh and smiles.

“Really Mkhulu” she says dramatically.

He walks in and kisses her on the forehead then me.

“Mkhulu you need to pick a side” She says letting out an exhausted sigh.



“I love you both” he says.

“But you love me more right”
Azamahle says.

“He’s my dad not yours” I say.

“He’s my grandfather not yours” she
says with folded arms.

I let out a sigh and shake my head.

“Vuka phela Zabe and make us
breakfast” My father says.

“Your brother left early for work” he
says before I can say anything.

I was going to ask why he’s not
making it.

“You’ll find us in the kitchen” he says



taking Aza with.

The little spawn turns and sticks her tongue out.

Now I know toddlers are nothing but demons.

Don't get me wrong I love kids, in fact I adore them but from afar. It's a shame I live with this one and there's not much I can do about it.

I kick the blankets off and grab my gown putting it on.

I walk out of the bedroom and pass by the bathroom to freshen up before heading to the kitchen.

“What are you making” Aza asks.



“Eggs and toast” I say.

“Mkhulu wants bacon and sausages and I want pancakes” she says.

What am I? their personal chef.

“If you don’t leave this kitchen I swear I am going to strangle you” I say.

“You’re mean and lazy” she shouts running off.

She runs back in and hands me the phone with a smile on her face.

“Thumbu ka mama” I melt at the sound of my mother’s voice.

“Mama please come back” I say.

“What’s wrong” she asks.



“Baba is making me cook everyday,Snqumo doesn’t do anything he wakes up early in the morning and runs off to work” I say.

“And what about your sister” she asks.

“Kwazi hasn’t come by since you left”

“But Zabe you know that your father loves your cooking,well everyone loves your cooking” she says softly.

“I know but that doesn’t mean I want to spend all day in the kitchen cooking for Aza and Baba” I say.

She heavily sighs.

“Ntobe khumbula ekhaya bandla” I



say.

She laughs out loud and sighs once more.

“I am coming home tomorrow but don't your father,I want to surprise him” she says.

I roll my eyes no one can surprise my dad this man is built differently.

“Okay” I say.

“I love you” she says.

“I love you more” I say.

I end the call and put the phone on the side starting with breakfast.



.....

I am exhausted, running a household isn't child's play. I have been juggling work and the people of this house, I honestly can't wait for my mother to come home.

It's only been a few days and already the ship feels like it's sinking.

It feels like we're the Titanic facing an iceberg.

I clear my mind of everything and close my eyes as my body eases into the mattress.

A good mattress is an investment



never let anyone tell you otherwise.

“Ma G” I get startled and open my eyes.

Aza is standing by the door, holding her stuffed toy with her finger in her mouth.

“Yini” I ask.

“I want to sleep with you” she says.

“No” I say.

“Please” she says softly.

I let out a sigh and scoot over.

She gets in snuggles close to me.

“Ma G” she says softly.

“Yes” I say.



“I miss gogo” she says.

“I miss her too” I say.

“Ma G” she says.

“Yebo Aza” I say.

“I love you even though you’re lazy, but I love you because you cook for us and bake for me and my teachers” she says.

That’s sweet and everything but I need my beauty sleep.

“I love you more” I tell her.

“Ma G” she says.

I open my eyes and look at her.

“Yini usuyathakatha manje we



Azamhle” I ask.

“Ngizokuceba kuMkhulu” she says.

“Aza please sleep” I say.

My voice is pleading with this child that’s how bad I need to sleep.

“Angifuni engani wena uthi mina ngiyathakatha” she says.

I look at her and smile breathing in and out.

She’s trying my patience, this little spawn of satan is trying my patience.

“Xolisa” she says.

I breathe out and swallow the bitter saliva in my mouth.



“I am sorry now can we sleep please”
I say.

“Okay goodnight” she says moving
closer.

An hour of her clinging to me for dear
life and she’s snoring.

I fix her pillow and stare at her
drooling mouth.

All that yapping and she’s fast asleep
while I am struggling to get some
sleep.

I slowly get out of the bed and walk
out heading to the kitchen.

I take out the leftovers from the
supper we had and put them in the



microwave.

“Magcina ka baba” he says.

I turn and he gives me that one smile that gets my mother blushing and bending the doctors rules.

“I am not making you coffee it’s not good for your heart” I tell him.

“I will settle for that delicious hot chocolate of yours” he says.

I put on the kettle and make him and myself a cup.

“Thank you” he says.

“So baba what are you going to do” I ask.



He heavily sighs and shrugs his shoulders.

“Your mother wants us to travel but I don’t think I can do that” he says.

He’s worked his whole life and now he doesn’t know what to do with himself.

“Maybe she’s right you guys have all the money to do anything you want” I tell him.

He chuckles and take a sip.

“Enough about me let’s talk about you,how’s work” he says.

“Work is work baba” I say.



He smiles and pinches my cheek.

“I am proud of the young woman you’re becoming Zabe” he says.

“Thank you baba” I say...

And all my life I have been making this man proud and it feels good hearing him

say these words.

“So is there a boy in your life” he asks nervously.

I chuckle and take a sip.

“No,I am too busy for that” I tell him.

I have never really thought about boys that much,not that I don’t want



to date but it's never been a pressing matter.

“Good,keep it that way” he says sounding relieved.

I look at him and laugh shaking my head.

If there's one thing my father fears it's me finding a man,getting married and leaving home.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 02

ZABELO



I think I made a mistake by saying I miss this woman,like she promised she's came back and now safely in the arms of her husband.

She doesn't care about me or the fact that Aza is on my case about this damn chicken.

I look at the chicken and shake my head,there's no way in hell I am slicing its throat.

Snqumo walks out with a knife in his hand.

He's the eldest of us three my mother gave birth to Snqumo the first



born, then Kwazikwenkosi came along.

I don't why they still had sex after having two kids, because my grandmother used to say once you have a boy and a girl child then you're done.

I guess these two never listened when their elders spoke because I came along.

We then have Azamahle she's the very last of the Ntuli family.

She's Kwazi's first born and trust me she's not always a demon.

How she came about is a long story but she's here and everyone loves her.



“Earth to Zabe” Snqumo says waving the knife in my face.

“Are you trying to kill me” I ask stepping back.

“Don’t be dramatic this is for the chicken” he says.

“Bhuti please do for me” I plead.

“I wish I could but I am meeting someone” he says looking at the time.

“But I don’t want to kill this thing” I say stomping my feet.

“It’s not a thing it’s a chicken” he says.

I shrug somehow I feel this is a violation of my human rights, I don’t



know which one but nevertheless I feel that way.

“Aza” he shouts.

She comes running and looks up at Snqumo smiling.

He unwraps a lollipop and hands it to her.

“Here,I want you to look after MaG and make sure she kills this chicken and cooks it” Snqumo says.

A smile spread across her lips and she nods her head.

“I have to go,see you guys later” he says.



“Ma” I shout.

She walks out of the house with her husband following behind her.

You would swear these two are twins always following each other.

“Ngize nebhece and your father would like to eat is Isijingi” (I came with some jam squash and your father would like to eat Isijingi) she says.

“First you bring a live chicken to the suburbs and now you want me to cook isijingi” I say.

“Just kill the chicken will you” Aza says.



“Shut up” I say.

“Okay that’s enough give me the chicken” My father says.

I hand him the knife and move my feet from the chicken’s wings.

It’s runs off charging towards Aza who drops her lollipop and screams her tiny lungs out.

“Don’t just stand there get the chicken” My mother shouts.

“Mkhulu it’s chasing me” she shouts.

I lean back and laugh as my parents chase the chicken in hopes of catching it and saving Aza.



“MaG” Aza shouts crying out loud.

I shouldn't be laughing but I can't help it.

I run over and pick her up, while my parents chase the chicken.

“Yibambe Mphemba” (Grab it Mphemba) my mother shouts.

The chicken gets in between my father legs and clucks away.

I turn and make my way inside the house, poor baby is traumatized.

“It bit me” Aza says softly.

I wipe her tears with a smile on my face, I might be going to hell for this



but this is the best day of my life. I didn't even have to pinch anyone the chicken did all the work.

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C-MAX PRISON PRETORIA

Bandla pulls the chair and sits waiting for his brother.

His brother finally makes an appearance and Bandla smiles emotional, it's been a while since he saw him.

The man has been taking phone calls



instead of visits.

Atleast he looks good meaning prison hasn't been that bad, but then again this is Dedani he's talking about.

He stands wanting to give him a hug but quickly remembers the rules settling down.

Dedani sits and looks at his young brother impressed.

“Sihayo” Bandla says.

“Bandla” Dedani says.

A moment passes with each one admiring the other.



“How are things on the outside”

Dedani asks.

“Things are good we just miss you”

Bandla says.

Dedani chuckles Bandla has always been the soft one, overly emotional and sentimental.

“How’s baba doing” Dedani asks.

“He wants to see you” Bandla says.

“Not in this place Bandla” he says.

“But he misses you” Bandla says almost shouting.

Dedani sighs and clears his throat.

“I want you to do something for me”



he says looking into Bandla's eyes.

"What" Bandla asks.

"Are you sulking Bandla" Dedani asks raising his left eyebrow.

"Cha" (No) Bandla responds.

"Then fix your voice and sit up straight when you're talking to me" Dedani.

Bandla swallows and sits like a man.

"I want you to tail someone, be discreet as possible and when the time comes I will let you know what to do" Dedani says.

He takes out a photo cut out from a



newspaper and hands it to Bandla.

“That’s the key to my freedom”

Dedani says.

Bandla looks at the picture and swallows.

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ZABELO

Baba finally caught the chicken and killed it,I had to cook and make up for all that running.

Aza is sitting on my lap with her head



resting on my chest.

She refuses to eat the horrible monster that chased and bit her.

“Cha kodwa uyalishaya ibhodwe Zabe” (You really know how to cook) Snqumo says.

“Your husband will be lucky” Kwazi says.

She finally decided to grace us with her presence.

“Just because you’re married it doesn’t mean Zabe wants to get married too” Baba says.

“Zabe do you want to get married” My mother asks.



I pretend not to hear them and talk to Aza.

“Awuzwa yini ugogo ukhuluma nawe”
(Can't you hear? Gogo is talking to you) Aza says.

Snqumo laughs and shakes his head.

“We Kwazi wayithathiphi lengane”
(Kwazi where did you get this child)
He asks.

The table erupts into laughter.

“Ma can I have Aza for maybe a month” Kwazi says softly.

The table goes quiet with my father frowning.



I put my hands over Aza's ears and keep mine wide open.

"And what's wrong with you coming home to see her" My mother asks.

Everything, but I won't say that out loud.

"She's my baby ma and I would like to spend more time with her, I want to come home to her and tuck her in like most moms do to their kids" she says.

"No" my father says.

"If you want to spend more time with Aza then come home" Snqumo says.

My father looks at Kwazi, oh man if



looks could kill she would be dead on the floor right now.

Kwazi drops her eyes to her plate remaining quiet.

“Tell your husband to give you kids if he want them, and also tell him that Aza is a Ntuli and will remain one till you tell us who her father is” My father says standing up and leaving the table.

So the story is Aza was conceived from a one nightstand.

And here’s the thing Kwazi never talks about it no matter how drunk she gets.



My mother lets out a sigh and stands up.

“I will talk to your father, but she’s not moving in with you. You know that by culture Aza remains with us she doesn’t belong to your marriage” she says walking away.

Aza wiggles herself out of my hold and runs after her grandmother.

I move my chair closer to hers and rest my head on her shoulder.

“Moral support” I say.

“In that case you’re supposed to hug me” she says.

I laugh and move my head then wrap



my arms around her.

“Ehh so who’s the father” Snqumo asks.

Kwazi throws her napkin at him and clicks her tongue.

Trust my brother to ruin the moment he’s just a replica of my father.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 03

ZABELO

Kwazi decided to spend the night



home,after having her hopes crushed she didn't feel like driving or going home.

Mdu her husband wanted to fetch her but she asked to sleep here.

She slept in my room and it felt like old times where we would talk all night and gossip about the parents.

Everyone went to church except Snqumo,Kwazi and I.

I don't know why but we've never really liked church that much, so much so the parents would leave without us.

Snqumo is in the garden reading a



newspaper and drinking coffee like the sir of the house psst.

“Make sure those veggies are but the same size” Kwazi says.

She’s cooking my dad’s favourite probably a peace offering.

“Can we talk about last night” I say.

“What about last night Zabe” she says.

“You’ve never really said anything about Aza’s father, you claim it was a one night stand with some random guy but I don’t believe you. You would never sleep with stranger that I can bet on” I say.



She lets out a chuckle and shrugs.

“Believe what you want to believe Zabe” she says.

“You do know that Aza is growing and she will ask about her father” I say.

“She won’t” she says unsure of herself.

“She’s already inquisitive with everything what makes you think she won’t ask” I let out a sigh and clear my throat gathering strength.

“Did the man force himself on you” I ask.

“What, No he didn’t” she says.



“Okay I guess I should start believing your one night story then” I say.

She sighs and forces a smile.

“Please promise me that you will never allow any man to make a fool out of you” she says.

“Is Mdu cheating on you,blink twice if he is. I promise Snqumo and I will go down there and burn him for hurting you” I say.

She laughs throwing her head back.

“You are so dramatic and no my husband is not cheating on me” she says.

“Good because if he is then baba will



deal with him” I say.

She continues laughing,it’s good seeing her laugh this hard.

“I am sorry for being pushy with the issue of Aza’s father” I say.

Sometime people need go mind their own business and from now on that’s what I am going to do.

“It’s okay” she says.

A message comes through on my phone and I look at it.

“Who is it” she asks.

“It’s Lethu” I say.

She nods her head and walking away.



I reply to Lethu's message with a smile on my face.

Work has been hectic for the both of us,we haven't gone out in a while.

Yes we see each other at work but it's not the same.

The troops long came back from church and we're now sitting at the table ready to eat.

Kwazi went all out with the food everything looks amazing.

My father has been asking that we eat already.



“Mkhulu can I please pray for the food” Aza says.

I have heard Aza pray and this is not a good idea.

She’s the type to pray about things she hears or knows about.

“Go ahead princess” he says smiling.

We close our eyes and wait for her to pray.

“Dear God thank you for today,thank you for Mkhulu and Gogo,thank you for Zabe,thank you for Malume and his frostishute friends(Snqumo coughs hard),thank you the food mama cooked and thank you for me



Amen” she says.

By the end of her prayer everyone is looking at.

“Where did you hear that about Malume” Snqumo asks.

“I think we should eat the food is getting cold” my mother says.

“Mkhulu said you need to get married and stop bringing frosty people in his house” Aza says.

I look at my tongue tied father and laugh.

I always tell these people to never gossip in front of Azamahle.



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I should have known Lethu would stood up me, typical of people in relationships.

Even Kwazi used to do this when she met Mdu suddenly I took a backseat.

One day she had the nerve to say I won't give her what Mdu is giving her.

It's no fun drinking alone and being surrounded by strangers all over.

I grab my purse and make my way out the club.



I get outside and a young couple is fighting.

The man is dragging this girl by her braids.

“Leave her alone” I manage to pull the guy away and stand in between them.

“Sisi please mind your own business this is my girlfriend” the guy says.

“And that doesn’t give you the right to hit her” I say

“Ahh baby manje uyuvuma losisi akhulume nami kanje”(So you’re allowing this lady to talk to me like this)he says.

“You deserve better trust me” I say



looking at the girl.

“Baby ungavumi sixabaniswe umuntu esingamazi,tholukuthi yisipoki esafa singajoli ” (Baby don’t allow us to fight because of a person we don’t even know,who knows maybe she’s a ghost that died single) The guy says.

I almost chuckle but I can tell he’s being for real.

“UQinisile baby unomona lo nokuthi ungenaphi angazi” (You’re right baby she’s just jealous,I don’t even know where she enters) she says

I look at her with my mouth agape suddenly I am the bad guy.



“Asambe muntu wami siyeke abantu abangajoli” (Lets go my love and leave single people alone) the guy says.

They walk away leaving me with my jaw still dropped.

I take out my phone and dial Luthu but her phone takes me straight to voicemail.

I leave her mouthful of a message and get into my car driving off.

I look at the fighting couple still holding hand and walking away,I find myself laughing and shake my head so much for trying to help.



I get home and Kwazi is still here drinking in front of the tv.

I guess everyone is asleep because she wouldn't freely drink in-front of our dad.

I take off my shoes and join her under the fleece blanket.

She subtly wipes her tears but I've seen them already.

"You're home early" she says.

"And you're not at your house" I say.

"I just needed to see Aza for another day" she says.



“Kwazi why are you crying” I ask.

She heavily sighs and laughs.

“Because I am a fool Zabe” she says sniffing.

“You’re not a fool Kwazi don’t say that” I say.

“Nkanyiso is Azamahle’s father” she says.

“What” I say.

She buries her face in her hands and silently cries.

“Isn’t Nkanyiso married” I ask.

“It happened a long time ago Zabe,he lied to me and said he was going to



leave his wife and that he was sorry for everything.

I believed him and when I told him that I was pregnant, he asked that I have an abortion. He said he would never leave his wife for me and that he wanted nothing to do with Aza” she says wiping her tears.

“I wish I could tell baba the truth but I can’t, I’ve disappointed him enough” she says.

Wow this is big so big i don’t know what my parents will do should they find out.

“You slept with Nkanyiso out of all



people” I sayZ

“I thought he changed Zabe,I really thought he changed and that he wanted me in his life but I was wrong. He played me again and I let him how stupid can I be” she says smiling through her tears.

“You’re not stupid” I say softly.

She is a little but I won’t say that out loud lest she hits me.

“Then what I am” she asks.

“You’re human and you made a mistake,please don’t punish yourself for it. Nkanyiso’s day will come for everything he did to you” I say.



I wrap my arms around her and hold her close.

I can't believe Nkanyiso is Aza's father, I can't believe that man's blood runs through Aza's veins. Nkanyiso is that one ex my sister could never really get over, he was her first in everything. I am not surprised she went back one last time.

But she should know better the man broke her, drove her to near death and depression.

"Please don't tell anyone about this" she says.

I remain mum this is big I still need to



think.

“Zabe please I don’t want my daughter to experience the same hurt and rejection I got from that man” she says.

The hurt in her voice says it all, this man succeeded yet again to break my sister.

“I won’t say anything but I do have a great mind to hire someone who you will break his kneecap” I say

She lets out a soft laugh and shakes her head.

“Life will deal with him” she says.

I force a smile i wish I believed in this



gibberish coming out of her mouth, but I am more of a revenge person.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 04

ZABELO

She places Jumbo speckled eggs, Tiramisu cake and some Kfc dunked wings.

She's been buying me lunch all week in the name of apologising.



I am over what happened but riding this free lunch wave hasn't been bad.

"Zabe come on it's been week now" she says.

"You're not the one who was ganged up for trying to help, you are not the one who looked like a desperate fool at that club. So I am allowed to be angry at you for as long as I want" I say.

"I booked us a spar day and after that we can go clubbing till the sun comes up" she says.

"I forgive you" I say.

"Girl you drive a hard bargain" she



says laughing.

“I long forgave I was just pushing trying to get more stuff out of you” I say.

“Shame on you” she says.

She sits and rests her head on my shoulder.

“So I want to introduce you to someone” she says.

I roll my eyes and bring my wings closer,there’s always someone interesting ready to be met with Lethu.

Lethu and I have been friends since high school,we studied the same



course and graduated in recorded time.

We work for one big Pharmaceutical company as researchers with my dad's help of course.

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It's been a while since I left work late like today. I am driving home and listening to JP Cooper's song "The Only Reason" it hits places I never knew existed.

It's one of those songs that make you want to jump into a relationship



without thinking twice. I can't wait to Aza and listen to her daycare stories, she promised me news about her teacher.

Just as I am about to stop at the traffic lights a car overtakes mine and slowly drives in front of me.

The driver suddenly stops unexpectedly causing a collision.

I hit my head on the steering and slowly raise it looking at the driver approach my car.

I panic and reach the glove compartment pulling out my 9mm P365 pistol that my father bought me.



It falls under the seat when another car hits the back of my car.

I hit the steering wheel once again and this time the doors to the car open and someone pulls me out of the car.

“Careful we need her alive” One voice.

I try pushing him off but he puts a cloth soaked in chloroform over my nose.

A few minutes in and I am drifting away into sleep.

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A bucket of icy cold water all over me and I am screaming my lungs out.

I am wet and confused the last thing I remember is being pulled out of my car and being put to sleep.

I look around and two men are in the room looking at me, one holding the bucket and the other a gun.

“Kuhle kona” (she’s beautiful) The one holding the gun says.

The other one chuckles and puts the bucket down.

I am disoriented and my head hurts so bad I can’t think.

The door opens and another man



walks in.

He walks over and hands me my phone and asks me to open it.

I shake my head “No” almost everything of mine is in this phone.

From personal information to banking apps.

“I won’t ask you again please unlock your phone” he says.

I shake my head once again and he punches me, I hit the floor with my head and slowly put a hand over my bleeding nose.

“Unlock the phone” he says.



He places it in front of me and punch in my passcode.

“Good” he says walking away.

I close my eyes as the excruciating pain persists.

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MRS NTULI (NONTOBENKO)

With Nhlakaipho away on business, Snqumo is the man of the house. Right now he's out there looking for Zabe. They called Kwazi



but she also hasn't heard from Zabe all day long.

She swallows hard as the feeling of hopelessness hits her again,Zabe never stays out late not unless she's with Lethu.

But they make sure to always let her know about their plans.

She grabs her phone and calmly calls Lethu.

"Sawubona Ma" Lethu cheerfully says

"Lethu Ngane yami I am calling about Zabe,is she with you" she asks holding her breath.

"No she's not" Lethu says.



A moment passes with Nontobeko getting this sickening feeling.

It's feels like her worst nightmare is about to come real.

"Ma is everything okay" Lethu asks.

"Zabe is not home,I have been trying to call her but her phone isn't going through" Nontobeko says.

Snqumo walk in and looks at his mother.

"I found her car but she's nowhere to be found" Snqumo says.

Her heart sinks to pit of her stomach and tears fall down her cheeks.



Snqumo swallow he's looked everywhere but nothing.

Soon after Kwazi and her husband Mdu walk.

"Ma...Ma.. i am coming over" Lethu says.

For a moment she had forgotten about Lethu..

She ends the call and looks at her children.

Deep down she knows something is wrong,it's that feeling only a mother knows.

"I think we should go to the police and report her missing" Kwazi says.



Tears fill Nontobeko's eyes, the thought of losing Zabe or any of her children makes her sick to the stomach.

Grieve would probably take her too she would never survive it.

"Let me call your father first" she says dialing her husband.

"Mkami " Nhlaka says.

"Mphemba we have a problem we can't find Zabe, Snqumo found her car but it's empty" she says breaking down.

"What do you mean you can't find her where is she" he asks.



“No one knows we looked for her but we can’t find her, hasn’t come home from work” she says.

“When did you realise she was late” he asks.

“A few hours ago” she says softly.

“Wathula wangangitshela Ntobe ingane ingekho” (And you kept quiet and said nothing knowing the child is not there) he shouts.

She starts sniffing and wipes her tears.

“Musa ukukhala Nontobeko ingane yami kube ingekho ekhaya maaan” (Don’t cry Nontobeko not when my



child is not home) he shouts .

He ends the call and calls back again.

“We Ntobe” he says softly.

“Mphemba” she says.

“Ngempela ngempela uthi iphi ingane yami” (Where is my child) he asks.

She shuts her eyes and remains quiet not knowing what to say.

“Give Snquumo the phone” he says.

Tears fill her eyes as she hands Snquumo the phone and walks away with Kwazi following behind her.

.....



[10/20, 20:21] o: 05

ZABELO

She can't see but she can hear the door open and close with Bandla walking in, last night she tried crawling to the door in an attempt to escape but things turned out badly.

One of the guys didn't hesitate dragging and kicking her in the face.

Last night was the first time anyone had ever put their hand on her.

Not even her mother has ever laid a



hand on her no matter what she does. She's never been beaten before nor has she ever been subjected to such pain.

Thoughts of her father telling her to "never show fear" seemed to be nothing but that last night.

She's been crying and shivering since the floor is cold, the coldness penetrating it's was through her flesh.

Her head hurts and the feeling of nausea hasn't left her.

"I specifically told you not to touch her" Bandla shouts.

Her heart starts beating so fast she



fears these man will smell her fear.

“She tried to escape” One of the voices from last night says.

“That’s not an excuse we never and I mean ever lay our hands on women” Bandla shouts even louder.

He moves closer to Zabe and carefully looks at her face.

As she silently cries not knowing if this is the day she takes her last breath.

Bandla sighs looking at the damage the men did.

Not only did they take the wrong sister but they went as far as beating



her up,something he hates with all his heart.

He reaches inside his pockets and takes out his phone calling the doctor.

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NHLAKA (MR NTULI)

He arrived early in the morning and Nontobeko hasn't said anything to him.

She's not sulking or angry just sad and it breaks his heart.

He moves closer and wraps his arm



around her waist kissing her neck.

“You made it seem as if I let this happen” Nontobeko says.

“She’s my child too Mphemba,I gave birth to that child and almost lost my life in the process” she says.

“I am sorry Ntobe” he says softly.

“Sorry... that’s all you’re going to say,shouldn’t you be out there looking for my child. Shouldn’t she be home now that you’re home and able to be the better responsible parent” she says.

He lets out a sigh and gets off the bed,he walks over to Nontobeko’s



side and kneels down taking her hand into his.

“I didn’t mean to question you like that Ntobe,it wasn’t my intention to hurt you Mkami ngiyaxolisa” he says.

He wipes her tears and kisses her hand.

“She must be scared Mphemba,my child is probably scared and alone wherever she is” she says breaking down.

He helps her sit up straight and holds her tight.

“Mphemba find my baby because wherever she is I know she needs us”



she says.

“I promise I will bring her home soon”
he says.

His phone rings and he lets go of his
wife walks over to get it.

He answers the phone and stands by
the window.

“Mphemba” The voice on the ends
says.

He shuts his eyes and clenches his
jaws.

Never in his wildest dreams did he
think he would hear this deep voice
again.



“What do you want” He asks.

“My freedom for your daughter’s life”
the voice says.

“If you touch her I will kill you” He
says.

“I won’t touch her but like I said my
freedom for her life it’s that simple”
The voice says.

Nhlaka remains quiet and breathes
heavily.

“You know where to find me when
you’re ready to talk” the call ends
leaving Nhlaka shocked and more
livid than he’s even been.

The door to their bedroom opens and



Aza walks in.

She runs towards him and he fixes his face lifting her up with a smile.

“Mkhulu where is MaG” she asks.

He smiles and pinches her nose for the first time he doesn't have the answer.

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DEDANI

The doors to his cell his open up and two guards walk in.

“Vuka sboshwa” They shout.



He gets dragged out of his bed and pulled outside the cell.

They usher him to the solitary confinement.

He looks at Nhlaka and clenches his jaws.

“You have the nerve Mphemba to have me woken up in the middle of the night only to come look at your face” He says.

Nhlakanipho’s anger grows but he holds himself.

“She’s just a child Sihayo” Nhlaka says.

Dedani looks at him knowing that if it



wasn't for his daughter this man would have ripped his heart out.

"This is simple Mphemba all I want is to be free" Dedani says.

"You killed five police officers, you're nothing but a criminal and a murderer. And I would be a fool to let you walk free not after I worked so hard to put you in here" Nhlakanipho shouts.

Dedani nods his head and clears his throat.

"I hope your wife forgives you for killing your daughter" Dedani says looking him straight in the eye.

Nhlakanipho swallows and tightens



his fist.

He's livid but trying his best to stay calm.

"I am begging you Sihayo not my daughter" he says.

"Make that phone call Mphemba, call them all and you will have your daughter by your side" Dedani says.

"Is she alive" Nhlaka asks the one question he's been dreading.

"Yes" Dedani assures him.

"You'll be out of this place by the end of this week" Nhlaka says walking out.



The doors to the solitary confinement close leaving Dedani in the dark.

He walks over to the thin mattress and lies down closing his eyes.

He breathes heavily as memories of his beautiful mother flood his brain.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 06

NHLAKA(MR NTULI)

This has been the toughest week of his life,Ntobe hasn't been eaten in the



past few days.

She refuses to eat not knowing whether Zabe is eating or not.

He picks up his phone and calls the prison, everything was finalised yesterday and now the bastard gets to walk free.

He gets assured that Dedani will be released in a few hours.

He puts the phone down and heavily sighs a man's family is always his vulnerable point.

For this to happen he had to threaten and call in favours, so much for being tasked to put the man behind bars



now he's helping him get out.

He walks out of his study and makes his way to the kitchen.

Almost a full house but Zabe is not here,he greets the kids and settles next to Nontobeko.

“Zabe is coming home today” he says.

Kwazi's face lights up she's been miserable without her sister and so has Aza,out of everyone in the house Zabe is her favourite person.

Squmo looks at his father questioning his statement.

This is premature even for him,people like Dedani can change



their minds anytime.

What happens if they don't give them Zabe.

Ntontobeko looks at him surprised,he should have told her privately before telling the kids.

“How are you connected to Zabe getting kidnapped?” She asks.

“Can we talk about this in the bedroom” he says.

Nontobeko scoffs defiantly.

“These two are old enough to know that before you were head of intelligence you were an agent” she says.



“I’ve been quiet Mphemba but today I want to know how are you connected to Zabelo getting kidnapped” she asks.

“Ntobe please” he says.

“It’s your fault that Zabe was kidnapped right” she says looking at him.

“Baba” Kwazi says looking at him.

She knew her father was in the force but she didn’t think it was this deep.

“I think we should give them a moment” Snqumo says.

Nhlaka watches as they both walk away and turns to look at his wife.



“You promised Mphemba that your work would never affect any of our kids,you promised us a safe and peaceful life. Kodwa buka manje ingane ithathiwe ngisimanga sakho (but look now the child is missing because of you) ” she says.

“Ntobe that’s not fair” he says.

He’s saying one thing and feeling the other,of course he blames himself for what happened.

“What’s not fair is your people taking my child and threatening to kill her,what is it that they want” she asks.



He looks at and she shakes her head.

“Ntobe I have never put you or the kids in any danger” he says.

“If that’s the case then why is this person after you?” she shouts.

“They couldn’t handle him so they asked me to step in and help them,these were orders from above and I couldn’t say no. It’s took months to track him down and I finally then did we went after him. On that day he wasn’t alone in the car his son and fiancé where with him. Everything happened so fast shots were fired because and in that



moment they were killed,his son died in his arms and his fiancé on the way to the hospital” he says.

He clenches his jaws and swallows thinking back to that day.

His gun might not have been the weapon to that took their lives,but it was his team that fired those shots.

“What if he doesn’t keep his word,what if they kill her what are we going to do” she asks.

He wipes her tears and kisses her forehead.

“Trust me Nontobeko nothing is going to happen to Zabe” he says.



He assures his wife even though the thought and possibility of them losing her fingers at the back of his head.

He fears the worst but he's not about to admit it.

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DEDANI NGCOBO

He's standing outside the prison gate waiting for his brother.

Birds are chipping and the sun is so bright he can't remember the last



time he was free.

He closes his eyes and breathes in the clean uncongested air looking to the sky.

Being outside these walls feels like a dream, for the past five years this hell hole has been his home.

Bandla parks the car next to him and steps out of the car.

He strides towards his big brother and gives him a hug.

Dedani wraps his arms around him and smiles.

Bandla holds on tight and breaks down sniffing.



A few minutes pass and Dedani clears his throat.

“Sekwanele Bandla (That’s enough Bandla) ” He says.

Bandla shakes his head still holding on.

“You don’t understand it was hard for me when you left” Bandla says.

Dedani sighs and holds him tight till he eventually pulls away and wipes his tears.

“I know that things changed when I left and that you had to man up and take care of things. But I must say you’ve been doing a good job and I



am proud of you” Dedani says.

Bandla nods with a smile on his face.

“Let’s go home” He says taking Dedani’s bag and leading the way.

“For a former jailbird you look good” Bandla says.

Dedani chuckles as they both get in the car.

A few hours later and Bandla parks the car in the drive way of his father’s house.

They had to go to a certain man and have Dedani cleansed before coming



home.

His father walks out of the house followed by their stepmother.

She runs towards the car and opens the door pulling Dedani out.

She embraces him tightly and softly as any mother can.

Her coconut body butter scent fills his nostrils bringing about memories.

She pulls away and turns him around carefully looking at him.

“We missed you khehla” she says.

He laughs and rubs his forehead.

“Ma please not that name” he says.



“Dlalana phela Khehla (Eat Khehla)”
Bandla says mimicking their mother.

“Ngizokushaya wena(I will beat you)”
their mother says.

She looks at Dedani one more time
and sighs.

“I need to feed you you’re so thin that
place wasn’t good for you” She tells
him.

He chuckles and looks at Bandla.

“I thought you said I look good” he
says.

“We both know Ma can’t see” Bandla
says with a laugh walking past and
greeting their father.



MaShezi follows behind him leaving Dedani with his father.

“Ngcobo,Mapholoba,Sihayo welcome home” His father says giving him a hug.

“It’s good to be home baba” he says.

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Bandla warned him and he didn’t listen,he’s waited for five years for this.

He walks over up the front door and breathes in and out before knocking.

The door opens and he comes faces



to you face with Okuhle.

“Who is that” Her mother asks but Okuhle remains quiet looking at Dedani.

“Okuhle I am talking to you” her mother says.

“Ma” Okuhle says.

Her mother appears and locks eyes with Dedani.

“Maye ngiyalingwa ngisehlane lase judiya(Jesus me I am being tested)” she exclaims.

“Ufunani wena la(what are you doing here) she says.



“Okuhle call the police” she shouts.

“Ma please I am not here to fight,I am here to ask for permission to visit Avethandwa’s grave and that of my son’s that’s all” he says softly.

They were buried and he wasn’t there,he was laying in that godforsaken hospital wishing he would die.

“Why,so you can dig up get them into your car and kill them again” she says.

“Ma” Okuhle says.

“Shut up Okuhle just because he paid for your varsity fees doesn’t mean he’s good” she looks at Dedani with



her chest heaving.

“No money in the world will make me forgive for you taking my daughter that day, no matter how many times you apologize it will not bring them back” she says.

“You’re nothing but a murderer and I hate you, no wonder your own mother tried to kill you she could see you were nothing but the devil” she says.

Tears fill his eyes but he blinks them away.

“Ma that’s enough” Okuhle says.

“Dedani please leave” she says softly.

“I am truly sorry Ma for causing you



this never healing pain” he turns and walks away gutted from the inside and holding himself from breaking down.

“And stay away from my daughter and grandson’s grave” Okuhle’s mother shouts

He reaches the car and gets inside and breathes.

Tears fill his eyes till they fall, Bandla warned him but he didn’t listen. He starts the car and drives off to the nearest bar.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 07

ZABELO

I don't remember much of what happened in these past few days.

I do remember being given food and something to numb the pain.

They even called a doctor to come check on me,talk about considerate criminals.

I still can't believe I was taken and kept hostage.

This is a story I will tell Aza someday



with a few spices here and there of course.

Last night I was blindfolded and dropped off outside the gate, Snqumi is the one that found me wandering about like a lost chicken.

My mother walks in holding a tray and places it next to my bedside.

“How are you feeling” she asks.

“I feel better now that I am home” I say.

She places her hand on my cheek my sighs.

“I was scared” she says.



“I was scared too but apart from being stomped on it wasn’t that bad” I say with a smile.

“That’s not funny” she says.

“I know but really Ma I am okay” I say.

“Did they touch you appropriate?” She asks.

“No..they didn’t” I say.

She still looks at me in a way that says she doesn’t believe a word I am saying.

“Zabe are you sure” she asks.

“Ma they didn’t sexually assault me I promise you” I say.



She nods her head and pulls me in for a hug.

“I thank God that you’re home and safe,I love you so much and I am happy that you’re okay” she says.

My father walks in and clears his throat.

My mother pulls away and wipes her tears smiling.

“I am cooking your favourite tonight” she says.

“Thank you Ma” I say.

She stands up and walks out leaving me with my father.



I get out my bed and walk over to my father.

He opens his arms and I wrap my mine around him resting my head on his chest.

“Bangishayile baba(They hit me baba)” I say.

Tear fill my eyes when I think about happened.

That man didn't care that I am a woman and that he was twice my size.

“I am sorry Magcina” he says softly.

“I promise it won't happen again no one will ever hurt you” he says.



“MaG” Aza shouts.

I pull away and behind the door and remain quiet.

“MaG...gogo where is she” she asks excitedly.

I remain standing behind the door till she walks in my room.

“Ahh Mkhulu it’s just you” she says disappointed.

My father laughs and points behind the door.

She turns and drops her stuffed toy.

“MaG” she leap into my arms and wraps her hands around my neck.



“You’re chocking me Aza” I say.

She giggles and kisses my face all over.

“I missed you” she says still giggling.

I look at her happy face and laugh too.

“I missed you more” I say.

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DEDEANI

“Dedani” he opens his eyes and looks around.

He doesn’t remember much about last night but he remembers



borrowing some guy's phone and calling Bandla.

He rubs his eyes and looks at his father standing in front him.

“Go take a shower I need you to drive me somewhere” his father says.

He grunts and raises his heavy head.

Last night is bit of a blur he drank till he couldn't speak.

Not that he wanted to speak he only wanted to numb the pain.

He gets up and staggers around making his way to the bathroom.

He takes off his clothes and gets



inside the shower.

He runs the cold water as thoughts of Avethandwa's mother pointing at him flash, her words echo inside his head. He understands that she was angry but to bring his mother into this was a low blow.

"Dedani" his father shouts.

He cusses under his breath and takes a quick shower, with his thoughts taking him further and further away.

He's been on the road for a while now and his father hasn't said anything.

"Where are we going Mapholoba" he



asks.

“To the cemetery take this road” his father says.

He takes the road leading to the cemetery except he’s not familiar with this cemetery.

“Park under that tree” his father says.

He parks the car and looks at his father.

“I spoke to Avethandwa’s mother and made her see reason, what I won’t tolerate Dedani is you drinking yourself into oblivion” his father says opening the car.

“Ngilandele(follow me)” His father



says.

He wants to fight his father on this but he doesn't have the will.

He steps out of the car and follows his father to two graves.

He stops on his track as soon as he realises that this where his family is buried.

“This is where you son and his mother are resting” his father says showing him Avethandwa's grave and his son's.

All the alcohol he thought was in his body evaporates, his heart grows heavier and heavier and tears fill his



eyes.

“What happened to them is not fault, had it not been their time God would have intervened. I know it hurts but you need to forgive yourself and allow your heart to heal” his father says.

“Those people wanted me baba but instead two innocent people died because of me” Dedani says.

“You didn’t know the police would come for you that day, this girl loved you and I know that wherever she is she knows you would have taken the bullet for both of them. Whatever her



mother said was out of anger and grief,it's been years but she's still grieving as a parent the pain of losing your child never goes away” He drops his head and wipes his tears.

“You don't have to pretend to be strong when you're hurting in the inside,I brought you here so you can cry,ask for forgiveness if that's what you want. But most importantly I brought you here so you could remember all the days she loved you and no one else,days where my grandson's face would light up every time he saw you. Nothing is ever fair in life my son,life happens to the best



of us but in all that we still find ways to carry on.

No words will ever erase the pain but forgiving yourself will ease the guilt and pain” he shakes his head and wipes his nose.

“How do I forgive myself baba when my son died in my arms for something that I had done,when Ave begged me to save our son and I couldn't. It hurts Mapholoba and I don't know if I can forgive myself” Dedani says.

“That's what you think because you haven't given yourself the chance” his



father heavily sighs and puts his hand over Dedani's shoulder.

“Don't hold on to the past...don't allow it to imprison you” His father says walking away leaving him standing there.

He stands tall and clears his throat.

“I should have protected you sthandwa sam but I failed,I wish I had the powers to bring you back but I don't instead I pray each day that your soul is at peace my love and that you're with our son” he looks at his son's grave and fights the tears.

“I will always carry you in my heart



Sihayo” he says softly.

He turns and jogs to the car where his father is.

He gets in and starts the car driving off.

“Thank you Mapholoba” he says.

His father nods his head and turns up the radio leaning back.

“Baba I am leaving” Dedani says still focusing on the road.

He feels his father’s eyes on him but doesn’t dare look his way.

“You just came back where are you going” his father asks worriedly.



“I don’t know but I need to clear my head,it’s not a permanent thing I will be back and I will keep in touch” he says assuring his father.

He needs to get away for a while so many things have happened here,they might be in the past but he’s a man that carries his past on his shoulders.

1 month later

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 08

ZABELO



It's been a month of healing and getting over what happened.

So many things changed from being free to being asked about my every move.

I look at my emails and respond to a few, my bosses were kind enough to give me time off even though I didn't need it.

"Done" Aza says.

I decided go take her out for breakfast just the the two of us.

I have been so busy at work trying to catch up that I haven't had time for



her.

A text from Snqumo comes through and I roll my eyes,he's asking if we're done yet.

It hasn't even been that long since we got here and already he wants to fetch us.

I put the phone down and look at Azamahle.

"I want this one" Aza says pointing at Marsha and the Bear.

"You watch too much of this at home pick something else" I say.

She picks Tom and Jerry and puts it on herself.



I go back to looking at my emails while Aza giggles and shows me the screen of her tablet in between.

This is where she learns all her tricks I swear parent should be aware of this cartoons.

Our waitress comes out table and I order another cup of coffee with a blueberry muffin.

A few minutes later the waitress brings our order.

I take out a juice box and place it next to Aza while she unwraps her muffin.

“Thank you ncanne” Aza says.

A work call comes through and I scan



the room looking for our waitress but can't seem to find her.

“Don't go anywhere okay” I say.

She nods her head and I move away from the table turning my back on her.

A few seconds into the call and I turn around to look at her only to see our table empty.

I end the call panicking and shout for her looking around.

My heart almost stops when I see her standing beside a table with a certain gentleman.

“Aza get away from there” I shout



People stare but I couldn't care less, I walk over to the table and pull Aza closer.

"What did I tell you about talking to strangers huh" I say.

"I didn't talk to anyone" Aza says softly.

I turn my head to the man and look at him from head to toe.

He's wearing a black suit with a black shirt buttoned all the way to his neck covering it, there's a chain hanging around his neck and a few details over his suit chest pocket.

"What are you a peodophile" I say.



He looks at me clearly disgusted by my assumption.

But he's the one dressed up like a sketchy person.

"Your child here spilled coffee all over my laptop" he says calmly.

His voice is so low I can't help but wonder if he's not a singer.

"Ngiyaxolisa malume(I am sorry uncle)" Aza says softly.

I look at Aza then back at the man.

I am embarrassed on my behalf and Aza's.

"I am truly sorry" I say.



“Please allow me to pay for the damages or even buy you a new one” I say.

“No need she’s just a child and I understand” He says.

Aza runs to our table and comes back with her half eaten blueberry muffin.

She hands it to the man and smiles.

“Phephisa yezwa Malume(I am sorry okay)”she says softly.

He wasn’t ready for Aza’s act neither was I, but his lips spread into a smile changing his whole face.

His black shiny eyes sparkle and I



am standing here looking at this transformation.

He takes a bite of the muffin and looks at Aza who is smiling from ear to ear.

He hands it back and the little spawn gobbles it up.

They both laugh and I am standing next to them like an imposter.

I clear my throat and he raises his eyes to look at me.

“This peodophile would like to drink his fresh cup of coffee in peace please” he says.

I grab the paper serviette and a pen



jotting down my number.

“Please call me about the laptop” I say.

“Come Aza” I say holding her hand.

She turns and waves back at the man who waves back.

I quickly pay the bill and grab our stuff walking out.

“Are you angry MaG” Aza asks.

“No but promise me that you will not talk to strangers,not everyone is a good person okay” she nods her head and looks at me smiling.

The clouds gather and it dawns on



me that I haven't called Snqumo.

"I think we should go back inside and call Malume to come pick us up" I say.

She giggles and runs back inside the restaurant.

"Azamahle Ntuli" I shout running after her.

I bump into the man from that table and we both drop our things to the floor.

He clicks his tongue and I hold my breath seems like I am good at annoying this man , he might just find my breathing awful.



“I am sorry” I say.

I pick up my bag and put everything inside and watch as he picks up his car keys and laptop bag.

He shakes his head and walks away leaving me standing there.

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I am laying on the couch resting my head on Kwazi’s lap.

“Today was just horrible” I say.

“So you called him a peodophile and



then almost knocked him over” she says.

“Basically yes” I say.

“What really happened” she asks.

“I was taking a call and I swear I only took my eyes off Aza for a few seconds, and when I looked back she was standing next to this man’s table. That’s when I almost lost it and asked if was a peodophile” I say.

She laughs stroking my hair.

“Did you atleast apologise” she asks.

“I did but I could tell he wasn’t interested” I say.



A phone rings and she looks at me.

“Your phone is ringing” she says.

“That’s not my phone” I say

“Well it’s coming from your bag” she says handing it to me.

I laugh thinking maybe Aza changed my ringtone.

Anything is possible with Azamahle.

I empty my bag and another phone falls out.

I look at the caller id and it’s written Bandla.

“Answer it” Kwazi says.

“Hello” I say.



“Uhm I believe we met today at the restaurant and somehow when we bumped into each other you took my phone and I took your lip gloss” the caller says.

“And here I was thinking Aza took it” I say.

“I suppose you called because you want it back” he says.

“Yes” he says sounding annoyed.

That was a stupid statement of course he wasn't his phone back.

“Can I give you an address where you can fetch it from” I say.

“I would appreciate that” he says.



He gives me the passcode to the phone before ending the call.

I send Kwazi's address to the Bandla contact and look at Kwazi.

"It's the guy I bumped into" I say.

She laughs and claps her hands.

"What are the odds" she says.

I look at her and laugh.

"You do know that third time is a charm right" she says.

I roll my eyes and fix my dress smiling.

An hour later the man calls and tells



me that he's outside.

I walk out and head to the gate.

"Don't go to far" Kwazi says.

I step outside and his car is parked two houses away.

I fold my arms for a good few minutes before he decides to move his car closer.

He steps out of the car and looks at me.

We're both stare and break into a laugh.

"We got off on the wrong foot my name is Zabelo and I would like to



properly apologise by taking you out for coffee” I say.

I hand him his phone and he hand me my lipgloss.

Our hands touch and he stares for a few seconds.

My knees buckle and this electric shock surges through my body.

“My name is Dedani and I would love to have coffee with you” he says.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 09



KWAZI

She walks back in smiling and looking high as a kite, she walks over to the sink and pours herself a glass of water.

She quickly gulps it down and sighs looking at me.

I know the look on her face i've seen it before and I know it all too well.

The first signs of infatuation and she probably doesn't even know it.

I smile and she hides her face trying her best not laugh.



“What did you guys talk about” I ask.

“Nothing but we are going out for coffee” she says.

“You like him” I say.

“No it’s too early for that” she says.

“Then why are you smiling like this” I ask.

“Because he’s handsome” she says.

She giggles once again and sighs calmly coming off the high.

“So when are you guys going out for coffee” I ask.

“Tomorrow” she says.

“Please be careful we don’t know this



man,for all we know he could be dangerous” I say.

She nods her head convincingly but her smile says something else.

“I will keep my phone on all day and you can call me anytime” she says.

I nod my head and smile hoping her story doesn't turn into mine.

I remember how smitten I was the very first time I saw Nkanyiso.

Everything seemed so perfect only it wasn't

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ZABELO

Snqumo keeps glaring and scoffing, baba assigned him as my driver ever since that incident.

“I really don’t understand why you’re lying about going on a date” he says.

“I never said it was date this is just coffee with a friend” I say.

“A male friend and since when do you have male friends” he says.

“It’s none of your business now stop poking” I say.



“You must think I am stupid like Kwazi, let me tell you something men and women can't be friends” he says.

I roll my eyes and look outside the window.

“Even if you roll your eyes at me you know I am telling you the truth” he says.

“What is it that I have done that is wrong” I ask.

He sighs and looks at me.

“Nothing I just want you be careful and not do something you're not comfortable doing. Sometimes it doesn't matter if it's the first date or



not men are unpredictable. I know baba doesn't like the idea of you dating but you're grown woman now and men see you, now tell me is this a date or just coffee as you keep saying" he says softly.

"It's just coffee and if he tries something then I promise to call you right away" I say.

He sighs exhausted from asking me the same thing over and over again.

"I believe you anyway you've seen how baba treats Ma so don't settle for less in the name of love or whatever that you're trying to do." he



says.

I nod my head even though he's making a big deal out of nothing.

He parks the car in the parking lot and looks at me.

“If you feel uncomfortable call me and I will leave everything and come get you” he says.

I nod my head and grab my bag stepping out of the car.

I wait for him to drive off and make my way inside the restaurant.

I scan the room and Dedani immediately stands up looking my way.



I hold my breath hoping that I don't fall flat on face.

I reach the table and he opens the chair for me.

“Waze wamuhle(you're beautiful)” he says leaning over.

I swallow hard and place my sweaty hands on my lap.

“Ngiyabonga(thank you)” I say.

He walks over to his chair and settles down.

I can't stop staring and now that I am sitting across him. I can't help but find him handsome in ways I can't explain.



“Zabelo are you okay” he asks.

“I don’t want this to be awkward” I blurt out.

“Neither do I” he says.

I was so excited to come but now I don’t know what to say.

He smiles and I smile back.

“There’s an icecream stall up ahead maybe we should go there and leave the coffee” he says.

“I would like that” I say.

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Time flies when you're having fun, I completely forgot about everything and anything till my mother called.

I didn't even bother calling Snqumo to come fetch.

I make my way inside the house and walk past the kitchen heading to my bedroom.

"Sawubona Zabelo" My father says.

I get startled almost dropping my bag.

He's sitting in the dark like some detective.

"Sawubona baba" I say.



“Where have you been” he asks.

“I was out with Lethu” I say.

“You were out with Lethu and didn’t even call” he says.

“We lost track of time baba” I say.

He slowly nods his head and stands up.

He walks over to where I am standing and kisses my forehead.

“Your mother called Lethu and she was home sleeping” he says.

I drop my eyes ashamed for even brining Lethu into this.

“Look at me” I raise my head and look



at him.

“Whatever it is leave it alone if it will turn you into a liar” he says.

He looks at me clearly disappointed and shakes his head walking past.

I want to say something but I’ve just been caught in a lie.

I shamefully walk to my bedroom and close the door behind me.

A call from Dedani comes through and I just stare at the phone till the call ends.

Another call comes through and I ignore it.



I can't stop feeling guilty for lying to my father.

A text from Dedani comes through and I look at it.

*The last time I checked your hands work perfectly fine pick up your phone Zabe *

I read the text and switch off my phone tossing it away.

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Sponsored insert



[10/20, 20:21] o: 010

ZABELO

“Go talk to him” My mother says
handing me a tray.

“Ma please talk to him for me” I say.

“I am not the one who lied when it
wasn't even necessary” she says.

“I am not against you seeing
someone you're old enough to date
and explore but lying about it after
happened gets to me.

You could have called and told us



that you'd be home late,I am your mother and if you can't talk to me about such then who are you going to talk too" she says.

"I am sorry mama" I say.

"I am not the one who stayed up late waiting for you" she says.

I take the tray and walk out joining my father in the garden.

"Morning baba" I say.

"Morning Zabelo" he says.

I sit next to him and rest my head on his shoulder.

"I was on a coffee date with a friend



and I had so much fun that I lost track of time and completely forgot about calling. I am sorry that I lied to you I only panicked and said the first thing that came to my mind” I say.

“So you were on a date with a boy” he says.

I hesitate but nod my head.

“Do you like him” he asks.

“I don’t know maybe” I say.

He nods his head and removes his glasses.

He remains quiet for a good while making me anxious.



“Baba it’s okay to let me go” I say.

“Let you go,do you not remember what happened to Kwazi” he says.

I will probably forever hear this story till I die.

“I do but not all men are the same that’s what you always preach, and just because Nkanyiso hurt Kwazi doesn’t mean this guy will hurt me” I say.

“So how long have you known this guy” he asks.

“We met recently so you don’t have to worry about me waking up and getting married to him,for now we



agreed on getting to know each that's all" I say.

"I don't want to see you hurt" he says.

I understand his concerns but at the same time I can't live in fear of getting hurt.

"If I fall and get hurt I know you'll be there to catch me like you've caught Snqumo and Kwazi before,I need you to stop being afraid for me more than I am for myself. And I need you to trust that your teachings haven't fallen on deaf ears" I say.

"I hear you and I want you to know that sometimes love can turn even



the smartest people into fools” he says.

He heavily sighs and wraps his arm around me.

“I have dreaded this day for the longest time,you’re the youngest and it should remain that way” he says.

“Baba come on” I say.

He laughs and looks at me.

“Uyozwa kowakho nawe(you’ll see with your own children)” he says laughing.

I smile and tilt my head to the side.

“Does this mean I can go on more



dates and you won't be angry" I say.

"You can go to as many dates as you want my baby" Mama says.

"Kahle Nontobeko musa ukumosha ingane(Wait Nontobeko don't spoil the child)" he says.

She walks over and sits on my fathers lap.

"Do you remember when we were young and the things we used to do" she says.

He blushes and looks to the side but Ma pulls his chin and kisses him.

I stand up and walk away before I get traumatised even further.



“From today onwards I am terminating Bhuti’s driving contract” I shout.

“Zabe” baba calls.

Now that he’s done kissing his wife he calls me this man doesn’t take me serious.

I walk back and kiss his cheek then mama’s.

“I love you both so so much” I say.

“We love you more sisi” Ma says.

.....



“Rule number one if you ever need me to cover for you then give me a heads up” Lethu says.

“It won’t happen again” I say.

“Trust me it will and when were you going to tell me about this new guy” she says.

A call from reception comes through and I stand up walking out.

“Where are you going” she asks.

“I am needed at reception” I say.

She follows behind me telling me about the do’s and don’ts of lying.

We get to reception and Samantha’s



cheeks are blushing red.

“What’s wrong with you,are you constipated” Lethu asks.

“Leave me alone Lethu” she says then turns to looks at me “Zabe there’s a man looking for you” she says.

“Sawubona Zabelo” Butterflies fill my stomach as I turn around.

Dedani standing in front of me dressed in a black polo neck and black pants with a chain hanging around his neck.

When I mentioned my work place I never thought he would drop by.



“If he’s the reason you lied then I don’t blame you,I would probably go to hell for him” Lethu whispers loud enough for everyone to hear..

Samantha moves from her desk and stands with us.

“Bengicela sikhulume ngasese(can we speak privately)” he says softly.

“Wait before you leave my name is Lethu and I am her bestie,this is Sam she’s the receptionist and it’s a pleasure to meet you Mr?”Lethu says looking at him.

“Ngcobo” He says.

“Ngabe niyajola yini(Are you guys



dating)” she asks.

He doesn't know what to say so he looks at me.

“I would give you babies if you asked” Samantha blurts out.

He chuckles and looks at me.

“Would you give me babies if I asked Zabe” he says.

Its my turn to get blushing cheeks now.

“No,now can we get away from these two” I say.

He grabs my hand and leads the way outside.



He strides to his car and I am just following suit.

He opens his car and takes out a bouquet of flowers stuffed with money.

I hear Lethu's voice scream and turn seeing her and Samantha peaking.

"These are for you" He says.

"What are these for" I ask.

I want join Lethu and scream but that might just scare him off.

"For the text I sent when you weren't picking up my calls" he says.

I had forgotten about the text and



tone it carried.

“Were you angry that I didn’t pick up your calls” I ask.

“Yes but I would never hurt you if that’s what you’re thinking,” he says.

I nod my head because a part of me believes him.

I remain staring and he wraps his arm around my waist pulling me closer.

“Is it wrong that all me wants to taste your lips” he asks.

“No” I say.

He leans closer and brushes his lips against mine as we both breath



heavily.

The flowers drop from my hands and the world ceases to exist the minute he parts my lips and kisses me.

He wraps both his arms around my waist and I wrap my arms around his neck.

“Maye whoah” Lethu shouts.

She runs over screaming and finally gets to us.

“Angali ningaqabulana kuze kubuye ujesu kodwa hayi ukuthi nidlale ngemali,Ngiyala MaG musa nje ukudlala ngemali yethu(I don't mind you can kiss till Jesus comes just



don't play with our money)" she says picking up the bouquet and running after the R200 note that fell out.

"Don't mind her she once hit her head as child" I say.

He laughs and steps back scratches his forehead.

There's something about his eyes that has captured me and refuses to let me go.

"Can I take you out for dinner" he says.

"I would like that" I say.

"Zabelo buya phela(Zabelo come back)" Lethu shouts.



He leans over and kisses my cheek.

“Have a great day Zabe” he says.

He gets into his car and drives off leaving me standing there.

I hold my cheek and smile then bury my head under my coat.

I smell like him good Lord I smell like this man.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 011

DEDANI



He looks at Zabelo's picture and smiles,he doesn't remember the last he felt like this.

So many flings over the past month but none like this.

Dammit this doesn't even feel like a fling it's much more than that.

He smiles thinking about her soft lips.

They've been talking for a week now over the phone and each time she calls him Fuze or Mapholoba something inside him of him moves.

A call from Zabe comes through and he stands up,he finds himself laughing for even standing up.



“Sawubona Mapholoba” she says softly.

“Sthandwa sam” he says.

She laughs and he smiles.

Her soft voice is music to his ears.

“We are not there yet” she says.

“Well I am already there for the both of us” he says.

She laughs once again and he ends the call not able to take not seeing her face

He calls her using a video call and smiles just looking at her pretty face.

“Where are you” he asks.



“On the side of the road something is wrong with my car and I am waiting for road assistance” she says.

He grabs his car keys without thinking twice and heads out.

“Send me your location I am on my way” he says.

“You really don’t have too” she says.

“Zabe I am on my way and that’s final” he says.

“Should I get you something to eat” he asks.

“Dunked wings and cake” she says

“Will I get a kiss for all my efforts” he



asks.

She nods her head and ends the call sending him her location.

He makes a stop at kfc then drives to Woollies for some some cake her favourite.

He drives to where Zabe is and parks behind her car.

He steps out of the car just as the tow truck drives off with her car.

He walks over with a smile and pouts his lips waiting for his kiss.

She leans over and wraps her arms



around his neck kissing him.

He moves his hands down her waist all the way to her arse, his heart skipping a thousand beats holding her is like coming home.

He could get used to this having someone smile each time they him.

He pulls away and removes the strand of hair on her face kissing her forehead.

“What are we Zabe” he asks.

“Two souls that find it hard to be away from each other” she says.

He laughs and shakes his head he’s been hearing this for the past few



days.

“Come” he pulls her hand leading the way to his car.

They both get in and he hands her the plastic.

She looks inside and beams.

“Thank you” she says.

“Should I take you home” he asks.

“I don’t want to go home just yet” she says.

“Would you like to see my place” he asks.

She nods her head and takes out her phone, she asks to connect to the



bluetooth and plays a song looking at him.

He starts the car and drives off placing his hand on her thigh.

🎵 I don't wanna mess this up
Could it be too much to say I'm in?
I just wanna know what's up
Do you feel it? 'Cause I think I'm in
(love) 🎵

She entwines their hands and stares as he keeps his eyes on the road.



🎵 I'm finna take my time

My mind, my rules

This ain't no crime

Making love to you

Though you ain't said it's mine

I have a hard time waiting for you,
babe

Like ooh, boy

You, boy

Got me where you want

Just gotta say and it's on

It's like ooh, boy

Do you know you got me like



Where do you go when you're alone?



They get to his house and he parks the car on the driveway.

He steps out and walks over to her side opening the door for her, he takes her hand and leads the way inside the house.

He wraps his arms around her waist and kisses her neck the moment he closes the door.

He holds her still and closes his eyes something about giving his all to her scares him.



“What’s wrong” she asks.

“I think I am falling in love with you Zabe” he whispers.

She turns around and places her hand on his jaw.

Her warmth is different from anything he’s ever felt.

“I don’t want to rush things and get hurt in the process” she says.

He takes both her hands and holds them close to his chest.

“I won’t hurt you Zabelo” he says leaning close and kissing her soft lips.



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ZABELO

I learnt my lesson the first time around and called to let my mother know I would late.

I walk past the lounge and the tv is on,I turn and look at my father and Aza sitting with their favourite cups watching Spirit Riding free.

I greet them and look at the time,it's was past Aza's bedtime.

“Shouldn't you be asleep” I ask her.



“I was waiting for you” she says.

I look at my father and he shrugs his shoulders.

“Please go to bed” I say.

She sighs and gets up with a scrunched nose.

“Ngizokushaya(I will beat you)” I say.

“Ushilo umkhulu wathi usuyajola uzosihlupha(Mkhulu did say you’re dating and now you will trouble us)”she says.

I look at baba and tilt my head to the side.

He smiles and looks at Aza



knowingly.

“She was probably listening in on my conversation with your brother” he says.

He stands up and walks over.

“I didn’t tell her anything” he says.

Yeah right knowing my father he was venting and Aza was the only person there to listen.

“Goodnight you too” he says walking away.

Aza goes straight to my bedroom and I follow behind her.

She gets inside the blankets and



looks at me.

“Usuyajola vele MaG” (Are you really dating MaG) she asks.

I laugh and shake my head she doesn't even know what that means.

“Yini ukujola Aza”(What is dating Aza) I ask.

“Angazi kodwa umkhulu uthi yimbi leyonto”(I don't know but Mkhulu says it's a bad thing) she says.

I laugh even more maybe I should introduce Dedani to my father,that way the man will be at ease with me dating.

A text from Dedani comes through



and I look at it.

Just make me your man please The text reads.

I smile and put the phone down this man will soon drive me crazy.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 012



ZABELO

I haven't heard from Dedani all morning and I feel sick.

Kwazi says it's a love thing it happens when you're not getting attention from your lover.

I swear it's a real thing and it should be diagnosed.

I make my way to the kitchen and go straight to the fridge.

"Morning baby" Mama says.

"Morning Ma" I say.

Aza and her grandfather join us in the



kitchen.

I look at their clothes and conclude they were out for a walk.

“Sawubona MaG” Aza says.

“Magcina” Baba says.

“Sanibona ninjani” (Hello,how are you)
I say

“Ewu siyaphila singezwa kuwe” (We are good and you) Aza says letting out a sigh.

Mama laughs and looks at Baba.

“Ngiyaphila” (I am fine) I say.

“Cha nami ngiyaphila sibonga nje impilo nokuvuka” (I am also find and



grateful for life and to be awake) she says.

I choke on my water my parents are ruining this kid.

“You need to stop spending time with old people” I say.

“Unomona maG ngoba uGogo noMkhulu bayangithanda” (You’re jealous because granpa and granny love me) she says.

“They are my parents not yours” I say.

“Mkhulu uyambona ke uyangisukela” (Mkhulu do you see her starting with me) she says.

“Your mother is a Kwazi” I say



sticking my tongue at her.

“Gogo mncwebe” (Granny pinch her) she says.

I move close to mama and wrap my arms around her so much to Aza’s annoyance.

She moves from her chair and walks over to my father.

Baba picks her up and she looks at me.

“I don’t understand why I have to compete with you for my parents,you’re not even theirs” I say.

She sticks her tongue out and rests her head on baba’s chest.



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I got a text from Lethu asking me to come to work, she mentioned something about not being able to read my notes.

I took Aza with me and she's been well behaved only because I promised her blueberry muffins and some chocolate.

“Kuze ufike cha umuntu angafa kulokhu kuthiwa esendleni” (Finally you're arrive a person can die while



you're said to be on your way) Lethu says.

I roll my eyes this one forgets that I am older than her by a year.

“Sawubona MaLethuza” Aza says.

Lethu smiles and pinches her cheek.

“Sawubona Azamahle” Lethu says.

“Awusezi ngani ekhaya usuyajola nawe” (Why aren't you coming at our house anymore are you also dating) Aza asks.

Lethu laughs and picks her up.

“Ngijola into engasukumi phansi” (My dating game is out of this world)



Lethu says.

She's not lying that's partly why she no longer comes around.

They both laugh walking away from me.

“Where are the notes” I ask.

“Go ask Sam to give them to you” she says.

I go inside and find the reception empty.

I count to ten calming myself down, If I don't count I will explode.

This day keeps trying my patience If it's not Lethu asking me to come to



work on my day off, then it's Dedani avoiding my calls and not bothering himself to call me back.

I drag myself out and find Sam, Lethu and Aza each holding a bouquet of roses.

"Surprise" Lethu says

I walk over to Aza and take the flowers before she tips over with them.

"If you don't want him I will have him" Samantha says.

You're most beautiful creature I've laid my eyes on I read the first card



and smile I've never been called
creature before big I like.

I walk over to Sam with Aza following
behind.

*And in your eyes I lose myself with
hopes that you find me* I chuckle at
the second card and move to Lethu.

“Ezazalwa zembethe” (The lucky
ones) she says handing me the last
card.

*Its crazy feeling but suddenly you're
the only reason I look forward to
seeing another day, All I am asking for
is chance Zabe” the card reads.

I blink my tears and smile still holding



the third card.

This man has just won my heart a thousand times.

“Zabe” I turn and he’s standing behind me with another bouquet.

I give Lethu the one I am holding and receive the forth one from Dedani.

Will you be my girlfriend Zabelo the card reads.

“Yes” I say

He lifts me up and puts me down leaning for a kiss.

His hands grab my arse and I giggle in between the kiss.



“Wenzani Malume” (what are you doing uncle) Aza asks.

He pulls away and looks at Aza.

“Nenzani MaG” (What are you doing MaG) she asks riddled with shock.

She’s not used to this type of kissing, she’s only ever seen my parents perk each other’s lips.

“Come there’s chocolate in my car”
Lethu says saving day.

They walk away leaving me with my man, he steps over and pulls me into his arms.

“Ngiyakuthanda” he says.



“Ngiykthanda nami Fuze” I say licking his lips and kissing him.

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DEDANI

He walks into his office and dumps a few file on the table settling down.

He never saw himself as the romantic type but for Zabe he will do anything.

He reaches for his phone and calls her.



“Sthandwa sam” he says.

“Mapholoba” she says.

He place his hand on his chest and laughs.

“Kwavele kwagiya inhliziyo” (My heart just danced) he says.

“Ngiyakukhumbula Fuze” (I miss you Fuze) she says softly.

“I miss you too” he says.

The door opens and Bandla walks in.

“My brother just walked in I will call you back later” he says.

He ends the call and looks at Bandla.

He stands up and they shake hands



before sitting down.

“How was your trip” Dedani asks looking at his body language.

He sent him to Mozambique to oversee a deliver of some contraband.

“A few hiccups here and there but I handled it” he says leaning back.

“Good because there’s another trip that I need you to do” Dedani says.

“Is it the Middle East one” Bandla asks .

“Yes” He says.

“But I thought you would do that one yourself” Bandla says.



“I was but I am taking someone on a getaway trip” Dedani says.

Bandla smiles as Dedani does to.

“Who is she” Bandla asks.

He takes out his phone and shows him Zabe’s picture.

Bandla frowns looking at Zabelo’s picture,he puts the phone down and looks his older brother.

“You’re joking right” Bandla says.

“No” Dedani say with a straight face.

“You can’t be serious,tell me this is a joke and I will forget you even brought it up” Bandla says.



“Weh Bandla careful” Dedani says.

“You promised that you would stay away from this man and his family,now you’re showing me his daughter’s picture” Bandla says.

Dedani reaches for his phone and looks at Zabe’s picture confused.

“Is this some kind of revenge plan that I don’t know about,because that’s the only reason you would date Mphemba’s daughter” A few seconds pass with Dedani looking at Bandla.

He loosens the button of his shirt and stands up feeling hot.

There’s no way his Zabe is that man’s



daughter.

He then looks at Bandla and chuckles none of this is making sense.

“She’s the one we took in exchange for your freedom” Dedani frowns he never told them to kidnap Zabe.

“I told you to take Mphemba’s daughter Kwazikwenkosi Ntuli” he says.

“There was a mix up with the cars my guys were tailing, it turned out we took the wrong girl. She’s Mphemba’s last and most protected, she’s never been made public for her own protection. If you look up Mphemba



only the oldest children and his wife pop up” Bandla says.

“And you never told me that you took the wrong person Bandla” he shouts.

“I didn’t want you to worry and panic and think that I had compromised your freedom” Dedani looks at him defeated.

“Are you sure she’s Mphemba’s daughter” he asks hoping Bandla refutes his claims.

Bandla nods with certainty.

“Ngiyakucela Sihayo yiyeke lengane izosingenisela amanzi ngomsele” (I am begging you Sihayo leave this girl



she'll bring us trouble) Bandla says.

“Give me a moment CJ” Dedani says.

Bandla stands up and turns walking away.

The door shuts and he swipes everything on the table in anger and hurt.

He reaches for his phone on the floor and calls Zabe.

She answers the phone on the first ring.

“Hello” she says.

He calms himself down and swallows.

“I was thinking that you've never told



me your surname sthandwa sam” he says.

She laughs as if she too just remembered.

“You never asked Mapholoba my surname is Ntuli” she says.

He shuts his eyes and moves the phone away from his ear pinching his nose bridge.

The universe just played the cruelest game on him.

“Sthandwa sam is everything okay” she asks.

“Everything is fine my love” he says.



“Okay will I see you later today” she asks.

“I have a few back to back meetings maybe we can see each other tomorrow” he says.

“Oh okay” she says sounding disappointed.

He ends the call and leans back on his chair.

“She’s just a child Sihayo” he remembers Mphemba’s words and sighs.

He never thought much of these words but now they make sense.



He laughs till tears form in his eyes five years in prison and he never really bothered looking into the man that put him behind bars.

But then again Mphemba has always been that the man who put him behind bars, apart from that and beside that dreadful day they had never been acquainted before.

A knock comes through and he quickly buttons his shirt.

“Come in” he says.

The door opens and Okuhle walks in.

He stands up surprised to see her



here.

“I asked Bandla for the address, I hope I didn’t come at a bad time” she says.

“No, of course not please come in” he says.

She closes the door behind her and looks at the files on the floor.

“Having a bad day” she says.

“Something like that” he says.

Okuhle looks at him and smiles.

“How about I take you out for coffee” she says.

He thinks about Zabe but now he



can't stop thinking about her and her father in the same picture.

"Coffee would be great" he says.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 013

DEDANI

He looks at Okuhle and sighs his body is here but his mind is elsewhere.

He feels that he's about the burst and that's not good.



“Why are we here Okuhle” He asks.

She clears her throat and lets out a sigh.

“I felt the need to meet and apologise for my mother’s behaviour” she says.

“Thank you but that was a month ago” he says.

“I know but what happened didn’t sit well with me” she says.

“Thank you and I appreciate your efforts but I am afraid I have to leave” he says.

She nods her head disappointed and forces a smile.



“I understand” she says.

He takes out his wallet and leaves a few notes on the table walking out.

He drives home to his father and finds him pruning his mother’s flowers.

He unbuttons his shirt and rolls up his sleeves joining him.

His father looks at his neck no matter the years that have gone by he can never get used to this scar.

“What brings you home” His father asks.



“I met a girl baba but I’ve just learned that I have to let her go” he says.

“Why” his fathers.

“She’s the daughter of the man who put me in prison,I don’t know if this some kind of a punishment or what because I love her baba. I love her so much that my heart is breaking as we speak” he says.

“If you love her then be open with her,let her take a decision based on the truth” his father.

“The truth is more complicated Mapholoba,not only do I hate her father and wish to kill him for costing



me my family. I took a decision to take his daughter in exchange for my freedom. I doubt she would still love me after knowing the truth” he says.

“You won’t know that until you give her a chance to choose” his father says.

“Even if I tell her the truth and she takes me as I am,ngiyasaba Mapholoba ukuthi ngingafikelwa uSatan ngimsebenzise ukuzwisa uyise ubuhlungu” (I fear evil thoughts consuming me and using her to hurt her father” He utters the scary thoughts that might comes with loving Zabe.



“Do you not trust your love for her because if you do then none of those thoughts will ever come to life” his father says patting his back.

“It’s my anger that I don’t trust” Dedani says.

“Then let her go” his father says.

He chuckles it’s easier said than done but deep down he knows he has to let go.

“If you prolong this it will only hurt her” his father tells him.

“I hear you baba” he says letting out a heavy sigh.

He moves a few feet away from his



father and takes out his phone.

He gathers some strength and calls Zabelo.

She answers on the second ring which is unlike her.

“Mapholoba” she says.

He clears his throat and places his hand on his chest.

“Zabe” he says softly.

“What happened to being called Sthandwa sam” she says laughing.

He smiles and look at his father the man is right,the longer he takes that harder it will be for the both of them.



“Sthandwa sam can we meet at my place in an hour’s time” he says looking at his wrist watch.

“Okay, is everything okay” she asks.

“Yes everything is okay” he says.

He ends the call and makes his way inside the house.

He’s been pacing up and down since he got to his house trying to think of ways to end things.

He finds himself laughing in disbelief this is harder than he thought.

He has sat in front of the most feared



and dangerous men yet here he is nervous about a breakup.

A knock comes through and he gets the door.

Zabe walks in a short dress that reveals her beautiful legs taking his breath away.

He closes the door and she places her bag on the kitchen counter before wrapping her arms around his neck.

“Sawubona” she says.

“Sawubona” he says leaning for a kiss.

He slowly pulls away and takes her hand leading her the couch.



He wasn't looking for love or anything but their paths crossed, and for a moment with her he could see everything possible.

He takes her hands and places it on his face.

"Are you sick" she asks.

"No but there's something that I need to tell you" he says.

She nods her head smiling at him.

He lets go of her hand and moves to kneel in front of her taking both her hands into his.

"Mapholoba you're scaring me" she says.



“I love you MaGodide but...” he swallows hard and looks away.

“But what” she says.

He gathers the strength and looks into her eyes.

“Ngiyakthanda ngane yabantu kodwa angeke ngikwazi ukuba nawe” (I love you but I can’t be with you) he says.

She laughs and shakes her head.

“Okay this is a joke right” she says.

He shakes his head.

“Uyangilahla Mapholoba” (You’re dumping me Mapholoba) she says softly.



“Angikulahli MaGodide wukuthi nje kunezimo ezime endleleni yethu” (I am not dumping you it’s just that there are situations standing in our way) he says.

“Zimo zini lezo” (What situation are those) she asks.

“I wish I could explain more but I can’t” he says.

She covers her mouth as tears fall down her cheeks.

“Please don’t do this” she says.

He blinks his own tears away and bites his lower lip.

“I am sorry MaGodide” he says.



She covers her whole face and silently cries.

“I don’t want to feel like for anyone else but you” she wipes her tears and looks at him.

His heart breaks hearing her cry.

“I don’t want to love anyone ngifuna ukuthanda wena” she says.

He wipes her tears using her thumb.

She moves his hands and stands up shaking her head.

“Uthe uyangithanda Mapholoba” (You said you love me) she says.

“Ngiyakuthanda” (I do love you) he



says.

“Then don’t do this” she says.

He looks at her and remains silent.

“You never loved me Dedani that’s why it’s so easy for you to do this”

She grabs her bag and heads for the door.

“Zabe please” he says.

“Don’t you you dare say that” she shouts

She turns and looks at him.

“I wish I never met you Dedani Ngcobo” she slams the door behind her and walks away.



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NHLAKA (MR NTULI)

Ntobe makes him a cup of tea and places it in front him.

His been mumbling to himself all evening

Zabe didn't call or let them she wouldn't be coming home.

Not that she has the privilege not to come home.

Ntobe sits on his lap and brings his



head closer to her bosom.

“Ngathini kuwe Ntobe” (what did I say to you) he says.

“We knew that something like this would happen” she says.

“Angiyithandi lento nakancane” (I don’t like this one bit) he says.

She laughs and raises his chin kissing him.

“I guess you’re going to die of a heart attack should she bring a baby home” Ntobe says.

“Ini ngizobulala kwayena lomfana ngezami izandla” (What! I will kill that boy with my bare hands) he says.



“Can we go to bed Mphemba” she says.

He heavily sigh while Ntobe stands up and pulls his hand.

His phone rings and he looks at the caller id.

“Snqumo” he says.

“Zabe’s been in an accident you need to come to the hospital” Snqumo says in a hurried voice.

He moves the phone from his ear and looks at his wife.

“We need to get to the hospital” He says.



Nontobeko's eyes widen.

"Why" she asks.

"Because Zabe was in an accident"
he says.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 014

NHLAKA (MR NTULI)

They get to the hospital and Snqumo immediately meets with them.

He leads them to her room and Nhlakanipho shakes his head the



moment he walks in.

The room reeks of alcohol and she's snoring.

The doctor walks in and looks at them.

"How is she" Nontobeko asks.

"She's going to be fine, luckily she had her seatbelt on and it minimised her injuries." The Doctor says.

"What are her injuries" Nhlakanipho asks.

"A few bruises to the face and a broken arm" the doctor says.

"She was lucky to have hit a tree



instead of a car,we did examine her and she can go home as soon as she wakes up ” the doctor continues.

“Thank you doctor” Nhlaka says.

The doctor walks out leaving them with Zabe.

Nhlaka looks at his wife and shakes his head once more.

Before this they have never had to attend a case of drunk driving.

He wonders if Zabe will be the first of everything.

“Ngitheni kuwe buka usephenduke isidakwa” (What did I say look she’s turned into an alcoholic) he says.



“Baba please this is not the time”
Snqumo says.

“Zabe” Nontobeko says.

Zabelo opens her eyes and looks
around.

“What happened” Nontobeko asks.

Zabe looks at her mother and rub her
eyes.

“Bangilahlile” (I got dumped) she
says softly.

Nhlaka clicks his tongue and shakes
his head.

He’s getting angry by the moment.

“Wasubona kungcono uzibulale” (And



you saw it best to kill your self) he says.

“I didn’t try to kill myself” Zabe says.

“Then what were you trying to do getting in a car drunk” he says.

She shrugs her shoulders and looks at her mother.

Nontobeko faintly smiles and holds her close while she silently sobs.

“Ungilahlile Ma” (He dumped me Ma) Zabelo says still in her mothers arms.

Nontobeko rubs her back till she quietens down.

“It’s his loss now hush down” she



whispers softly.

Zabe nods her head while Nhlaka looks by.

“Ngathini kuwe ngabafana notshwala” (What did I say to you about boys and alcohol) He says.

Snqumo holds in his laughter and leans against the wall.

“Budala utshwala Zabe kanjalo nabafana” (Boys and alcohol are way out of your league) he says.

Zabe looks at him defiantly.

“Mphemba” Nontobeko says softly.

“If we baby her she’s going to think



it's okay to drink and drive,Zabe should just stay away from boys and focus on her career. Imagine dying this young for a man cha ungehlule Zabe” he says.

“Angikafi nje” (I am not dead) Zabe says.

“Niyamuzwa uyangiphendula” (Hear that she’s talking back now) he says.

“Awukahle Mphemba yenze iphutha ingane sale usundlulisa phela baba” (The child made a mistake will let this go please) Nontobeko says softly.

He clicks his tongue and looks at Zabe disappointed but his heart



warms up seeing his precious daughter still in one peace.

If he was any father he would have used his belt on her, but this is Zabe his last and no matter how angry he gets he can never hurt her.

He tells Snqumo to take her things to the car while he and Nontobeko remain behind.

Nontobeko gently strokes her hair.

“Breakups are hard we can agree on that but it’s not the end of the world, I promise you there is someone out there meant for you. Just promise us that you won’t ever put your life in



danger like that” Nontobeko says.

Zabe nods her head and wipes her tears.

Nhlakanipho sighs grateful that she’s well and alive,he’s also grateful to whoever that dumped her.

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DEDANI

He looks at his phone and contemplates calling her.

He misses her more than anything.



He almost presses the green button but stops himself, he's worried about her and how she's taking this whole thing.

A knock comes through and heavily sighs.

He puts the phone and the bottle the of whisky on the table and stands up getting the door.

He moves out of the way allowing Bandla and two girls to walk in.

"I told you I don't want company" he says.

The scrunches his as the smell on cheap perfume fills the room.



He closes the door and looks at the girls Bandla brought.

“Ulethe mina abaqwayizi” (You brought me prostitutes) he says.

“Just for tonight to help you get over that thing” Bandla says.

“Thing Bandla” Dedani says.

He’s still sensitive to the matter and the least Bandla can do is address her in her name.

“Angisho kanjalo I am only trying to help you” Bandla says.

“I don’t need your help” Dedani says.

“You’ve been drinking all day clearly



you need something to help ease your tension” Bandla says.

He calls over one of the girls.

“This is my big brother make sure he’s happy” He says.

The woman places her hands on Dedani’s chest and leans close kissing him.

She pulls away and looks into his black eyes.

“You don’t have to do anything I will do all the work” she says.

She leans over his ear and nibbles on his earlobe.



“My job is to serve you hard and real good” she says.

He wraps his arm around her waist and lifts her up.

She wraps her legs around his waist, he walks with her heading to one of the bedrooms.

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ZABELO

“Good morning sdakwa esincane” Snqumo says placing a



cup of coffee in front of me.

I should have known better than to get into a car drunk now I will never hear the end if it.

“Morning Bhuti” I say.

“How are you feeling” he asks.

I shrug my shoulders it hasn't sunk in yet.

“You'll be okay maybe not today but you will be fine ” he places his bank card on the table and smiles.

“Go spoil yourself do anything to make yourself feel better just don't think about this guy” he says



He kisses my forehead and walks away bumping into Lethu and Kwazi.

“Hey lover boy” Lethu says.

“Lethu” he says already past.

I shake my head these two need to f*ck and get it over and done with.

Lethu gives me a hug and pulls away.

Kwazi settles next to me and fixes my sling.

She spent the night home after getting a call that I was in an accident.

“So what happened” Lethu asks.

“He dumped me” I say.

“Just like that no explanation



nothing” Lethu says.

“Ave ayizinja amadoda onke futhi” she says clapping her hands before I can say anything.

“He mentioned that there are things standing in the way of us being together” I say.

“Did you ask what those things are” Kwazi asks.

I shake my head.

“I don’t even want to know anymore” I say.

“You do and I suggest you go to his place and demand he tells you the real reason he broke things off. I bet



those things are things you can get past and still be happy together” Kwazi says.

“What if he still doesn’t tell me and I hurt myself by going there” I say.

“Then you’ll wear your big girl panties and walk away,you’ll know that you tried and he just wasn’t willing to meet you half way” Kwazi says.

“I don’t like this but I fully agree with Kwazi go there and talk to him,he’s so good for you I would really hate to have to hate him” Lethu says laughing

Kwazi and I laugh too.



Tears fill my eyes and laugh but Kwazi holds my hand.

“You have nothing to lose Zabe” she says.

“But I am scared” I say.

“Don’t be Meazi and I will be there holding your hand” Lethu says.

“MaG” Aza shouts.

She joins us in the garden and looks at my cast and shakes her head.

“Umalume uthi wena uyisidakwa esincane”(Uncle says you’re an alcoholic) she whispers.

“Yini isidakwa Mama”(what is an



alcoholic) she asks looking at Kwazi
Lethu laughs and looks at Kwazi.

“Kwazi khuluma iqinisi oe inangakhi
lento yakho” (Kwazi tell the truth how
old is she) she asks.

Kwazi laughs and hides her face.

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I am standing outside Dedani’s
places with my hand sweating.

I cleaned up real good and drank
some water to help keep hydrated.

I should be bed working on feeling



better but I am head seeking answers from a grown man.

I am trying to be positive just like Kwazi and Lethu but it's hard.

I breathe in and out before knocking on the door.

It takes a few minutes but the door opens and a woman dressed in a man shirt appears.

My heart sinks to the pit of my stomach and I get tongue tied.

“Bandla” I hear Dedani’s voice shout.

He appears behind the woman fixing shirt his collar.



All the strength I had leaves me body and my heart breaks.

I turn around and walk away.

“Zabe wait” he says catching up with me.

“It’s okay I understand” I say.

It’s not even a day since we broke up and he’s already moved on typical.

“It’s not what you think okay,ngempela sthandwa sam it’s not” he says.

He looks at my arm and runs his thumb over my bruised cheekbone.

“What happened” he asks.



I want to tell him that he hurt me so bad I stopped at a liquor shop and got myself a bottle,I drank that thing neat without any dash.

Worst mistake ever but now I know better.

“Does this I meant nothing to you” I ask.

“You mean everything and more” he says.

“Then why is there a naked woman in your house” I say

“Those are Bandla’s people not mine” he says.

“Yeah right and I am supposed to



blindly believe that” I say.

“Zabe I am telling the truth” he says

I pull my hand from his hold and walk away.

“MaGodide please hear me out I didn’t sleep with that woman,I tried but you were all that I could think about ayikaze ivuke ngisho ukuvuka ” he says gently wrapping arms around me.

“I can’t breathe Mapholoba that’s much it hurts” I say.

He holds me still while I melt away in his arms.

“I am so sorry for hurting you” he



says.

“Sihayo” he lets go of me and we both turn around looking at the man calling him.

“There’s an important call for you” the man says.

I look at the man wondering where I’ve heard this voice before.

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[10/20, 20:21] o: 015

ZABELO



She carefully looks at Bandla trying to figure out where she heard his voice from.

“Sihayo this is important” Bandla says.

She closes her eyes and immediately her mind takes her back to that day.

She remembers the door opening and a man walking in, she couldn't see him because of her swollen face and closed eyes.

But she heard his voice clearly so much so that now it's sounding like Dedani's.

She starts breathing heavily still



looking at Bandla and takes a few steps back.

“It was you” she says pointing at Bandla.

“You are one of the men who took me” she says.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about” Bandla says.

She covers her mouth and shakes her taking a few more steps backwards.

The more he talks the clearer it’s gets.

“Bandla be quiet you’re scaring her” Dedani says.

“I need to call my father” she says.



Dedani stops her from running off and looks into her eyes helplessly.

“Ngiyeke Dedani” (Let me go) she says pushing him off.

He locks her in wrapping his strong arms around her.

“I am begging you please let me go” she says.

“Not until you hear me out” he says.

He slowly lets go and looks into her teary eyes.

“That’s your brother” she says.

He nods his head.

“Well he’s nothing but a criminal and I



will make sure my father puts him behind bars” She says.

“MaGodide please” Dedani says softly.

She looks at him confused by his calmness.

Tears fill her eyes and she tilts her head.

“You knew” she laughs in disbelief still looking at him.

“All along you knew” she says shaking her head.

He remains silent and swallows hard.

“Please let me explain” he says.



“Ngaze ngayisilima mina” (Oh I am such a fool) she says

She looks at him and realizes she knows nothing about the man standing in front of her.

It's breaks her heart that she was so drunk in love she never asked anything about him.

“Ngiyacela musa ukukhala Zabe” (please don't cry) he says.

“Ufuna ngenzeni because everything we shared feels like it was lie,it feels like none of it was real Dedani” she says.

“Everything was real all of it,but I



need you to calm down so I can explain everything in detail” He says.

“I don’t want to hear it Maphola” she says.

“You know what you did good by dumping me, you just saved me the trouble of being involved with a criminal of a man like you” the words hurt him but he keeps a straight face.

“Kahle nawe ngamatshe” (Easy on the hurtful words)Bandla says.

“Bandla vala umlomo wakho dammit maan”(Bandla shut your mouth) Dedani shouts in frustration.

Zabelo jumps frightened and looks at



the man she loves bring fear to his own brother.

“I came here seeking answers but I got way more than a bargained for, I don't want to see you ever again” she walks away leaving him standing there.

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It's been a long day with Dedani calling, texting and emailing her but nothing makes sense at this moment.

So many thoughts are running through her head.

Could it be that he lied about



everything even the way he looked into her eyes and made her feel.

She hits her forehead head with her palm feeling stupid for believing a man like him could fall for her.

A knock comes through and she wipes her tears sitting up straight.

Her father walks in all dressed up and she forces a smiles.

“How are you feeling” he asks.

“I feel better” she says.

He sit on the bed and takes her hand into his.

“I am sorry that he broke your heart,I



won't lie a part of me is happy that you're single but another part of me is sad because you're hurting" he says.

She looks at him and thinks back to Dedani and his brother.

"Baba did you ever find the people who kidnapped me" she asks.

"Yes" he says.

She wonders if she should tell him about Dedani's brother.

She might not have seen him but his voice is one that is unforgettable.

"Ubuziswa yini" (What makes you ask) her father asks.



“It’s just that after I came back you never said anything about them” she says.

“That’s because I did my duty as a father and put them behind bars” he says.

She looks at him and smiles.

“I love you baba with all your faults” she says laughing.

“Habe nayi ingane ingihlolela” he says laughing.

“Why are you dressed up” she asks.

“We’re going out for dinner and we are taking Aza with” he says.



“What about Snqumo” she asks.

“He has a business meeting,will you be okay on your own or should I drop you off at Kwazi’s” he asks.

“No,I will be fine on my own” she says.

The door bursts open and Aza walk in.

“Sesiyahamba thina MaG” (We’re now leaving MaG” she says.

Zabe blows her a kiss and smiles.

Her father stands up and kisses her forehead.

“Call us if you need anything” he says.

She nods and watches as they both walk out closing the door behind



them.

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She opens her eyes and stretches waking up, she fell asleep soon after taking a shower with one arm working.

“Sawubona MaGodide” she jumps and screams seeing Dedani in her room.

“Baba” she screams out.

“They are not back yet” he says.

She looks at him breathing heavily



and runs towards the door.

Dedani moves faster and blocks her way making slam onto his chest.

“Please don’t hurt me I swear I didn’t say anything to my father” she says.

“I am not going to hurt you” he says softly.

He looks at her disappointed and feeling offended she would think like that.

“Then why did break in”she asks

“Because you blocked me and you haven’t replied to my emails” he says.

“All I am asking for is a chance to tell



my side of the story,I admit I was wrong for not saying anything but this is partly the reason I ended things with you” he says.

She looks at him without saying anything.

“I hate how you think everything was a lie because it wasn’t,I’ve loved before but loving you feels different in ways I can’t explain. I want to tell you the whole truth but I also want you to bare in mind that I am human and I make mistakes. I also want you to know that letting you go was a mistake and that I love you Zabelo” he says.



She breathes out heavily while shaking her head, she wants to be immune to this man but it's impossible.

He pulls her closer and kisses her without warning.

“Dedani cha” she whispers trying to pull away.

“Ngiyaxolisa nje Zabe” (I am sorry) he says.

He kisses her softly and unties her robe looking at her beautiful body. He didn't expect her to have nothing underneath but he's grateful for this sight.



He lifts her up and places her on the bed getting in between her legs.

He kisses her neck and moves down leaving wet kisses.

He circles her navel using his tongue and moves down to kiss her vagina,he uses his two fingers to separate her pussy lips.

His pants tighten at the sight of her closed flesh.

His leans over and gently licks her.

“Zabelo” her father shouts,

Dedani quickly stands up and looks at the door.



Zabelo rolls over and falls off the bed.

She quickly gets on her feet and
Dedani ties her robe.

“Hide” she says.

They both panic looking for a hiding
spot till Dedani looks at the closet.

She opens the door and he squeezes
himself in.

“Zabelo” Her father shouts once
again.

“Sabela MaG” Aza says.

The door opens and her father walks
in,her arm starts itching and her heart
races.



“The alarm got triggered are you okay”her father asks looking around.

She nods her head looking everywhere but to his eyes.

“Look at me” he says.

She raises her head and looks him in the eyes.

“Are you sure you’re okay” He asks.

“I am okay baba” she lies yet again.

Her father walks around the room before walking out and closing the door.

She hurries to the door and turns the key locking.



Dedani steps out of the closet and looks at her.

He wants to open her legs again and marvel at that beautiful sight.

He wants to run the tip of d*ck on her flesh and hear her moan.

She walks over and raises her hand to slap him but he holds her wrist and smiles.

“Ngiyakhuza njalo MaGodide” he says letting go.

“I want you out of my room and fathers house now” she says seething.

“I can't leave now not when your



father has noticed that something is off with alarm” he says walking over to the bed.

He sits on the edge and takes off his shoes and belt before peeling the cover and getting inside the bed.

Zabelo looks at him ready to burst in anger.

She leans against the wall looking at him

make himself comfortable in her bed.

“Musa ukuzenza isigora samakhaza buya uzolala ” (Don’t act tough with the cold come to bed) he says patting her side of the bed.



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[10/20, 20:23] o: 016

ZABELO

She had to turn off the lights and remain in the dark with this man.

She can't see his face clearly but by running her hands on his face, she knows he's calm and his eyes are closed.

His hand is resting on her belly and the quietness slowly getting to them.



She's angry at him,angry that he's in her bed and completely comfortable.

She's angry that she's allowing him to get away with breaking an entrance,she's more disappointed that she wants to him his side of the story.

She's angry for wanting to hear him now that it suits him.

“You need to leave Mapholoba ” She says softly.

“Not until you hear me out” he says.

“You first break in and trigger the alarm now you don't want to leave” she says.



“I triggered that alarm wanting to see how long it would take your father to notice and if he checks the cameras he won’t see anything” he says.

“I don’t want to hear you out,I don’t want to feel anything for you other than disappointment,anger and fear” she says.

“Ngivemele ngidinwe Mapholoba” (Allow me to be angry) she says.

He heavily sighs and moves his hand from her belly.

“Allow me to process the fact that your brother is a monster. He’s the reason I couldn’t sleep,eat or keep



the lights on for days. Angikaze ngashaywa mina Mapholoba but those men hit me” she says.

“Please leave” she says turning her back on him.

He moves closer and holds her still.

“I want you to understand that I am what I am because I chose too not because I was forced. Five years ago I was imprisoned to serve a life sentence for killing a few officers and a few other crimes. My life choices led to me losing the people I love and being away from the people that I love. I could have bribed my way out



of prison but I stayed because my grief wouldn't let me be free. So a few months ago I decided to look up the man who put me prison" She moves his hand and sits up straight turning on the side lamp.

"I don't want to hear it we can go our separate ways without you telling me the truth" she says.

"I asked my brother to take Nhlakanipho's daughter in exchange for my freedom,I heard he was retiring and I knew he was the only man who could get me out no questions asked. I didn't know that they would take you because I didn't



know you existed” he says.

“So you ordered your brother and a group of men to kidnap my sister so you could go free for crimes you committed” she says.

“Yes” he says.

“Did you know about me when we first met” she asks.

“No,I swear falling in love with you just happened. It’s one of those one in lifetime things and I am glad it happened to me” he says.

She softly chuckles and shakes her head.

“You were right Dedani we can’t be



together” she says.

He looks at her the way she did when he uttered these very same words.

“Life is not a movie,you don’t hurt people and expect them to take you as you choose to be” she says.

He clears his throat and nods his head.

“It doesn’t matter that you didn’t know about me,you still hurt me and the thought of knowing that my sister was supposed to be one doesn’t make it any better” she says.

She lets out a heavy sigh as her tears fall.



He uses his thumb to wipe them with a sad smile on his face.

“I chose my father Mapholoba” she says.

“I understand MaGodide” he says

She silently breaks down and holds his hand.

None of them really understand but it has to be done.

“I love you” he says leaning close and kissing her.

“I wish I had done things differently” he kisses her forehead and pulls away.



He gets out of the bed and puts on his shoes and belt.

He walks over to the window and looks at her once more before opening it jumping out.

She pulls the covers over her head and cries.

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She wakes up to Aza drawing on her cast with a marker.

“Cha kodwa uyavilapha MaG” (Yeah no you are lazy) Aza says softly.

Zabe laughs and yawns stretching.



“Morning Azamahle” Zabe says.

“Gogo asked me to wake you up” Aza says.

“And you decided not to wake me but draw on me” Zabe says.

Aza giggles still holding the marker.

“I tried waking you up but you’re were too lazy to wake up” she says.

The door opens and Nontobeko walks in with Zabe’s breakfast.

“Morning Magcina” she says.

“Morning ma” Zabe says.

“Mina” Aza asks.

“Morning Azamahle ka gogo” she



says.

Aza giggles and looks Zabe

“Ngisayobona umkhulu” (I am going to Grandpa) she says jumping off the bed and running off.

Nontobeko puts the tray on Zabe’s bedside table and sits on the bed.

“How are you feeling” she asks.

Zabe smiles and shrugs her shoulders.

“I am really okay mama it’s hurts a little but I understand” she says.

“I am glad you’re feeling better because I’ve been worried about



you,these past few months haven't been kind but I am hopeful that from now onwards things will be better" she says.

"Thank you mama" Zabe says.

Nontobeko smiles and pulls out her husband's card from her boobs.

"Go spoil yourself and take Lethu with" she says.

"Ngiyabonga mama "Zabe says.

Nontobeko stands up and looks at the time.

"I am headed to your sister's house her husband called she's not feeling well" she says



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She looks at Lethu and laughs as Lethu goes on and on about Dedani.

“The man is crazy and I am glad he’s out of our lives” Lethu says.

They are at a restaurant having lunch and discussing Dedani.

Zabe sips from her straw with a smile on her face.

“I need to be sad for a few more days just to coin it” Zabe says.

“And I need to come to the house



more often for some moral support”
Lethu says.

They both laugh and Zabe starts choking and coughing violently, Lethu stands up to rub and hits her back.

“Yini ucabangani” (What are you thinking) Lethu says

Zabe laughs wiping the corner of her eyes.

Old people believe that if you’re eating and suddenly choke then it means you were internally thinking of something.

“Lutho” (Nothing) Zabe says looking at Dedani make his way to their table.



“Lethu”he says slightly nodding his head.

Lethu folds her arms and scoffs looking away.

“MaGodide” he says softly.

“Mapholoba” she says.

He remains looking at her without saying anything.

“Kukhona okunye” (Was there anything else) Lethu asks.

Dedani looks at her.

“Don’t look at me like that,I liked you but you had to ruin things so now I hate you for the both of us” Lethu



says.

Dedani chuckles and looks at Zabe.

“What do you want” Zabe asks

“Nothing I just came by to say hello, you look good” he says.

Zabe drops her eyes and fiddles with her fingers.

“Cha uyingozi ngiyakuvuma kusobala ukuthi unespillion salento” (I am impressed this clearly means you have experience in this department) Lethu says nodding her head.

“But your charm, smile and handsomeness will not work on Zabe, infact no weapon in a form of you will



prosper” She says.

Dedani looks at her flashing a smile.

“Ubokhumbula Lethu inhliziyo

yisthutha kabi futhi ayiphakelwa”

(Remember Lethu the heart is foolish and it can't be controlled) he says.

“It's was good seeing you Zabe” he says walking away.

Lethu sits on her chair and fans herself.

“I don't know how you can resist this man because I was ready to give in” she heavily sighs and sips her drink.

Zabe smiles thinking about Dedani's pulling charm.



“It’s called practice” Zabe says.

“If I were you I would be in his bed lying on his chest drawing planets and gossiping about me” Zabe laughs and catches Dedani looking her way.

Zabe looks him till he takes his eyes always from her.

She sighs and thinks about he said, he’s right about one thing the heart is one foolish organ.

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[10/20, 20:23] o: 017



ZABELO

It's been a few weeks without talking to Dedani, I do think about the guy but that's about it nothing more.

I suppose my arm is healing nicely and baba got me a new car.

His way of celebrating my yet again single status.

Either way I have a new car and I am happy.

"Zabe" Lethu says.

"Yebo" I say.



“I’ve got a surprise for you” she says.

“I hate surprises” I shout.

“Oh now that Dedani is out of your life you hate surprises, akusiwena

owawukhala uhlyphika la when he

asked you to be his girlfriend. Mxm

ey futhi ngiyayizonda leyandoda”

(Oh now that Dedani is out of your life you hate surprises, weren’t you the

crying mess when he asked you to be

his girlfriend. Matter of fact I hate

that guy) she says.

“Seems like you hate him more than me” I say.

“Ninjalo phela mhla naphola



niphenduka oJudas basemhlabeni”
(That’s how you lot are when you’re
healed you turn into the Judases of
this world) she says.

“Close your eyes” she says.

I close my eyes and lean back on the
chair.

“Sawubona pentshisi lami” (Hello my
peach) I open my eyes and Cebo is
standing standing in front of me.

I get on my feet and fling into her
arms wrapping my one arm around
her neck.

She wraps both her hands around my
waist and holds me tight.



“Why didn’t you tell me you’re coming” I say.

“Then it wouldn’t have been a surprise” she says.

“You two look good” she says.

“I’ve been taking care of this one real good” Lethu says.

Cebo laughs.

“How about I take you out for dinner and drinks then we catch up” Cebo says.

“Sounds like a plan” Lethu says.

“I am on Aza duty but I will drop her off at Kwazi’s place” I say.



I look at Cebo still in disbelief, she was the mother hen at varsity basically took care of Lethu and I. She's the big sister of the group.

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DEDANI

He makes his way to the kitchen and pours himself a glass of water. Today he fought the urge to call her and ask how her day was.

He fought the urge to drive up to her



work up place and watch as she chats with security with the biggest smile on her face.

He didn't think it was possible but here he is alive but incomplete.

A knock comes through and he gets the door,he moves out of the way allowing Bandla go walk in.

“Still sulking” Bandla says.

Dedani chuckles and walks over to the sink,he puts the glass in and turns to look at Bandla.

“Buya la” He says.

Bandla blissfully unaware moves closer.



Dedani grabs him by the back of his throat and slaps him.

He looks into his eyes and slaps him again.

“If you talk to me like I am your friend I won’t slap but punch you” Dedani says.

“So you’re hitting me because of a woman” Bandla says.

Dedani slaps him again.

“If you ever talk badly about MaGodide I will not punch you but break your knees” Dedani says.

“From now on I want you to keep her name and everything that has to do



with her out of your mouth”Dedani says.

“If you get back together with her she will always choose her father,can’t you see that” he says.

“Bandla stop meddling in my business this is the last time I am warning you” Dedani says.

He lets go of Bandla and watches as his little brother makes his way to the bathroom.

A few minutes in his phone rings and he looks at the caller id.

He heavily sighs answering his father’s call.



“Mapholoba” he says.

“What is this that I hear about you hitting Bandla” his father says.

“Ngempama eyodwa nje sekuthiwa ngimshayile” (With only one slap and I am said to have hit him) Dedani says.

“Dedani you have to understand that father is still young,he doesn’t fully understand matters of the heart” his father says.

“I hear you baba and I apologise for slapping him twice” Dedani says.

His father laughs and Dedani end the call after asking how his mother is.



Bandla joins him in the kitchen and Dedani charges at him. He grabs hold of him and punches him in the face.

“Now you can tell Mapholaba that I beat you up” he lets go and clicks his tongue.

“Ungijwayela kabi wena Bandla”
Dedani says.

He walks over to the couch and settles down.

“Leave my house and come back once you remember that I am your older brother and not your mate”
Dedani tells him.



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ZABELO

Its been a long day with my parents and that of Lethu's asking to see Cebo, and Aza asking her so many questions we had to get away from her.

Cebo took us to dinner and drinks, we're sitting at the bar having cocktails.

"So tell me about this new guy" Cebo says,



“I have been talking about Mapholoba for so long that now I am tired” I say.

I raise my glass and take a few sips.

“Ngikhona mina futhi ngizokutshela”(I am here and I will tell you) Lethu says.

The wine is going to the head and it’s a nice feeling.

“Lethu please” I say.

“So the guy spent weeks trying to get Zabe to be his and when he finally did,he dumped her” Lethu says.

Cebo wraps her arm around my shoulder and kisses my forehead.



Lethu orders another bottle of wine.

“Isilingo” Lethu says looking towards the entrance.

I turn my head and look at Dedani walk in with his arm wrapped another woman’s waist.

“Is that him” Cebo asks.

I nod my head.

“I think we should go somewhere else” Cebo says.

“I need the bathroom first” I grab my bag and make my way to the bathroom.

I get in and use the first door



available.

The pressure from my bladder gets released and I close my eyes. I flush and stand up walking out.

I get a fright of my life when I see Dedani standing by the sink with his hands inside his pockets.

“You can get arrested for being here” I say.

He moves from the sink still looking at me with a smile on his face.

“Geza izandla MaGodide” (Wash your hands MaGodide) he says as I am about to head for the door.

I move to the sink and wash my



hands.

He stands behind me and looks at me through the mirror.

I shamefully nod my head and he places his hands on my waist.

“Why is it that our paths always cross” he says.

I look at him through the mirror and shrug my shoulders.

“Maybe this is a sign from my ancestors to yours that we should be together” he says.

“And the woman you are with” I ask.

“She’s just a colleague” he says.



I laugh out loud and shake my head, at some point men are just the same.

“You must think I am fool then” I say.

“Okay she’s a friend” he admits.

“So who’s that guy you’re sitting with” he asks.

I realise he didn’t actually see that Cebo is female.

“That’s Cebo my date” I say.

He slowly lets go of my waist and steps back.

“So you’re on date” he says.

“Yes and I should get back to the



table” I say.

I walk away and hear his footsteps follow behind.

He abruptly grabs my waist and turns me around having me crash into his arms and kisses me.

It takes a few minutes to realise I am kissing him back and push him off.

Damn the wine it’s now moving to places it shouldn’t.

“Don’t go back to that table,let’s walk out of this place and go home to watch a movie please” he says.

“I still choose my father Mapholoba” I say.



“It doesn’t matter MaGodide because I don’t want you to choose,ngicela indawo kweyakho inhliziyo Zabe ngifuna ukuthanda wena hayi ubab’wakho” (It doesn’t matter MaGodide because I don’t want you to choose,I am asking for a place in your heart I want to love you and not your father) he says.

I turn around and Lethu is raising her glass looking our way.

Cebo nods her head and I turn to look at Dedani.

“Whatever happens we would have tried” he says.



“I still don’t like you for what you did”
I say.

He smashes his lips onto mine and
grabs my arse.

“But you love me and that’s all that
matters” he says.

He takes my hand and we leave the
restaurant in drunken high spirits.

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We grabbed a few snacks along the
way and we’re now sitting on the
couch in-front of the tv watching a



movie.

“Zabe” he says.

“Fuze” I say.

“Loving me won’t be easy sthandwa sam” he says softly.

“It’s doesn’t have too but all I am asking for is that this step be worth it” I say.

He entwines our hands and kisses mine.

He lets go and brings me closer kissing my forehead.

I feel so at peace that I am slowly forgetting that I have parents.



“Should I make you something to eat”
he asks.

“No,just hold me” I say.

“I love you” he says.

I look into his eyes as he utters these
words and feel something inside me
complete.

“I love you too Sihayo” I say.

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[10/20, 20:23] o: 018

ZABELO



I woke up early to prepare breakfast for him,we slept in the same bed and he borrowed me his t-shirt.

I look at the bacon,cheese,eggs and sausages and wonder if I did too much.

I place the slices of toast on a plate and walk over to the fridge to get something to drink.

I grab a bottle of Cappy and close the fridge.

“Morning MaGodide” the bottle slips from my hands.

We both pick it up and I look at the huge scar on his neck.



I have never seen something so ghastly up-close.

“I will go put on something” he says.

“It’s okay” I say.

He walks away still and comes back wearing a long sleeved t-shirt that covers his neck.

“I didn’t mean to get frightened I just wasn’t expecting this” I say.

“I am used to this MaGodide” he says softly.

My heart sinks and the thought of being used to people’s reaction.

Now it makes sense why he covers



his neck all the time.

“I made breakfast” I say.

His face lights up as he looks at the food.

“When did you go to the shops” he asks.

“I didn’t all this was in your fridge” I say.

“Must be my mother I don’t do grocery shopping” he says.

I sit next to him and hold his hand.

“You don’t have to hide your scar from me Mapholoba” I say.

He nods and reaches for the toast.



I stand up and put on the kettle, I look at him subtly raise his t-shirt collar.

I move and walk around to stand behind him.

I hook my arm under his and rest my head on his back.

“Nami ngingaso isibazi but it’s on my thigh” I say.

He chuckles and turns around.

“Can I see” he says with a mischievous smile.

“Only if you stop hiding yours” I say.

He stands and up from his chair and excitedly picks me up. He places me



on the kitchen counter and stands between my legs.

He searches for my scar and laughs when he sees it.

“MaGodide this is barely visible” he says.

I laugh and point at it.

“It’s still a scar Mapholoba” I say.

He laughs and kisses it then looks at me.

“I love you” he says.

He wraps his arms around me and rests

his head on my breast.



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I called Cebo and Lethu as soon as I got home she told them about my night, I swear spending the night with a man feels different.

It's different from spending the night with Lethu or being home.

I didn't know I was a cuddling person till I spent the night at Dedani's.

The phone rings and I close the pots answering his call.

“Sthandwa sam” he says.



“Mapholoba” I say.

“Buka ke I told the driver to deliver everything you need to get through the day” he says.

I told him I have a headache and he’s been calling every hour to check on me .

“Thank you” I say.

“Can I see you later on,I promise I will park away from your house” he says.

“Okay but only for a few minutes” I say.

“Thank you” he says.

“I love you” I say.



“Angizwa” he says.

“Ngiyakuthanda Dedani Ngcobo” (I love you Dedani Ngcobo) I say.

He chuckles and heavily sighs.

“Ngiyakuthanda nami Zabe” (I love you too Zabe) he says softly.

I end the call and carry on with my cooking.

“MaG” Aza says startling me

“Aza” I say.

“Ukhuluma nobani” (Who are talking to you) she asks.

I look at my phone and smile.

“I was talking to the uncle we once



met” I say.

She nods her head and grabs a piece of carrot walking away.

A call from Dedani’s driver comes through and I take the call walking out.

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I cooked up a storm and made sure to include everyone’s favourite salad.

Mama first dishes up for her husband and then everyone else.



“What’s the occasion” Snqumo asks.

“Nothing I just wanted to cook for my family” I say.

“You’re in a good mood and it’s suspicious” He says.

Baba looks at me and smiles.

“The food is amazing Zabe” he says.

He looks at Kwazi and frowns.

“Kwazikwenkosi” he says.

Kwazi raises her head and looks at him.

Tears well up and she drops her head.

“What’s wrong” mama asks.

She clears her throat and blinks her



tears away.

“Nkanyiso is Aza’s father and he’s been hounding me wanting to see her” she blurts out.

Baba drops his cutlery and pushes his place away.

“And I am dating again” I say.

He shuts his eyes and rubs his forehead.

“Kwazi ngakubuza about Aza’s father and you said he was just a guy, now you’re telling us that it’s that’s bastard Nkanyiso” he says.

“Baba I am sorry” Kwazi says.



“You’re sorry after everything that he did you still went back to him,after he humiliated you and left you for another woman you still went to him. Were you perhaps hoping for something different even though he took your virginity and spat you out like you were nothing” he says.

“Mphemba sekwanele manje”
(Mphemba that’s enough) Mama says.

“Kahle Nontobeko uwena owona lezingane nangu omunye usitshela ukuthi usuyajola futhi” (Hold on Nontobeko you’re the one spoiling these kids,look even Zabe is telling



us about dating again)he says
looking my way.

“Ngibulaleni Kwazi nifuna lokho
angithi,umutshele futhi loyo Nkanyiso
wakho alibeke egcekeni lami khona
ngizomdubula kahle” (Kill me Kwazi
isn't that's what you want,and tell that
Nkanyiso to set his foot in my yard so
I can shoot him) he stands up and
walks away.

“Yeka lokudla okumnandi” Snqumo
says.

He takes his plate and adds more
food walking away.

Dedani's call comes though right on



cue and I excuse myself.

I step outside as a person needing fresh air and walk out of the gate.

I spot his car not too far from our house and run towards it.

He steps out of the car and meets me half way.

He gives me a hug and pulls away to kiss me.

“I missed you”he says.

“I missed you too and I am glad you dropped by” I say.

He leans for another kiss and pins me against the car.



I feel his hard on right on my stomach and decide to touch his manhood.

He stops and opens the door to the backseat, we get in and I sit on top of him.

I move my waist while he pulls out my top and cups my breast.

He licks my nipples and gently sucks on my boobs.

He slides his hand inside my leggings and places his fingers on my clit.

He slowly moves his fingers while I wrap my arm around his neck.

“Oh oh oh Mapholoba” I say out



letting shuddering a cry.

He takes out his hand and holds me tight as I calm down in his arms.

“How’s the headache” he asks.

“Completely healed” I say laughing.

A startling knock on the window frightens up and I quickly grab my t-shirt and hide my face.

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[10/20, 20:23] o: 019

ZABELO



She quickly puts on her top watching as her mother steps back.

“She’s going to kill me Dedani” She says.

Her knocks on the window again as Zabe looks at Dedani helplessly.

“Uzongiphumela before I call your father” Nontobeko says.

Dedani opens the door and steps out holding Zabe’s hand.

Nontobeko looks at her then Dedani.

“Usuyakhumula manje wena” (You’re getting naked now) Nontobeko says.

“It’s not what it looks like ma” she



says.

Nontobeko angrily slaps her so hard Zabe's ear starts ringing.

“Emgwaqeni Zabe lapho uzobonwa khona ngabantu” (In the street Zabe where everyone can see you) she says.

“Ma kube yiphutha lami ngiyaxolisa” (Its my fault I am sorry) Dedani says softly.

Zabe looks at Dedani and shakes her head.

Right now she wishes the ground would open up and swallow her.

“I should go” Dedani says walking to



the driver's seat.

He gets inside the car and drives off.

Nontobeko looks at Zabe and slaps her again.

“Sies” she says.

Tears fall from Zabe's eyes as she swallows.

“I am disappointed in you because this is not how I raised you Zabelo” Nontobeko says.

“I am sorry” Zabelo says.

“You are sorry, what would have happened if your father was the one that saw you” Nontobeko says.



Zabe remains quiet still looking at her mother.

She realises she messed up and that her father or brother could have walk out.

Nontobeko walks away with Zabe following behind.

They get inside the house and find Kwazi putting the dishes in the washer.

“Come here” Nontobeko says.

Kwazi finishes up packing the dishes and makes her way to the table.

The three of them sit and a thought crosses Nontobeko’s mind,just



maybe Nhlakanipho is right and she spoiled them.

“Mama ngicela ungamtsheli baba ngiyathembisa angeke ngiphinde”
(Ma please don't tell Dad I promise it won't happen again) Zabe says.

Nontobeko heavily sighs.

“What happened” Kwazi asks.

“I found your sister naked in the car with a man” Nontobeko says.

Kwazi looks at Zabe shocked.

“Really Zabe in a car of all places”
Kwazi says.

“We didn't do anything” Zabe says.



They both look at her not believing a word that comes out of her mouth.

“I am really disappointed in the two of you, Kwazi I thought you knew better that to sleep with a married man and not just any man but Nkanyiso. And you Zabe if you can get naked outside your father’s gate without a care in the world, then I fear what’s to come with this boy in your life”

Nontobeko lets a heavy sigh and shakes her head standing up.

“In what ever you do moving forward please be considerate of my husband’s fragile heart, I am way to young to be a widow” she says



walking away.

“Waze wayisinakanaka” (You are such a fool) Kwazi says.

“Ma is exaggerating all of this and if I were you, I wouldn’t be laughing not with the mess I am in” Zabe says.

“Keep yapping your mouth and I will tell Baba how Ma caught you naked in a car with man” Kwazi says.

Zabe stands up rubbing her cheek and clicks her tongue.

“Mxm” she says walking away.

“With that stinking attitude I can bet he’s already tapped it yingakho usumile izimpiko” Kwazi says.



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Yesterday was eventful but the whole family woke up in a much better mood.

She's still holding her breath that her mother doesn't say anything to her father.

"MaG can I take this" Aza says showing her a pack of marshmallows.

Zabe looks at the basket and laughs there's nothing in there but junk.



They've been searching for Dedani's biltong and Aza's has been throwing everything she sees in her basket.

"No put them back" Zabe says.

Aza frowns and folds her arms sitting on the floor.

She lies on her back and releases heavy sighs.

"If you don't stand up now I am pinching your small bums" Zabe says.

A couple walks by and looks at her in utter shock, they also look at Aza on the floor.

"Ningibukani nina" (What are you looking at) Aza asks.



Zabe laughs as the couple walks away,with that question she knows Aza is upset.

“Aza” Zabe says softly.

Aza looks at her defiantly refusing to get up.

Zabe raise her head and her eyes meet with Dedani’s.

They both smiles and break into a gentle laugh.

“Mapholoba” Zabe says.

“Sthandwa sam” Dedani says.

He looks at Aza on the floor and picks her up,she giggles as Dedani



briefly flys her in the air like an airplane.

“Sawubona Aza” he says.

Aza looks back to Zabe who nods her head.

“Yebo Malume” Aza says softly.

“Unjani” (How are you) he asks.

“Ewu siyaphila singenzwa nina” (We are good,how about you) Aza says.

Dedani laughs and looks at Zabe.

“Don’t ask” Zabe says.

He leans over and kisses Zabe then pulls away.

“How are you feeling” he asks.



“I am okay” Zabe says.

Dedani gently rubs her cheeks
looking into her eyes.

“Ngempela I am okay” she says.

He smiles and looks at their baskets.

“Are you done shopping because I
was thinking we go grab something
to eat” he says.

“We’re done” Zabe says taking Aza’s
marshmallows and putting in her
basket.

“Thank you MaG” she says.

“You welcome” Zabe says.

“MaG umtshelile yini umalume ukuthi



uyajola wena” (Did you tell uncle that you are dating) Aza asks.

Dedani looks at Zabe with a huge smile on his face.

“Hawu” Dedani says.

“Ngempela malume futhi umkhulu uthi yimbi kabi lento ngoba usezohlupha” (Really uncle and grandpa says dating is a bad thing) Aza says.

Dedani holds in his laugh at Zabe.

“Kunganjani mina ngijole naye uMaG ukuze phela angahluphi” (how about I date MaG so that she doesn’t trouble anyone) Dedani says.



Zabe laughs looking at Aza's face.

“Hawu kanti unjani wena malume ushilo nje umkhulu wathi yimbi lento,ungayenzi ngoba nawe uzohlupha” (But what is wrong with you,grandpa did say dating is a bad thing. Don't do it because you're to be trouble too)Aza says.

Zabe and Dedani laugh looking at each other.

Dedani puts Aza down she pushes her basket.

“I was thinking MaGodide how about you spend the night at place tonight,I will cook and we can watch any



movie you want” he says.

“I would like that” she says.

He leans over and kisses.

“Weh Malume nina niyathanda ukuqubala neh” (Uncle you two like kissing huh) Aza says.

Dedani pulls away and brushes his lips not knowing how to respond.

They honestly thought she wasn't watching.

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KWAZIKWENKOSI



She looks at Azamahle's picture and smiles, the child has been nothing but a blessing in her life.

She would die before giving her daughter up to another woman, worse the woman Nkanyiso left her for and continued to humiliate her because of that very same woman.

She puts the photo down and grabs her phone dialling Nkanyiso.

"MaGodide" he says.

"Weh Nkanyiso I am calling for one thing only stay away from me and my daughter" she says.

He chuckles and clears his throat.



“Weren’t you the one running after me wanting me to be part of Aza’s life”he says.

“And you said you want nothing to do with her,but now that suddenly your precious wife can’t give birth you want my child” she says.

“This isn’t about me and you or the past,this is about what’s best for our child” he says.

“Mxm best for our child listen here and listen good,you don’t have a child. Ngithembe mangithi ulengisa mahala lepitshana lakho alinanzalo” (Trust me when I say your your small penis



doesn't have the ability to make someone pregnant) she says.

"That's not what your moans used to tell me" he says.

She laughs really hard and sigh.

"Ngangibekezela ngoba ngikuthanda kodwa themba mina uma ngithi lepitshana lakho alidobhi luthu kuMdu,ungizwe kahle ke Bab'Pitshana eyami ungane angeke uze uyithole" (I was patient because I loved you but trust me when I say Mdu's penis takes the cup,Now listen to me Mr Small penis you will not get my child) she says.



“Weh Kwazi you don’t want to try me”
he says.

“Inkinga yakho uzitshela ukuthi
uyangazi,uma kuza kweyami ingane
ngizokubulala Nkanyiso ngubulale
kwayona lenyumba yakho
ningijwayela kabi nina bozavolo
babantu” (Your problem is you think
you know me,but when it comes to
child I will kill you Nkanyiso and that
barren woman of yourself) she says.

He angrily clicks his tongue and ends
the call.

She breathes out heavily and
swallows,for Aza she would do



anything without thinking twice.

.....

[10/20, 20:23] o: 020

ZABELO

I finish packing my overnight bag and sigh looking at the lingerie I left out.

Dedani and I have been spending a lot of nights together but I am afraid he might think I am rushing things.

I take the lingerie and shove it in the closet, the matching underwear will



just have to do for now.

My bedroom door opens and mama walks in followed by Aza.

I told my mother that I am spending the night at Lethu's.

As for my father the man has been in a sullen mood all day.

“Uyahamba MaG” (Are you leaving MaG) Aza asks.

I nod my head and she giggles.

“Uhamba noMalume” (Are you going with uncle) she says.

Mama looks at her and scoffs.

“Sekwazi ngisho nengane ukuthi



uyokipita” (Even the child knows that you’re sleeping out) she says.

That’s not true but I let her be.

“Ma ngishilo nje I am going to Lethu’s” I say.

“And it’s written popayi here” she says pointing at her forehead.

I shrug and pick up Aza.

“Ungisize mina Zabelo ungangilethi ikatshana ngoba uzozigadela sisi” (And please don’t bring any baby here because you’ll look after it yourself” she says.

I look to the side and roll my eyes, I am not saying I will come back with a



baby but Kwazi did and they raised it.

“Ngizoligada mina gogo ikati la MaG uliphathe yezwa” (I will look after her cat MaG you should come with it)

Aza says.

I laugh and kiss her cheek.

“I mean it Zabelo if you want to be an adult and do adult things then be responsible,I want you to know that every action has a consequence” she says.

“I know and for your information I am not doing anything I shouldn't” I say.

She laughs and takes Aza from me.

“Ngangisho njalo nami ngibe ngazi



ukuthi ubab'wakho ungibambisa ubonda ubsuku bonke" (I used to say the same thing knowing very well that your father made me hold the wall) she says.

I see a mischievous smile on her face and laugh.

"Ma!" I say.

"All I am saying is that your father and I are enough with Azamahle" she says walking out.

I grab my phone and send Dedani a text before walking out.

I get to the kitchen and find Snqumo standing next to the fridge.



“Cha senizomitha Zabe indlela esenilala ama out ngayo” (With the way you’re sleeping out you’re going to be pregnant)

He says.

My father walks in and I shamefully look down.

“noKwazi naye kwaqala kanje sathi sisabuka wasilethela iradio ngisho umsakazo ongena maBattery mina” (Even Kwazi started like this and later brought us a battery free radio) he says.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about because I am going to Lethu’s



house” I say.

He laughs and looks at my father.

“Uzoyibona ke leLethu Baba izokhuluma icathathuze,uthi usabuka ikubize mkhulu” (You’ll see the I am going to Lethu’s talking and taking baby steps,next thing it will be calling you grandpa) he says.

My father looks at me and sighs.

“Greet Lethu for me” he says.

Guilt instantly hits I nod my head.

.....

DEDANI



He looks at the romantic set up and smiles.

He called in someone to set all this up and asked his mother to cook for him.

He checks the pots and laughs looking at his favourites.

He picks up his phone and dials his mother.

“Is the food okay” his mother asks.

“It’s perfect Ma thank you” he says.

“You’ve never asked me to help you cook this girl must be special” his



mother says.

He chuckles and close the pots.

“It’s more than that Ma ngiyayithanda lengane yabantu” he says.

“If that’s the case your father and I would like to meet her” she says.

A knock comes through and he smiles.

“I think she’s here” He says.

“Tell her we would like to meet her” his mother says.

“I will and thank you Ma” he says ending the call.

He gets the door and sighs looking at



Okuhle.

“I was in the neighbourhood and I thought I would come greet you” she says.

She walks in and stops on her tracks looking at the romantic set up.

She turns around and looks at him.

“I should have called” she says letting out a nervous laugh.

“Okuhle look I meant what I said, I won't stop taking care of you and your mother. But you need to stop coming to my place unannounced and whatever it is that think is going to happen between us won't. Mina



ngithathiwe bandla futhi losisi
uyadubulana angasidubula sobabili”
(I am taken and the lady shoots
people, she might even shoot the both
of us) he says.

She swallows hard and nods her
head embarrassed.

“Can I at least thank you for taking
care of us” she says.

“I made a promise that I that I would
look after you so there’s no need to
thank me. I loved your sister Okuhle
and it only feels right that I take care
of you and your mother” he says

“And I made a promise to myself that



I would take care of you” she says softly.

“You don’t have to worry about me MaGodide is there to do taking care off” he says.

A knock comes through and he sighs looking at the time.

“That must be her” he says getting the door.

He opens the door and smiles seeing Zabe.

They share a kiss before he takes her overnight bag.

Zabe walks in and sees Okuhle and turns to looks at him.



“Sthandwa sam this is Okuhle,Okuhle this is Zabelo my girlfriend” he says.

Zabe smiles and slightly nods walking to the bedroom.

“You need to leave” Dedani says to Okuhle.

“I see” Okuhle says heading for the door.

Dedani makes his way to the bedroom and finds Zabe sitting on the edge of the bed.

Knowing woman she’s probably thinking of the worse scenario.

He walks over the closet and opens the safe taking out a photo.



He walks back to the bed and kisses her forehead before sitting next to her.

“That’s Mhlengi my son and his mother ” he says.

Zabe takes a look at the photo and swallows.

“You have a family that I don’t know about” she says.

“I had a family but we got in an accident and they passed away” he lies.

“Okuhle is Avethandwa’s sister and wants to take care of me” he says.

“Ngifile” (Over my dead body) Zabe



says.

He laughs and she moves to sit on his lap.

She wraps her arm around him and hugs him.

“I am sorry that you lost them” she says.

He holds her tight and sighs with the cast gone she gives the best hugs.

“Is this from the accident” she asks placing her hand over his neck.

She’s always wanted to about his scar but never got around to doing it.

“From my mother” he says.



She looks at him shocked with her mouth hanging.

He eyes glisten with tears and clears his throat, this isn't an easy topic never was.

“Your mother did this to you,why?” she asks softly.

He holds both her hands and kisses them swallowing hard.

Where doesn't he begin telling his beautiful mother's story.

“It's okay” she says bringing him closer to her chest.

He squeezes her hard and sighs letting go.



They look at each other and smile.

“You didn’t even see that beautiful setup made specially for you” he says.

“I did” she says.

“But you haven’t tasted my mother’s amazing cooking” he says.

“I want to taste you” she says.

He looks up and kisses her.

“Hayi ngaleyondlela Mapholoba” (Not in that way Mapholoba) she says.

He holds in his breath still looking at her.

“Kanjani MaGodide” (How MaGodide) he asks.



“Ngifuna ukuba munye nawe Mapholoba” (I want to be one with you Mapholoba) she says softly.

She gets up from him and stands in front of him taking off her dress.

His eyes marvel at her beautiful body and he swallows standing up.

He stands behind her with his hands settled on her smooth waist kissing her neck.

He pops her bra and cups her breast closing his eyes, his father warned him about this day.

He shouldn't be touching her but he can't help it.



He's about to invade her father's kraal but he can't help it.

He turns her around and lifts her up,they hungrily kiss each other and Dedani lays her down.

Their emotions are running high getting the better of them,she's moaning his name and praising him while he runs the tip of his dick on her wet p*ssy.

He's already weak but he's not messing this up.

He looks at her and uses his d*ck to gently hit her clit running his dick over



her p*ssy.

He bites his lower lip and slowly pushes the tip of his d*ck inside her.

She opens her eyes and looks at him.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you too” she says.

He rubs her cheek while slowly thrusting inside her.

The tip of his d*ck pops inside her and he groans helplessly like a wounded animal.

she lets out a scream and holds on to him.

He kisses her and slowly thrust in



while she hits his shoulders.

“Kubuhlungu” (It hurts) she whispers.

He looks at the tears in her eyes and holds himself.

“Should I stop” he asks.

He doesn't want to stop this is the sweetest thing he's tasted in a while.

She shakes her head and he gently strokes her using half his length.

She softly moans and slowly moves her waist.

“Ahh Mapholoba” she says.

He loses his marbles and fully thrusts in causing her to scream.



“Ngiyaxolisa MaGodide” (I am sorry MaGodide) he whispers fully inside her.

He places his finger on her clit and gently rubs it easing the pain and tension.

She relaxes allowing him to gently stroke and thrust in and out of her.

His stomach tightens and he fully strokes her till they both moan and holds on to each other.

Zabe cries while he groans jerking inside her.

“Ngiyofela lana MaGodide” he whispers.



.....[10/20, 20:23] o: 021

MR NGCOBO (Vumani)

“Khehla,Fano nikuphi” (Khehla,Fano where are you) Nobuhle shouts.

Vumami looks at her and wipes his tears she’s back to being herself.

His heart sinks as she looks around for her boys.

She looks at the blood on his shirt and panicks.



“Vumani ziphi izingane zami”
(Vumani where are my kids) she asks.

Vumani swallows and lets out a
breath.

“Vumani elabani legazi” (Vumani
whose blood is this) she asks.

He opens his mouth but nothing
comes.

Nobuhle shakes her head and covers
her mouth with her hand.

“No” she says.

“We need to go to the hospital” he
says.

“Why” Nobuhle asks.



“Because there was an accident and Dedani is in the hospital” he says.

“Okay but what accident” she asks.

“It’s was just an accident mawabo” he says.

He changes his shirt and grabs and his car keys.

He then gently takes her hand and leads the way to the car.

It’s been an hour since they came back from the hospital and Nobuhle hasn’t said anything, she’s been sitting on her floor in the boys room looking into space.



Vumani gathers the strength to walk in and hold her from behind.

She breaks down and holds on to his arms.

“You didn’t mean to do it” he says.

“I almost killed my son Vumani” she says.

“Ngiyisilwane samama” (I am monster) she says.

“Buhle please don’t say that” he says.

She gets on her knees and turns around looking at him.

She places her hands on his face and cries.



“I am getting worse Mapholoba” she says

“No you’re not” Vumani says looking into her scared eyes.

“I took a knife and almost took off his head” she says covering her face and crying.

“It was the voices not you” he says.

She wipes her tears and kisses him.

She leans over to his ear and whispers the last thing Vumani had expected to hear.

“Buhle musa ukungicasula wena usuyasangana ekhanda” (Buhle don’t make me angry are now crazy) he



shouted.

“Ngiyakucela Fuze kwenzele izingane zethu” (I am begging you Fuze do it for our kids) she says.

Vumani shakes his head and stands up.

“Sizamile sthandwami kodwa buka ngisho amaphilisi awasasebenzi,uma ungeke ukwenze lokho ngizohamba ngiyiziphonsa kujantshi” (We tried my love but look even the pills aren't working anymore,if you don't do this I will throw myself at a moving train) she says silently crying.

“Buhle ngiyakucela musa



ukukhuluma kanje” (Buhle please don’t speak like that) he pleads.

She stands up and holds his hand smiling.

“You’ve loved me from the very beginning and you’ve stood by me through it all. Your love has healed my soul Mapholoba in ways words can’t describe, you gave me two beautiful boys that I love more than anything. But I am a danger to them and I am tired Fuze so tired and it breaks my heart dragging you down this road with me. I know that it’s hard but I can’t forgive myself I won’t be able to look him the eyes after



what I did to him. He's probably scared of me so I am begging you myeni wami" she pleads.

He wakes up sweating and slowly gets out of the bed.

He looks at his wife and sighs she's always been a heavy sleeper.

He makes his way to the Dedani's bedroom and walks in closing the door behind him.

Tears fill his eyes as he looks at his



late wife's photo.

He reaches for it and hugs it silently crying.

There's not a day that goes by that he doesn't miss her or long for her touch.

He bites his fist and looks at Nobuhle's photo shaking his head.

.....

ZABELO

I roll over to an empty side of the bed and open my eyes.

I look around and the bedroom is



empty.

“Dedani” I call out but he doesn’t respond.

I reach for his robe hanging by the edge of the bed and put it on.

I open my bag and take out my sleepers.

A packet of condom falls and I quickly pick it up to shove it back in the bag.

Only one person could have done this my mother, I look at the condoms and it dawns on me that we didn’t use any last night.

The first round I understand but the



second we could have been more responsible.

I drag my feet to the kitchen and get the disappointment of my life.

The house is already clean and theres no sign of him.

I walk over to the couch and slowly sit bringing the fleece blanket closer.

My legs are tired and there's this discomfort down there.

I should be getting ready for work but my whole mood just dropped.

Who leaves a girl at their place without any explanation.



Maybe I didn't do it for him and now he doesn't know what to say to me.

I want to call Lethu but she'll just go off at Dedani when she sees him.

The key rattles and the door opens, the nerve he locked me in imagine.

He walks in with a bouquet of flowers and a few shopping bags.

He smiles widely like a kid seeing candy.

"Morning Zabelo MaG Ntuli" he says.

I was smiling but now I am not.

He walks over to the couch still



smiling.

“I am just putting respect to the name” he says.

He puts the bags down and leans for a kiss.

“Sawubona sthandwa sam” he says handing me the flowers.

My lips curve into a smile and I look down.

“I was hoping you’d still be asleep, I wanted to surprise you” he says.

He places the shopping bags down and opens one of them.

He takes out a bunch of medication



and places it on the table.

“I got you everything you might need”
he says.

He pauses and takes a breathe.

“Are you okay is everything okay
down there?” He asks.

I nod embarrassed.

“Wothi ngibone” (Let me see) he says.

My eyes pop and I swallow it's one
thing allowing to see when we're both
in the mood and it's another for him
to just want to see.

“Lala baby ngibone” (Baby sleep so I
can look) he says.



I lie back on the couch and feel his hands on my thigh gently parting them.

“It’s a bit swollen but it’s still beautiful” he kisses it before I can close my legs and comes up smiling.

“Are you okay” I ask.

He smiles nodding his head.

“You’re scaring me Mapholoba” I say.

He laughs and takes my hand into his.

“Did I pressure you into doing this” he asks.

“No, I did this because I was ready and I was giving myself to the man I



love” I say.

He lets out a breath and smiles.

“Your father is going to kill me” he says.

“Kade ngemuliswa mina Mapholoba ngamhlonipha uBaba,I wasn’t keeping myself for marriage but the man I love. Ngiyakuthanda Mapholoba futhi angizisoli ngalutho” (I long had my umemulo and honored my father,I love you Mapholoba and I don’t regret a thing) I say.

“Nami ngiyakuthanda MaGodide phela uyingelosi empilweni yami” (I love you MaGodide you’re an angel in



my life) he says.

.....

I left my bag at Dedani's and called Lethu for lunch.

My morning was beautiful the man went all out for breakfast, he ran me a bath and managed to sex me up too.

“Wakekelisa okwedada yini” (What's with the duck walk) Lethu says giving me a hug.

“Lutho” I say.

She looks at me as I sit and frowns.



“You’re glowing why” she asks.

I blush and look to the side.

“You guys did it didn’t you” she says.

I nod my head and she screams.

“Ngiyamthanda Lethu” (I love him
Lethu) say

She laughs and claps her hands

“Weh usozomitha ke wena” (Oh my
now you’re going to be pregnant) she
says.

“I need your advice on something” I
say.

“What does he have a tiny dick” she
says.



“No, just listen and then talk” I say.

“I am listening” she says.

“Dedani wants you introduce me to his parents and I want to do the same, but Dedani has a past and I don't think my father is going to like him” I say

“We all have a past Zabe wena introduce your man and take it from there” she says.

“His past is linked to my father he's been to prison and he's to blame for my kidnapping” say.

“Habe uyisigebengu kanti Zabe usuyahlanya” (He's a criminal, Zabe



have you gone mad) she says.

“Lethu please” I say.

She lets out a sigh and shakes her head.

“Couldn’t you fall for someone else without such a past,I mean love is love yes but did you have to still love him even after knowing the truth” she says.

“I can’t help it Lethu” I say.

“If I were you I would walk away from this man and forget that he exists,what kind of life will you have where you constantly have to choose between him and your father” she



says.

I twiddle my thumbs looking down.

“This is why I am always saying love is overrated,kwakuthandwana nje ngoba kwenzenjani” she says.

“So what you’re saying is I shouldn’t introduce them” I say.

“Your relationship is a couple of months old,you’re not sure if he’s going to marry you or not so no don’t introduce him. And beside what are you going to introduce him as because I know Bab’Ntuli will punch him before you even utter a single word” she says.



“Okay” I say.

She heavily sighs and waves her hand calling the waiter.

“Niyazenza kodwa Zabe inkosi impela wathi cha ngikhetha wena sgebengu sami, kodwa sona sihle shame angikubeki cala kodwa kona ukujaja MaG ngiyakujaja” (You are full of wonders you just told yourself that you’re choosing your criminal, he’s handsome I am not blaming you but I am judging you MaG) she says.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 022



ZABELO

It's a weekend and I am at Dedani's home he finally introduced me to his parents, and today I was invited for a late lunch.

His stepmother is beautiful and a sweetheart, as for his father the man is intimidating as both his sons.

"You can leave the dishes I will do them" Dedani's Mother says.

"Ma its only fair that help out with the dishes, I mean you're stuck with Aza and I know she's a handful" I say.



She laughs and takes the tray of tea walking out.

I still don't get why Dedani asked me to bring her along, he knows how she can be.

Dedani walks in followed by Bandla they stop laughing when they see me.

“Ngithi ibhale u4 ingane yakho” (Your child even crossed her legs) Bandla says.

Dedani gives me a kiss and takes a clean dish cloth.

“So you two are going to do the dishes what about me” Bandla says.

“You can stay with Aza” I say.



“I don’t think I can handle her many questions” Bandla says.

“Weh Malume” Aza shouts joining us in the kitchen.

She stands in front of Bandla and smiles.

“Asambe siyophuza itiyе minа nomkhulu sifuna ukuxoxa nawe”
(Let’s go drink tea Mkhulu and I want to have a chat with you) she says.

She takes his hand and they both walk out.

Dedani stands behind me and wraps his hands around my waist.

“I love you everyday” he whispers.



“I love you more” I say.

He moves his hands to my breast and cups them squeezing them.

“I miss you” he says.

I turn and around and he smiles.

He makes this love thing easy and worth giving it up for.

“You’re the best thing that’s ever happened to me” he says.

“And you’re the most handsomest man I have ever laid eyes on” I say.

He laughs and pulls away tilting his head.

He places his hand on his waist and



bats his eyelids.

“Angazi noma ngilahlekile yini kodwa kukhona ubhuti ungimfunayo,uhlaza ngebala muhle yena kodwa uma umbuka ungamjahile” (I don’t know if I am lost or not,but I am looking for a man he’s dark in complexion and he’s handsome only when you take a real good look at him) he imitates.

That was a week ago and the new security guy at his place didn’t know him.

I carry on with the dishes while he reaches for the dishcloth.

He stands behind me and rubs



himself on me.

“Dedani” I say.

“I can multitask” he says.

His multitasking ended up with us in his bedroom, my chest is flat on the bed whilst my arse is up in the air.

He pulls out his d*ck and slowly pushes it in again.

This man has stamina for days and my knees are about to give up.

I hold on to the cover biting my lip.

He slowly thrusts in and out filling me up and stretching my walls.



I don't know if all men are this big or not but Dedani is.

He spanks my arse and slowly thrusts in moving his waist.

I close my eyes yearning for more .

He pulls it out and rubs the tip against my hole.

I don't want this to stop his dick is life having him inside me is the sweetest thing.

I push my arse and he groans putting it back in,I gasp as he thrusts in fully.

He hardens his pace giving me slowly strokes.



“Mapholoba kumnandi” I find myself saying.

His slow strokes bring tears to my eyes.

“I love you Dedani” my toes curl and I almost collapse on the bed but he tightly squeezes my waist holding me steady and increases his pace.

“Oh MaGodide” he says letting out a manly cry.

He fills me up with his seed and slowly pulls out.

We both collapse on the bed panting.

He pulls me closer and kisses me wrapping his arm around me.



.....

Dedani dropped us off and Aza hasn't closed her mouth about today.

“Beningikhumbule” (Did you miss me) she asks looking at my mother.

My mother playfully shakes her head
No.

“Wo kanti ngizohamba futhi” (I am going to leave again) Aza says folding her arms.

“We missed you sisi” mama says.

“Umaka malume ungibhake ikhekhe”



(Uncle's mom baked me a cake) she looks at mama and frowns as if realising something.

Mama looks at me and laughs clapping her hands.

“Yona siyoyicela ivuthiwe” she says.

“Gogo awusangithandi mina” (Gogo don't you love me anymore) she asks softly.

“Habe ngiyakuthanda Azamahle”(I do love you Azamahle) mama says.

“Pho yini ungasangibhakeli ikhekhe” (Then why haven't you baked me any cake) she asks.

“I will,tomorrow it's just gonna be me



and you in the kitchen baking” mama says.

“Cha ngiyabonga Ntobe ugogo ungibhakelile mina” (No thank you granny gave me a cake) Aza says standing up.

“Sengibizwa ngoNtobe” (You’re now calling Ntobe) mama says laughing. Aza walks away and mama claps her hands.

“Unjani umkhwenyana” (How’s the son in law) she asks.

“He’s good and he asked me to great” I say.

“Ubomtshela phela avele” (Do tell him



to come by) she says.

I nod my head and smile this woman is slowly warming up to the idea of me having a man in my life.

“Zabe” Baba says joining us with a sleepy Aza.

“Mphemba” I say.

He laughs and walks past heading to Aza’s bedroom.

I follow behind and wait for him to tuck her in.

“Baba can we talk” I say.

He sits on Aza’s bed and looks at me.

“I love you Mphemba” I say.



“I love you too Magcina” he says.

“Baba I am dating and I know that even today it doesn’t sit well with you, but I love him Mphemba and I would really love for you to meet him” I say.

He nods and clear his throat.

“I want you to meet the man that makes you happy baba” I say.

“Okay” he says softly.

I smile and join him on the bed giving him a hug.

“Thank you” I say.

“Let’s go drink some tea” he says.



We both stand up and he kisses Aza's forehead.

We walk out and I turn off the lights closing the door.

I take out my phone and send Dedani a text about meeting my parents.

His call comes through immediately and I head to my bedroom to take the call.

“Awusangithandi yini MaGodide” (Don't you love me anymore MaGodide) he says.

“Ngiyakuthanda muntu wami” (I love you) I say.

He heavily sighs on the other end.



“I am not ready to meet your father MaGodide” he says.

“Dedani please” I say.

“Trust me when I say meeting your father is a bad idea” he says.

“Fuze you’re not meeting my father the man who put you in prison or the man whose daughter you took, you’re going to meet your girlfriend’s father” I say.

“We both know that’s impossible MaGodide you can’t separate the three” he says.

“My father is not really a hard man you can apologise Dedani” I say.



He remains silent.

“Dedani” I say.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam but I am not ready to meet him just yet” he says.

“Kulungile Dedani hlala unjalo” (Its okay Dedani stay as you are) I end the call and toss the phone on the bed.

He calls and calls but I look at it without answering.

An hour later a call from Lethu comes through.



“MaG” she says.

“Yazi Lethu uDedani is selfish” I say.

“Ngilaphandle” (I am outside) she says.

“I will open gate for you” I say.

“I am in a hurry please borrow me that fur jacket of yours,the expensive one Kwazi brought” she says.

“Engabe uyoshisa bani” (I wonder where you’re going) I say letting out a laugh.

I grab the jacket and put on my gown and sleepers walking out.

I bump into my parents cuddling in



front of the tv.

“Iyaphi indlela ebusuku” (Where are you going at this time of the night)

Baba asks.

“Lethu is outside she needs this jacket” I say.

I walk out and head to the gate getting out.

Dedani’s car approaches and stops two houses from mine.

Lethu steps out and walks up to me.

“Really Lethu” I say.

“Just hear him out” she says.

She pulls my hand to the car and



opens the front door for, she then gets in the back and closes the door.

“Lethu is my friend not yours” I tell him.

He looks at Lethu and clears his throat.

“Thathani sengathi mina angikho” (Pretend as if I am not here) She says with a huge smile on her face.

“MaGodide angiyathandanga indlela ovale ngayo ucingo, mina nawe siyathanda asikho enkulisa lapho silahla khona amo toys” (MaGodide I didn't like the way you're ended the call, you and I are dating we're not in



preschool where we throw our toys away just because we don't get what we want" he says.

"Preach" Lethu says.

"Lethu stay out of this" I say.

"Ngikukhuzile kodwa MaG buka manje"(I warned you though now look) she says.

We both look at her and she raises her hands up.

"Okay I am shutting up now" she says.

"I am sorry for what I said and for being selfish" he says.

I look at Lethu and shake my head.



“Waze kahle kamhlophe ukuthi ngakhahlelwa ihhashi esifubeni” (You know I can’t keep secrets) she says.

“Will you meet my parents” I ask.

“If it will make you happy then yes” he says.

My lips curve into a smile and I lean over kissing him.

“Thank you Mapholoba” I say.

I wipe my lip balm off his lips smitten that he came all this way.

“Awbakithi bona shame ngimbekile kodwa ubab’Ntuli niyothi ngasho” (How lovely but I am banking on Bab’Ntuli don’t say I didn’t tell you)



she says.

“Ehh I am not going back with you ungaze ungingume (you might hurt me) for everything I said, Zabe you’ll find me at me gate waiting for you” she steps out and shuts the door.

“Out of all people you called Lethu” I say.

“I was desperate you weren’t taking my calls” he says.

“I was angry” I admit.

“I understand and I need you to be patient with me MaGodide” he says.

“And I need you to take every step with me Mapholoba” I say.



Snqumo's car drives past and Lethu jogs to Dedani's car.

“Uwuchitheke umhlangano Romeo and Juliet” she says opening the front door.

I kiss my man goodbye and step out of the car.

He drives off while Lethu and I walk up to the gate.

“Cha lupink” Snqumo remarks.

He then looks at Lethu and winks.

“Sawubona weLethu” he says

We walk past his car and get inside the yard.



“Ungangijaja uma ngingazwisa uSnqumo” (Would you judge me if I gave it up to Snqumo) she asks.

I choke on my saliva and look at her.

“Udinga umthandazo wena” (You need prayer) I say.

She walks in first inside the house with Snqumo following behind us.

I shake my head these two will have me locking the door to my room.

Two weeks later

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 023

DEDANI

A few naked girls walk in with each sitting on a man's lap.

“Indulge me Sihayo” his business partner says.

Dedani chuckles and leans back on the couch looking at the girls.

All beautiful with sexy bodies but none catching his eye.

“I am taken” Dedani says taking a sip of drink.



“We’re all taken and some even married” his partner says.

“I like my woman with a little meat on their body, and I don’t like sharing” Dedani says.

He doesn’t see himself cheating on MaGodide could be a love potion or love indeed but he’s content.

“A man with impeccable taste” his partner says roaring with laughter.

He raises his glass and Dedani does the same with a smile on his face, he’s concluding their business in a few days in time to get home for Zabe’s birthday.



He can't wait to see he misses every inch of her body,if possible he would have brought her along.

He looks at his phone and frowns not a single phone call from Zabe.

“I am calling it a night Dlabazane” he says looking at his partner.

He stands up and walks out making his way to his hotel room.

He gets to his room and walks over to the bar where he pours himself a drink.

He thinks about Zabe's birthday and wonders if he can ask Lethu to help him organise something.



He wants everything to be perfect and there's no one who knows Zabe like Lethu.

He makes his way to the balcony and dials Zabe's number.

"MaGodide" he says.

"Mapholoba" she says softly.

"How are you my love" he asks.

She lets out a heavy sigh and coughs.

"Ngiyagula Mapholoba" (I am sick Mapholoba) she says.

He loosens the button of his shirt and swallows.

"What's wrong" he asks.



“Everything I think am coming down with some flu” she says.

He chuckles and lets out a sigh.

For a moment he thought it was something else something more serious, but knowing women everything is serious with them.

“Should I come home and take care of you” he asks.

He would love nothing more than to just stare at her all day.

“No, finish up your business then come home” she says.

“MaGodide have you seen a doctor” he asks.



“No” she says.

He shakes his head Zabe forgets that she’s human.

“Should I send a driver to pick you up and take you to the doctor” he asks.

He wants to command her but Zabe is stubborn and he keeps learning that.

“Sthandwa sam I am okay it’s just flu it will pass” she says.

“Okay but I am sending Bandla to come drop off some medication and a few things you might like” he says.

She laughs softly melting his heart.



“Thank you” she says.

“I love you MaGodide” he says.

“I love you Dedani” she says softly.

He says his goodbye and ends the call.

He finds himself laughing and shaking his head,he’s never said so many I love you to one person.

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ZABELO

“Aza” I call out.



She comes running and looks at me.

“Gogo said I shouldn’t come any closer you might infect me” she says.

I laugh this child is slowly but surely turning into a little diva monster.

“Call your mother for me” I say.

“Umkhulu uthena kumele uchathe khona uzoba ngcono” (Mkhulu said you need an enema to get better) she says.

“Azamahle please call your mother” I say.

“Mama” she shouts.

Kwazi comes running in and looks at



her.

“Yini” she says.

“uMaG uthi angikubize” (MaG asked me to call you) she says.

Kwazi walks over and puts her palm on my forehead.

“You’re burning up” she says.

I’ve been sick for the past couples of days.

“Just make me give some medlemon I will be fine” I tell her.

It started off as a stomach bug but now I am coming down with a fever.

“I am taking you to the doctor” Kwazi



says.

“Aza go put on your shoes we’re taking MaG to the doctor” Kwazi says.

Aza runs out and Kwazi helps me sit up straight.

“Your face is even pale are you sure you haven’t eaten anything that’s doesn’t agree with you” she asks.

I shake my head and rest my head on her shoulder.

“I need my mother” I say.

She laughs and pushes me off.

“Get dressed I am going to bring the car around” she says.



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The doctor looks at me and sighs.

I've been staring at him without blinking.

"Are you okay" The Doctor asks.

"I came in here because of a fever" I say.

"Yes however your pee urine says you're pregnant" He says.

"I am not pregnant" I say.

He places all three pregnancy tests in front of me.

"I could refer you to a hospital for



some blood work and further observation” the doctor says.

A knock comes through and Kwazi walks in before the doctor can anything.

“Mam you can’t be here” the doctor says.

“Umithi Zabelo” (You’re pregnant Zabelo) she says.

I shake my head.

“Pho yini le umoya ongcwele” (Then what is this the Holy Spirit) she asks pointing at the pregnancy tests.

“We’ve been careful Kwazi” I say.



“Well not careful enough” she shouts.

“Mam please” the doctor says.

“Take your things it’s clear you’re not sick just pregnant” Kwazi says walking out.

The doctor writes down a note and hands it to me.

“Get this medication from the pharmacy you’ll be fine” the doctor says.

I walk out of the doctor’s consultation room and drag myself outside.

“Get in the car Zabelo” Kwazi says.

I cover my face and burst into tears.



God knows I've been careful I remember the first time Dedani and I had sex the following morning he bought a morning after pill.

She walks over and pulls me into her arms.

“Ubaba uzongibulala” (Baba is going to kill me) I say.

“Zabe kanti wena nalomuntu wakho aniyisebenzisi yini icondom” (Don't you and that person use a condom) she asks.

“Siyayisenzisa and it's only two weeks back that we didn't but we got the pill and I drank it” I say.



“That means the pill didn’t work because you’re were already pregnant,the condom must have burst or something and your stupid boyfriend didn’t tell you” she says.

I shake my head Dedani would have said something.

“Kwazi ubaba uzongibulala” (Kwazi baba is going to kill me) I say.

“Yebo phela” (Yes) she says.

“Umkhaliselani uMaG” (Why are you making MaG cry) Aza asks.

“Uyazi mina mama ngizokuceba kuGogo ukuthi ukhalisa uMaG” (You know mommy I am going to tell on



you for making MaG cry) she says .

Kwazi turns and looks st her.

“Get in the car Azamahle” she says.

“Ungithethiselani pho” (Why are you shouting at me) Aza says in a shaky voice.

I wipe my tears and force a smile.

“I am not crying” I say.

She walks over and holds my hand.

“Thula yezwa ngizomceba umama”
(Shush okay I am going tell on her)

Aza whispers.

I bite my lower lip and nod my life is about to be turned upside down.



We got home an hour ago and I've been looking at the forth pregnancy test we bought on our way home.

I am trying to jog my memory but Dedani never mentioned the condom bursting.

I wipe my tears a grab my phone calling him.

He picks up on the first ring laughing I also hear a few male voices in the background.

The green eyed monster creeps in where there's a group of rich men trust when I say a bunch of women



are there.

“MaGodide” he says.

I try to hold myself from crying but fail.

“I need you to come home” I say.

“What’s wrong” he asks sounding panicked.

“Dedani I need you to come home please” I say.

“You’re scaring me Zabe what’s going on” he asks.

I breathe out and sigh calming down.

“I just miss you that’s all” I say.

“Ngizobuya sthandwa sam” (I will be



back my love) he says.

I nod my head and sniff.

“Okay,I need to go now Aza is calling me” I end the call and look at the pregnancy test.

I shove it under my bed and get inside, I pull the cover over my head and sleep maybe then I will wake normal.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 024

ZABELO



I took another pregnancy test upon waking up and there's definitely something growing inside of me.

"This will make you feel better" Kwazi says passing me a cup of tea and rusks.

"Have you told the father" she asks.

"Not yet" I say.

"Well you need to let him know and you need to tell Ma before she sees it for herself" she says.

"Did you tell her when you found out about your pregnancy" I ask.



“No” she says.

“Then why should I burn myself” I say.

She remains silent and I scoff, I am not telling my mother anything she’s just going to have to find out by herself.

“This is a mess” I say.

“Tell me Zabe what did you think was going to happen when you had unprotected sex” she says.

“How many times must I tell you that it was only those two times we didn’t use protection and I drank the pill.

And don’t act brand new on me when you knowingly slept with a married



man,in your case what did you think was going to happen” I ask

Her eyes widen in shock.

“Zabe ” she says.

“What,you’re standing here making it seem as if I went out there and intentionally got myself pregnant” I say.

“Every action has a consequence” she says.

“You would know right” I say.

She shakes her head and claps her hands.

“I really hope Baba deals with you”



she says.

“Just like how Nkanyiso is dealing with you” I say.

She slaps me across the face fuming.

“Kwazikwenkosi” My father says.

We didn't even see him him standing there,I didn't even know they are back.

I hold my cheek and stare at Kwazi.

“I am not your friend Zabelo you better remember that” she says walking away.

My father walks up to me confused.

“Magcina what's going on” he asks.

I bite my lip and tears fall.



“Woza la” (Come here) he says
pulling me into his arms.

I burst into tears and fail to hold
myself.

“Talk to me” he says.

I want to tell him everything but the
fear of his reaction and
disappointment stops me.

“I am just worried about work I’ve
missed so many days” I tell him.

He laughs and wipes my tears
suddenly I am overly emotional.

“What’s important is you getting
better and going back to that job of
yours” he says.



I nod and sadly smile,as old as I am disappointing my parents has always been my biggest fear.

“Now tell me what was that all about” he asks.

“Nothing I just said something I shouldn't have and it pissed her off” I say.

“You know I hate siblings who fight please apologise to your sister” he says.

“I will” I say.

“Good” he says.



I called Lethu and Cebo for lunch, after what happened between Kwazi and I. I can't really talk to her for a now about anything.

Cebo looks at me and sighs.

"I thought you didn't want kids" she says.

"That was a long time ago before she met Dedani" Lethu says.

"I know I said kids would be the last thing on my list but God works in mysterious ways" I say.

"So you're telling us that there's a stranger growing inside you" Lethu says.



“That’s what happens when a person is pregnant” Cebo says laughing.

“I wouldn’t know I’ve never been pregnant” Lethu says.

She looks at me burst into a fit of laughter.

“Hayibo Zabe waze wamitha umncane” (You’re pregnant at a young age) she says.

“Don’t mind her we both know her brain is missing a few cells” Cebo says.

“So have you told the father” Cebo asks.

That question again.



“He’s away on business but I will tell him” I say.

She nods and leans back.

“You’re going to be an amazing mother” she says.

This is the first positive thing anyone has said in the past day and a half.

“Thank you Cebo” I say.

We look at Lethu and she drops her shoulders.

“You do realise that you’re going to give birth to Aza’s competition right” she says.

I laugh and shake my head that



thought hadn't crossed my mind.

"And you two are going to be aunts" I say.

"Cebo is just going to confuse the child" Lethu says.

We all laugh and it really dawns on me that I haven't told Dedani about the baby.

I wonder what his reaction will be, we haven't talked about having kids or starting a family.

I reach for my phone and send him a text nonetheless.



Say I was pregnant would we keep it I press send and look at Cebo and Lethu discuss who will be a better Godmother.

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DEDANI

He reads Zabe's text for the hundredth time, he wants to respond but he's not sure what to say.

This is the confirmation he has been waiting for.



He shakes his head smiling of course they are keeping their baby he didn't make it for Zabe to abort it.

They are both adult fully capable of taking care of a baby.

They are both financially and emotionally capable so why wouldn't they keep it .

He heavily sighs and looks at the time his driver will be here any minute now to take him to the airport.

He wants to address this whole baby thing and make it clear that they are keeping it.

Matter of fact he's panicking he



should have told Zabe about the condom bursting but then she would have taken the pill.

At the same time he didn't think she was already pregnant, she had been quiet about the matter till now.

A knock comes through and his driver walks in.

Dlabazane offered him the private jet, Dedani told him that a family emergency had come up and he needed to get home.

It's late but he drives straight to Zabe's home.



A thought crosses his mind now that she's pregnant he needs to get her a house and a comfortable car.

He parks two house from her home and dials her number.

“Sthandwa sam” he says.

“Mapholoba” she says in a sleepy voice.

“I am outside my love” he says.

“Ngempela” (Really) she says.

“Yes please come outside” he says.

He ends the call and steps out of the car.

It's takes a few minutes for her to



appear dressed in her fluffy gown.

He meets her half way and she flings into his arms.

She holds on tight while he twirls her around.

“I missed you” he says putting her down.

Tears fill her eyes and she lets out a heavy sigh.

“I am pregnant” she says “ I am sorry sthandwa sam I should have told you about the condom bursting” He says.

“What” Zabe says.

“Dammit” he murmurs when he



realises she wasn't aware about the condom thing.

“So the condom did burst and you said nothing” she says.

“I wanted to tell you but the thought of having a child with you stopped me,I want to have kids with you Zabe as many as possible” he says.

“So you made a decision for me without telling me” she says.

“Ngiyaxolisa MaGodide” (I am sorry MaGodide) he says.

She takes a few steps back still looking at him.

“We love each other Zabelo I didn't



think it would be much of a big deal”
he says.

She sarcastically laughs.

“People who are in love talk about
such things Dedani,a child is a huge
commitment not something you
decide on your own to have” she
shouts.

“I am sorry okay “ he says.

“Okay” she shouts back.

“I can’t believe you would do
something like this,when my sister
mentioned it I said not you but I was
wrong” she says.

He runs his hands over his head and



moves closer trying to touch her.

“Don’t touch me” she says.

“Sthandwa sam you’re making a big deal out of nothing,I will be there for you and the baby” he says.

“It’s not about that it’s about you selfishly keeping this from me” Zabe says.

“I should have told you MaGodide but the more weeks went by the more I thought to myself it didn’t take” he says.

She claps her hands and nods her head.

“Well congratulations Mapholoba



you're going to be a father" she says walking away.

He takes two steps and grabs her arm.

"Wongiyeka mina somanga wendoda" (Leave me alone liar of a man) she shouts.

He pulls her into her arms and looks into her eyes.

He deeply stares into them and smiles.

"Ngishayake ke MaGodide ngonile sthandwa sami bonake ukuthi wenzani ngami" (Hit me then I wronged you see what you do with



me) he says.

A moment passes without her saying nothing.

He moves his hand and places it on belly.

“He or she is going to be loved” he says.

His heart is already filled with love and joy for this little person on the way.

“I know but I am disappointed in you, I need time to digest everything and figure out if I am going to tell my parents or not” she says.

He nods his head and leans over



kissing her.

“I love you” he says.

“I know” she says.

He lets go of her and she turns walking back to the house.

He cusses under his breath and gets in the car,he sits for a while watching her enter the gate. He hits the steering wheel frustrated he should have known better and kept his mouth shut.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 025



ZABELO

“Happy birthday to you,happy birthday Zabelo happy birthday to you” I smile looking at my parents holding a cake.

“Happy birthday Magcina” Baba says. I sit up straight and blow the candles.

“Happy birthday thumbu kamama” mama says.

“Thank you” I say.

Aza walks in holding a cupcake.

I look at my parents and they laugh.



“She wanted to do her own thing”
Baba says.

“Happy birthday MaG” she says
handing me the cupcakes.

I blow the candle ontop and smile.

“Thank you so much Aza” I say.

She throws herself on my bed and
hugs me.

“Usunangakhi MaG” (How old are you)
she asks.

“25” I say.

“Is that a big age” she asks.

I nod my head and she laughs.

“You’re getting old” she says.



Kwazi walks in followed by Snqumo.

“You’ll find us in the kitchen” Mama says.

“Happy birthday Magcina” Snqumo says kissing my forehead just like he’s done.

He picks up Aza and looks at Kwazi walking out.

Kwazi closes the door and walks over to sit on the bed.

She lets out a sigh before she can begin.

“You may think I was judging you but I am not, I am your sister Zabelo and if you’re doing something



questionable then I will call you out on it. You called me out on my past mistakes that's fine, yes I slept with Nkanyiso and now he's back in my life trying to ruin it and take my child away.

Nkanyiso was nothing but a mistake and I don't want you making the same mistakes I made. You hardly know this man but already you're carrying his child, none of us know this man but you're carrying his child. Do you even know what kind of a man he is when angry, sad or excited and have you seen him around children to trust him enough to give



him a child. You might love him granted but trust me having a child with the wrong person is the worst thing you can ever do to yourself. I am not perfect in fact I am far from it, but I am your sister and I love you ngeke ngikulahlikise” she says.

“I am sorry for what I said about Nkanyiso” I say.

After this it’s only fair I apologise it wasn’t right of me to say all those things.

“It’s okay I will deal with that one when the time comes” she says.

She smiles and stands up.



“Happy birthday Magcina ka Baba”
she says walking out.

A call from Dedani comes through
but I ignore his call.

Kwazi is right can I really say I know
this man and all his seasons.

He sends a text and I read it while
peeling Aza’s cupcake paper off.

*Good morning mawe ngane yami, I
hope you slept well sthandwa sam
and the baby didn’t trouble you.

Today is your day and I am not trying
to ruin it, the fact that we haven’t



spoken in two days breaks my heart. I am sorry that I lied to you but ignoring me won't make this go away. I was selfish and I am sorry MaGodide all I am asking for is to see you and hold you. I love you so much birthday girl and I hope your day is as beautiful as you are,happy birthday MaG ka Azamahle*

I read the text and lay back on the bed I miss him so much but I can't bring myself to let this go.

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I notice my mother looking my way
abs take a bite from the food on my
plate, this woman has been watching
me like a hawk you'd swear she
suspects something. Lethu stands up
with a glass in her hand and smiles
looking my way.

I asked her not to plan anything for
my day but she did.

I feel tired and everything is
overwhelming I just needed today to
myself.

She gathers everyone's attention and
smiles.



My mind drifts away to Dedani he asked to see me but I don't know if I want that.

The man knows our situation but still he took such a decision.

Lethu clears her throat bringing my out of my thoughts.

“To Zabe the most beautiful,loving,humble and hardworking person I know.

To my best friend the only person other than Cebo that I can call and tell everything. To the sweetest person ever created today is about you MaG,I know you said you didn't



want a party but I couldn't resist celebrating another year added to your life.

I want you to know that you are loved and adored, happy birthday Zabelo and may God continue to keep you safe and blessed. I love you MaGodide" she says.

She raises her glasses and loudly makes a toast.

The night is perfect but my mind is else where, could it be that Dedani trapped me with a baby so many thoughts are rubbing through my head in can't focus on one.



I let this thought slide and come out of my thoughts as Lethu gently nudges me.

“Come I want to show you something” she says.

She leads the way and I follow her outside.

“Don’t be mad” she says.

Dedani appears holding a bouquet and a box of chocolates.

“Happy birthday Zabelo” he says.

A smile spreads across my lips.

As much as I am angry seeing him just put a smile on my face.



“I’ll take these you two can talk”

Lethu says.

She takes the flowers and chocolates making her way inside the restaurant.

“How are you feeling” he asks wrapping his arms around my waist.

I miss this him holding me and showering me with love.

“I don’t know” I tell him.

“Are you having doubts about us” he asks softly.

Of course I am, I nod my head and he sighs.

“I am starting to wonder if you didn’t



do this to spite my father” I say.

He looks shocked by my words.

“I would never hurt you just to get back at your father you need to know that and believe it,your father and I might have a past but you are my future” he says.

He leans over and brushes his lips against mine.

Again I missed this the warmth of breath against mine.

“I miss you” he says.

He kisses me and runs his hands down to my arse.



I pull away and catch my breath.

“You shouldn’t be here my whole family is inside” I say.

Him being here is huge risk.

“I had to see you guys” he says.

I leans in for another kiss.

“Zabe” my body goes stiff as I pull away and turn to look at Snqumo.

He looks at Dedani then me,he then looks back to Dedani and frowns.

“What the hell is he doing here” he asks.

My mouth opens but nothing comes out.



Snqumo charges at Dadeni and they both fall to the ground.

Snqumo throws the first punch and I run over to separate them.

“With my little sister” Snqumo says in anger.

“Bhuti please” I say.

His elbow hits me on the stomach and I fall on butt. I watch as Dedani flips him over and gets ontop of him punching him.

“Ungijwayela kabi wena” Dedani says.

“Mapholoba please let him go” I say.

Snqumo wraps his hands around



Dedani's neck and manages to knee his rib cage.

Snqumo gets ontop of Dedani and I try to get him off but he pushes me off to the ground.

I realise this is bigger than me and run making my way inside the restaurant.

"Zabe" Kwazi says meeting my by the door.

"Tell baba to come help Snqumo is fighting someone" I run back outside and find the two of them still tussling.

"Dedani please stop" I plead.

My hearts almost stops when my



father appears followed by my mother.

He stops on his tracks when he sees Snqumo and Dedani punching each other.

“Sihayo” he says.

I look at my father then the two hooligans, everything starts spinning and I get lightheaded.

“Zabe” Kwazi calls out from a distance.

My knees weaken and I drop to the ground.



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[10/20, 20:24] o: 026

ZABELO

She's looking at Dedani and subtly shaking her head, she's pleading with him to leave but the man remains rooted where he is.

This isn't how she wanted her family to meet Dedani.

Heck she didn't even know that Squmo knows Dedani.

Tears fall from her eyes she's never



met such a strong willed stubborn man.

Dedani looks at her and swallows he was so engrossed in that fight he didn't even realise that she fell.

He wants to rush her to the hospital but everyone is fussing over her.

Her eyes are pleading with him but he doesn't want to move not until he knows she and the baby are fine.

“If you don't leave right now I swear your family will find you at the morgue” Snqumo says.

He's being held back by Kwazi's husband.



“Is she okay” Dedani asks

Zabe looks down and shuts her eyes closed.

How can one person be this inconsiderate why isn't he walking away.

Mphemba swallows and looks at Zabelo he's confused more than anything.

He's never seen his baby this shaken you would swear she's seeing a ghost.

“Zabe do know this man” Mphemba asks.

Zabe shakes her head.



Dedani looks at her as his heart slowly sinks, being denied by her hurts more than those punches Snqumo gave him.

“Unamanga Baba uZabelo ngibafice begonene beqabula” (She’s lying Baba I found them hugging and kissing) Snqumo says.

“Zabe is that true” Nontobeko asks.

Zabelo shakes her head she’s now in spot light.

“Zabe musa ukungilinga” (Zabe don’t test me) Snqumo roars.

She doesn’t dare look his way and prays no one asks her to speak up.



“Snqumo you’re causing a scene”
Mphemba says.

“I think we should go home” Kwazi
says.

Cebo walks over to Dedani and pulls
him to the side while Zabe watches.

They briefly exchange words and she
watches as Dedani turns and leaves.

Snqumo looks at Zabelo still fuming
she’s never seen her brother like this
and it scares her.

Her father helps her up and quietly
walks with her to the car.



They drove home in silence she drove with her parents and that was the longest drive of her entire life.

“I would like to speak to Zabe alone please” Mphemba says.

“I’ll go warm you some milk”
Nontobeko says brushing Zabe’s cheek.

Her father carefully looks at her before sitting next to her.

“If you lie to me Zabelo I will know”
he says.

“Do you know that boy” he asks.

She nods her head and he shuts his eyes.



“How long have you known him” he asks.

“A couple of months” she says.

He looks into her eyes visibly disappointed.

He was hoping for a different answer or this.

“I want you to stay away from that boy,I don't care how long you've know him he's not a good person. I don't want him anywhere near you do you hear me Zabelo” her father says.

She remains silent and thinks even if they met under different circumstances he would have still



said this very same thing.

“Zabelo” he says in a stern voice.

“But Baba he’s my boyfriend and I love him” she says.

He almost loses it but holds himself.

“Zabe I am your father and I am telling you that boy is nothing but bad news,if you still wish to live under my roof and continue being my daughter you will stay away from him” he says.

“Baba please don’t do this he’s a good man,he’s been nothing but kind towards me and I love him” she says.

That work again irks him.



“You’re still young you know nothing about love” he says.

She bites her trembling lip and swallows what more can she say after being told she knows nothing about love.

But then again she want to scream and tell him that Dedani’s love has been nothing but soothing.

“I doubt he even told you the truth about himself or his life,that boy is a criminal and a murderer. He’s a manipulator,a cold hearted killer and I don’t want you near him” he says softly trying to make her see reason.



She looks at him still biting her lower lip, she wants to tell him that he's chosen Dedani despite knowing about his past.

"I don't want to be angry Zabelo so please help me and stay away from that boy, nothing good will come out of whatever you're trying to build, and may this be the last time we speak of this" he stands up and shakes his head.

"Nihambe niqoma kodwa Zabelo first it was your sister now it's you" he says walking away.

Zabe leans back and quietly places



her hand over her abdomen letting the pain subside.

Kwazi walks in and looks at her hurrying to her side.

“We should take you to the hospital” Kwazi says.

Zabe quickly shakes her.

“I don’t want to go to the hospital” she says.

“Zabe your pregnancy is still in its early stages anything can happen” Kwazi whispers.

“I am fine it’s a little pain from Snqumo pushing me” she says.



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NHLAKA (MPHEMBA)

He looks at Dedani and swallows,for the second time he's at the mercy of this arrogant young man.

First he took his daughter and strong armed him into getting him out of prison,now he's seeing his daughter but why. Is it to seek revenge and hurt him,so many thoughts are running through his head right now.



The thought of him anywhere near Zabe makes his blood boil, but he remains calm as he did back at restaurant.

He still doesn't understand how Zabe would fall for such a person, he lets out a sigh remaining calmer the thought of Zabe staying away from him calms him down.

Surely his daughter won't carry on with this criminal, he knows Zabe and she wouldn't.

"I didn't come here for small talks, stay away from my daughter she's not your age mate nor is she



your play thing” Mphemba says.

“With all due respect Bab’ Ntuli I love your daughter” Dedani says.

“Man like you know nothing about love” Mphemba says.

“But men like do right,the same men who bury bodies and torture people” Dedani says.

Mphemba stands up and pulls out his gun.

He cocks it and points it at Dedani.

“I knew that coming here would be a mistake people like you only understand one language and that is violence. I don’t know what you’re



playing at going after my daughter. If you want to revenge for what happened five years ago then come at me straight and leave my family out of it” He says.

“Do I blame you for losing my son yes,do I sometimes wake up hating you and wishing I could hurt you the same way you did of course I do. But because I love your daughter I let it go,as hard as it is I wake up each morning and let it go” Dedani says.

“You may not believe me but I love your daughter” he says so much to Mphemba’s annoyance.



“Love le kwa msoon hayi kweyami ingane”Mphemba says.

“I want you to listen to me very good stay away from my baby girl or I will kill you and bury your body where your father will never find it,this is a courtesy visit Sihayo use it wisely don't try me or you'll be sorry” He says.

“And what about my child,you want me to walk away but what about my unborn child” Dedani says.

Mphemba looks at him the thought of Zabe sleeping with Dedani and carrying his child gets his heart



racing.

He swears the air in his lungs left and came back in time for him to breathe.

He places his hand on his tightening chest and gasps for air.

There's no way Zabe could be carrying this man's child.

"Mphemba" Dedani says standing up.

Mphemba struggles to breath and accidentally pulls the trigger.

The gun goes off and Mphemba falls to the ground wheezing while Dedani slumps to his chair.



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[10/20, 20:24] o: 027

BANDLA

His mother asked him to fetch her casserole dishes the ones Dedani refuses to bring back.

She's got a stokvel coming up soon and wants to impress the ladies.

"Sihayo" he shouts.

He figures he's in his study considering that he saw an unfamiliar car outside.



A gun goes off just as he is about to open the door.

He burst in and finds Mphemba on the floor and Dedani on his chair.

He runs over to Dedani and checks him out.

“I am okay check on Mphemba”
Dedani says.

“Ngoba kwenzenjani” (What for)
Bandla asks putting pressure on his wound.

“Bandla” He says in a strained voice.
Bandla walks over to Mphemba and looks at him wheezing.



“Loosen his shirt and make sure he continues breathing” Dedani says.

Bandla does as told and pulls out his phone calling the ambulance.

“Let me get you to the hospital and leave this old man here” Bandla says.

“Bandla please that’s MaGodide’s father he has to live” Dedani says.

Bandla clicks his tongue looking at Mphemba.

“Usuyophila nje ngoba uDedani unonembeza” (You’re going to live only because Dedani has a conscious) he says.



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ZABELO

All eyes on her she can't even raise her head and look at her distraught mother.

“Nakanye empilweni uBaba abanjwe yisifo senhliziyo” (Not even once in my life has baba had a heart attack) Snqumo says.

He's the angriest out them all.

“If he doesn't make it know that it's on you” He says.



Zabelo raises her head and looks at him.

“Noma ungangibuka uma nje ungashona ubaba kuyobe kuyophutha lakho” (Even if you look at me, but I am still saying if he dies it’s all on you) he says.

“That’s enough Snqumo can’t you see you’re hurting her” Kwazi says.

“Hurt, our father is in there fighting for his life and you’re telling me about Zabe’s feeling. The problem is that Zabelo has never been beaten she’s spoiled this one” Snqumo says.

“Shaya mina keh Snqumo ngoba



uZabelo ingane yami okusho ukuthi woniwe yimina” (Beat me then Snqumo because Zabelo is my child meaning I am the who spoiled her) Nontobeko says.

“Ma yini kanti lengaka engiyenzile mina,ukuthandana kwami sekungaze kubange impi engaka” (What is it that I have done,does me being in love have to cause such a war) Zabelo says.

“There’s are so many boys choose one and stay away from that murderer” Snqumo says.

“Wena ikhanda lakho alisebenzi



ngiyabona didn't Baba tell you that the reason you disappeared is because of that very same boyfriend of yours" he says.

"It was a mistake" Zabelo whispers.

"Zabelo" Nontobeko says shocked.

"So you knew" Kwazi says.

"He explained everything to me Mama" Zabelo says.

"Amen" Snqumo says shaking his head.

He looks at her and sighs.

"Uthakathiwe wena" (You're bewitched) Snqumo says.



The doctor makes his way to them and looks at their mother.

Zabelo holds her breath tears forming in her eyes, she can't have her father's death on her hands that's one thing she could never live with.

"Doctor how's my husband"

Nontobeko asks.

"Your husband is stable and out of danger, he's sleeping however I can allow you to see him only for a few minutes" the doctor says.

"Akuhambe uZabelo" (Let Zabelo go).

Nontobeko says.

Zabe follows the doctor to her



father's room.

“Only for a few minutes” the doctor says.

He closes the door leaving Zabe alone with her father.

She walks up to the bed and looks her father.

Her entire life and she's never seen him in such a state, her father has always been a hero strong and never sick.

She rests her head on his chest and sniffs.

“Ngiyaxolisa Mphemba” (I am sorry Mphemba) she says.



“I should have told you about him but I was afraid rightfully so, you’re in the hospital and it’s my fault. I shouldn’t have fallen in love with him but it happened” she raises her hand and wipes her tears.

“Isono sami ukumthanda Baba” (My only son is loving him) she whispers.

“Ngiyafise ukube kuthiwa angimthandi kodwa ngiyamthanda” (I wish I didn’t love him but I do) she heavily breathes sniffs.

“I love you baba” she says turning on her heels and walking out.



She drags her feet to Dedani's room and finds Bandla standing outside.

It's been hours surely by now Dedani is in his room.

She's grateful to Bandla for being at the right place at the right time, he's the one who called them to come to the hospital.

He looks at her and she lets out a sigh she's been catching heat from everybody she's tired.

"How is he" she asks.

"He's going to make it no thanks to your father" he says.

"May I see him please" she says.



“Sure go ahead” he says.

She gathers all her strength and walks in.

Tears fill her eyes and here she was think she was all out.

She closes the door and walks over to his bed,he doesn't look bad which is a good thing .

She still doesn't understand how her father ended up having a heart attack and Dedani getting shot.

The police were here but Bandla chased them away.

She takes his hand and places it on her belly.



“I am sorry” she says.

He opens his eyes and he looks at her.

“How’s the baby” he asks.

His voice is strained but he manages.

“We’re both fine” she says.

Kwazi convinced her to see a doctor.

“Your father asked you a question MaGodide and you sat there and lied, you denied knowing me in front of everyone” he says softly.

“What was I supposed to say Dedani after you beat up my brother” she says.



“Ubufuna ngenzeni Zabelo ngithule ngimbuke engishaya” (What did you expect me to do watch as he beat me) he says.

“You were supposed to walk away Dedani” she says.

He looks at her in disbelief.

“Walk away after you begged me to take each step with you,after I promised to meet your parents despite my reservations” he says.

“Things got out of control Mapholoba and I panicked” she says.

“Phuma Zabelo” he says.

Her eyes widen in shock.



“Uyangixosha” (Are you chasing me away) she says.

“It’s clear you don’t know what you want and you’re not ready to fight for us” he says.

She looks at him without saying anything.

“Please leave I am tired it’s been a rough night) he says.

She slowly nods her head and walks out.

“Maybe you should stay away from him for now” Bandla says.

She had forgotten about Bandla playing guard, she pulls out her phone



from her jacket and walks away without saying anything.

She calls Lethu and asks her to come pick her up, she avoids going back to her family and makes her way out of the hospital.

Everything is happening all at once overwhelming her.

She reaches outside and sits on one of the benches staring into space.

Even with with her jacket she can still feel the cold breeze.

“I am sure it’s not that bad” she turns to her side and notices a man standing next to the bench.



“May I” the man says.

She nods and goes back to staring into space.

The man removes his coat and places it over her shoulders.

“Thank you” she says.

“My name is Ntsika” He says.

“And I am Zabelo” she says.

He smiles and stares into space with her.

She heavily breathes and carefully looks at this man grateful for the silence.



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[10/20, 20:24] o: 028

DEDANI

His father just left with Bandla living him with his mother, she's been fussing over him like a mother would a young boy.

She fixes his pillow and tucks him in, he grunts hating every moment of it.

If it's not the nurse pressing their cleavages on his face it's his mother.



“Ma please stop” he says.

“If you fixed things with Zabelo then I wouldn’t be doing this” she says.

He’s been miserable without Zabelo but the woman denied her.

“What’s there to fix mama when she denied me in front of her whole family and friends” he says.

“Oh please not even Jesus was this offended” she says.

“Well I am not Jesus” he says.

“I am not saying be Jesus but Zabelo is the mother of your unborn child” she says.



“And I am the father of her unborn child” he says.

His mother laughs and lets out a sigh.

“Do you love her” she asks.

He nods his head with a smile.

Of course he loves her and it scares him that he loves her more than anything.

“Then be patient with her, she’s still young and she’ll make mistakes along the way. She loves you and I have seen that, who are we to say she was wrong for denying you. We were not in her position we don’t know what was going on in her head. And



the way I see thing It's really not about her being scared of her father or family,it's about respect and doing things the right way. When her father sat her down she didn't deny you,because the atmosphere and approach was different. We may blame Zabe but what about you Dedani" she says.

"What about me I didn't deny anyone" he says.

"You didn't but you got her pregnant and didn't tell her,you selfishly decided to have a child for the both of you. You did this knowing very well that you and father don't get along



what does that make you. The same guy who wasn't ready to meet her parent but somehow got her pregnant, and then you went to her birthday celebration knowing that her whole family would be there. Instead of walking away and respecting her father you chose to stay and put her in an even more awkward and tense situation. And now what have you done huh you chased her away knowing that there's a possibility of a huge fall out with her family, because you chose to tell her father that she's pregnant again without her consent. Again Dedani you made a decision on



her behalf” she says.

He clears his throat and looks at his mother.

“She’s probably alone and scared right now, she’s never been pregnant and probably doesn’t know how to handle this she needs you now more than ever” she says.

“Ngisuke ngathatha ngamawala” (I over reacted) he says softly.

His mother smiles and fluffs his pillow one more time.

“All I am saying is be patient with her by what you told me all her firsts will probably start with you” she says.



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ZABELO

A whole week and my father hasn't said anything to me,he told the whole family about my pregnancy and hasn't said anything since.

Living under one roof with him when things are like this is unbearable.

A call from Lethu comes through and I pick up the phone.

“We just got the truck we're on our



way to you right now” she says.

“Alright thank you” I say..

I look at my packed bags and sigh walking out.

I make my way to the kitchen and find everyone having breakfast.

I grab a chair and clear my throat.

“Lethu is on her way with a truck to pick up my stuff,I am moving out” I say.

“So you’ve made up your mind” my mother says.

“Yes” I say.

I look at my father and he couldn’t be



bothered.

“For now I think it’s best I leave” I say.

“Zabe you can’t leave uKwazi waphuma ngoshado ekhaya kanjalo nawe” (Kwazi left through marriage and so will you) she says.

“I know Ma but I can’t stay here not when Baba constantly rejects my every effort” I say.

“If you leave this house don’t come back” Baba says.

“Mphemba” my mother says.

“Baba the doctor said I am stressed and that’s not good for my baby” I say.



“Ubuthunywe ubani ukumithe” (Who told you to get pregnant) he says.

“Mphemba yingane uZabelo bayawenza amaphutha mxolele” (Mphemba she’s a child and they make mistakes) mama says.

He pulls his chair out and stands up.

“I have said my peace Nontobeko” he says walking away.

Snqumo looks at me and shakes his head.

I stand up and look at my mother.

“You can come visit me any day mama, I love you and I am sorry for disappointing you and causing so



much havoc” I say.

She stands up and pulls me into her arms.

“I love you sisi” she says.

“I love you too mama” I say.

I pull away and look at Snqumo before walking back to my bedroom,there’s really nothing to say to him.

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We’re sitting on the floor eating white bread,slap chips and some Russians.



Lethu burps and passes me the bottle of coke.

“You are one dramatic person” Cebo says.

“Says someone wearing combat boots we’re not at war” Lethu says.

“And we’re not at a fashion parade” Cebo says.

Lethu out of the blue decided to wear a huge hat and sunglasses.

“I can’t believe you finally have your own place” Lethu says.

I look around and smile at some point I was going to move out it’s a shame it had to be this way.



“So have you spoken to Dedani” Cebo asks.

“The last time we spoke he was still in the hospital” I say.

“That’s basically a no” she says.

“If he did that to me going days without speaking to me, trust me he would be single as we speak” Lethu says.

A knock comes through and Lethu stands up to get the door.

“You” Lethu says.

She moves out of the way letting Ntsika in.



“Ladies” he says.

Cebo turns her head and looks at me.

“I thought you had back to back meetings” I say.

“I did but I figured you guys might be hungry and decided to get some food” he says.

“Sidlile” (We are) Lethu says.

I give her the eye but she folds her arms.

“Dude we told you that Zabe is taken”
Cebo says.

“Listen we don’t want to sound rude or anything but we’re kinda busy”



Lethu says.

“Guys come on” I say.

“You don’t like me do you” Ntsika says.

“No” Lethu says.

He smiles and looks at me.

“Luckily I am not here for you guys but MaGodide” he says.

He looks at the time and places the food on the counter.

“MaGodide” he says slightly nodding his head and walking out.

“Bye Ntsika” I say.

Lethu slams the door behind him and



clicks her tongue.

“Esho noMaGodide uphashile” she says.

I laugh throwing my head back.

“Angimfuni lowa bhuti futhi nje angimphiwanga” (I don’t want him,I don’t like him)she says.

“Engathi lesisu sizokufebisa” (It seems like this pregnancy will make you like men) Cebo says standing up.

She walks over to the counter and looks inside the two paper bags Ntsika brought.

“Atleast he brought your favourite wings” she says.



“Mxm amawings okunuka engathi lengane ingawahlanza” (Stupid wings I hope the child throw them up) Lethu says.

“Guys I am not dating Ntsika and I am not planning to” I say.

“Then tell him to stay away” Cebo says.

“Yazi ibhadi la Dedani leli naba oZabe bezofebela ama wings” Lethu says.

I laugh out loud because she’s seriously worked up.

“Since when are you team Dedani” I ask.

“Since when have I never been” Lethu



asks.

I look at Cebo and she shrugs.

“I just don’t like Majazane” she says.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 029

NHLAKANIPHO

He looks at Zabelo’s photo and wipes his tears,he’s one of those fathers that don’t want to part with his daughters. If it were up to him Kwazi wouldn’t be married and living off



with her husband.

No father wants to see their child throw their life away, because to him that's what Zabelo is doing.

Not only will this boy break her heart but he will get her killed.

He heavily breathes the doctor told him to stop stressing.

But how when a call might come in telling him to come identify his daughter's body.

The bedroom door opens and Nontobeko walks in.

She walks over to the bed and sits next to him.



“Am I wrong Ntobe for wanting what’s best for her” he asks.

“No, but you’re going about it the wrong way” she says.

“She refuses to leave this boy because she’s in love with him, the more you fight her the more you push her into his arms” she says.

“She’s young and in love and we both know how that feels, but we need to provide a safe space for when she falls. We are her parents but she’s her own person, whatever happens Mphemba she’s going to need us. When that child arrives she’s going



go need me and I am going to be there” she says.

“I am not saying give him a chance but you yourself said he convinced his brother to help you breathe. They could have let you die Mphemba but they didn’t please think about that” she says.

He sighs and leans closer kissing her.

“I am lucky to have you Ntobe” he says.

“Do you want some sugar” she asks.

He smiles and nods his head.

“But can you please call Magcina first I just want to hear her voice” he says.



Nontobeko reaches for her phone and calls Zabelo.

“Hi, Ma” she says.

“Hello sisi how are you” Nontobeko asks.

“I am good Ma I just miss you guys” she says softly.

“We miss you too, how’s the new place and how are you settling in” she asks.

“The place is beautiful Ma but it’s too quiet for me, I really miss Baba and Aza” she says.

“They miss you too and I promised Aza that I would bring her by” she



says.

“Before I forget how’s the baby”

Nontobeko asks.

“I think we’re good I am seeing the doctor next week” she says.

“How’s baba doing” Zabe asks.

Nontobeko looks at him and smiles.

“Your father is doing good sisi”

Nontobeko says.

“Ma I have to go someone’s at the door” Zabelo says ending the call.

Nontobeko looks at him tilting her head.

“Make things right with the child



Mphemba” she says.

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DEDANI

Bandla zips his bag and looks at him.

“Is there something you want to say Bandla” he asks.

“Where’s MaGodide” he asks.

Everyone’s been asking him about MaGodide.

“What do you want to do with MaGidide, is she your woman” Dedani



asks.

“I am just asking because I haven’t seen her in a while” Bandla says.

“Phuma kuMaGodide” he says.

“I hope you say that even when you find her in the arms of another man” Bandla says.

Dedani looks at him and frowns anyone but Zabe

“Zabelo wouldn’t do that” he says.

“Women are emotional beings and right now she’s vulnerable and needy, some smooth talker will come and sweep her off her feet and raise your child for you” Bandla says.



He doesn't like not one bit.

The door opens and the doctor walks in followed by two police officers.

“Goodday sir these two officers are here on official business” the doctor says.

“Officers what can I do for you”
Dedani asks.

“The hospital as per requirement notified us of your incident,we would like to ask you details of the night in question and take your statement”
one officer says.

He looks at Bandla and chuckles.

“As you can see I am on my way



home and there's nothing to tell" He says.

"Sir if a crime has been committed we need to know" The other officer says.

"Anikahleni bomantshingelani angibizanga muntu khulumani nalo onibizile" (Please officers I didn't call anyone talk to the person who called you here) he says.

"Sir like I said the hospital called us" The officer says.

"Nazoke khulumani nesibhedlela senu" (There you have it talk to your hospital) he takes his phone and



walks out with Bandla following behind.

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ZABELO

I look at the pots and sigh cooking for yourself isn't fun.

I will definitely miss the compliments and complaints from everyone.

Going to work and coming home to an empty house is truly depressing.

It will take some getting used too it



but I will get there eventually.

A call from security comes through asking me about a guest.

I tell them to let him through.

A few minutes later a knock comes through and Ntsika walks in with a bunch of flowers, chocolates and a bottle of wine.

“I am sorry for dropping by this late but I brought a housewarming gift” he says.

“I have a man Ntsika and he’s not friendly” I tell him

“I know and I am not trying to take his place or ruin things for you



guys,we're friends Zabe and that's it"
he says.

I laugh because he took the words
right out of my mouth.

He's tall and a shade lighter than
Dedani.

He's handsome but his eyes are
ordinary nothing like my Mapholoba.

"Zabelo" he says.

"Oh sorry what was that" I say.

"I said it smells amazing" he says.

"Why don't you join me for dinner
Lethu and Cebo have plans" I say.

"I would love to join you for dinner" he



says.

He's one of those kind strangers slowly turning into a friend.

He joins me in the kitchen as I plate up and pours himself and I a glass.

"I can't drink I am detoxing" I say.

He laughs and grabs another glass pouring me juice.

Another knock comes through and I shake my head.

"I will get it" he says.

"It must be one of the neighbours" I say.

I've had two already come introduce



them themselves.

“And then” I drop the spoon on the floor and turn around locking eyes with Dedani.

He walks in followed by Bandla.

“MaGodide” he says.

I squeeze my thighs as it feels like I am about to pee on myself.

What kind of security just lets in a stranger.

“Mapholoba” I say.

“Ngitheni kuwe buka itafula lababili kuphekwe ngisho iy’biliboco” (What did I say look table for two,there’s



even delicious food) Bandla says.

I clear my throat before Bandla makes matters worse.

“Mapholoba this is Ntsika a friend, Ntsika this is Dedani my boyfriend” I say.

Ntsika extends his hand for a handshake but Dedani looks at me instead.

He looks ready to murder someone something I haven't seen before.

“Asimshaye bafo khona ezoyeka ukuhamba evakashela abafazi babantu” (Lets beat him up so he can stop visiting other people's wives)



Bandla.

“Bandla” I say.

“I think I should go” Ntsika says.

Bandla grabs the flowers and the box of chocolate.

“Mina lezinto zakho ey’shibhile” (Take your cheap things) Bandla says.

Ntsika forces a smiles and takes his things walking out.

Dedani walks over and groans picking up the spoon.

“Usuya hoster manje wena MaGodide huh” (You’re hosting now) he says.

I look at Bandla and he’s eating the



plate that was meant for Ntsika.

“Ngikwenzeni ngempela MaGodide usungaze ungijolele” (What have I done to you MaGodide to cheat on me) he says softly.

My mouth drops why is this man being dramatic.

Bandla bursts into a fit of laughter looking at us.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 030

ZABELO



I look at him then Bandla there's no way we can talk in front of this one.

“Ngicela siyokhuluma ngasese” (Can we speak privately) I say.

“Weh mjolo uyabanyisa wemjolo weh, Mjolo uyabanyisa” Bandla sings.

Lord give me strength, I close my eyes and say a short prayer praying for my child not to take after this one.

We get to my bedroom and I close the door.

I walk over to the bed and sit so much needs to be said.



He decides to stand by the door and look at me.

“Firstly nothing happened between me and that guy,secondly I don’t appreciate you coming to my place unannounced,thirdly I am not cheating on you Dedani” I say.

“Then what was he doing here late at night” he asks.

“He was dropping off that wine your brother is busy drinking” I say.

“I don’t like him and I don’t want him back here” he says.

“Okay” I say.

He looks at me at in way I that send



fear inside to me.

“Angikinqeni mina ijele Zabe” (I am not afraid of prison) he says

Of course he’s not that place was his home for years.

I remain quiet and he moves from the door and comes to sit next to me.

I am angry at him for thinking it’s okay to come here unannounced and threaten peoples after not speaking to me for a whole week.

He reaches for my hand and circles his finger on my palm calming me down.

“How did you know about this place” I



ask.

“I called Lethu but she wouldn’t tell me anything,so I contacted Cebo she’s the one who told me” he says.

I chuckle yeap I have snitches for friends.

“I messed up didn’t I” he says.

Tears fill my eyes and I nod yeah he did mess up.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam” he says.

“Ungixoshile Mapholoba when I needed you” I tell him.

“I know and I am sorry,I should have done things differently but I didn’t. I



am sorry that I got you pregnant and for telling your father about the baby before you could. I am sorry MaGodide for being selfish and for not taking your feelings into consideration. And I apologise for neglecting you and the baby, that's not what a responsible father or boyfriend does" he says.

"Since we are apologise nami ngiyaxolisa for denying you, I was scared of my father's reaction upon seeing my brother's. And even now with the shooting and everything I am scared for you" I say.

"The shooting was an accident your



father didn't mean to do it" he says.
Relief washes over me hearing him
back up my father's story puts me at
ease.

"We won't always get things right
MaGodide,kodwa othandweni
siyakhulisana and I love you
MaGodide" he says.

"I love you too Fuze" I say.

He smiles and looks down.

"I am not really a difficult man mina
MaGodide all I need is your love and
respect" he says.

I look into his eyes and smile it's
pointless staying mad at this man,



I lean close and kiss him.

“I missed you” he says.

“I missed you more” I say.

Both are clothes are on the floor and my legs are spread wide open hanging over his arms.

He’s slowly penetrating me his d*ck fully thrusting in and out.

I move my waist up meeting his every stroke and thrust.

Kwazi said I shouldn’t sleep like a corpse and move my body.

His dick fills me and he gently moves



his waist side ways.

He shouldn't be straining himself like this but here he is pulling it off.

He pulls out and puts it back in.

He stares before kissing me passionately matching his hunger and desire.

He pulls out and I ask him to just lay back and relax.

I sit ontop of him with my hands on his chest and lift my butt up,I grab his hard cock and slide my arse down.

He gasp and grabs my boobs,I start moving my waist watching at his mouth slightly hangs open with his



tongue stuck out a bit.

I move up and down and he groans shutting his eyes.

I tuck my feet under his legs and move my waist spelling the word coconut like Lethu taught me.

I move my waist up and down slowly going hard on him feeling his cock in places I shouldn't.

“Yima Zabe” (Wait Zabe) he says.

He looks ready to burst his eyes are red and have shrunk.

I shake my arse ontop of him and he cries out biting his lower lip.



“Noma yini MaGodide shono nje wena kuzoba ngokwakho” (Whatever it is name it and it will be yours) he says.

I raise my butt and pull out his cock, I hold it tight and rub it against my wet hole before pushing myself down on him.

“Sthandwa sami yima” (My love wait) he says tightly holding my waist.

I move his hands and work my waist.

“Awu ungabathatha bonke nkosi kodwa hayi uMaGodide” (You can take them all Lord but not MaGodide) he says crying out.



I gently lay ontop of him and fuck him real good.

He wraps his arms around me and meets my strokes before groaning and crying out in pleasure.

“Wamnandi MaGodide ngabe wenzangani” he says catching his breath.

He’s the first to leave the bedroom and a few minutes after I follow him,I get to the kitchen and plate up for him noticing that the bottle of wine is empty.

“Where’s your brother” I ask.



“He went out for a smoke” he says.

He looks at me and smiles standing up.

He walks over to my side and stands behind me wrapping his arms around my waist.

Nothing feels safe life being in the arms of this man.

He kisses my neck and buries his head on my neck.

“I really missed you” he says.

The door opens and Bandla walks in.

He looks at us disapprovingly and closes the door.



“Cha niyabukisa seningaze nenze imikhuba ngikhona endlini cha aningizweli shame” (So you really would have sex knowing I am in the house, you guys don’t consider my feelings) Bandla says.

I look to the side while Dedani laughs.

“Yey bafo uyaklewula man bakwenza kamnandi huh” (MaGodide must doing you nice the way you cry out) he continues.

“Bandla do you want someone food” I ask changing the topic.

He heavily sighs and sits down.

“Yebo” he says.



I quickly dish up for the both of them and give them their food.

Their faces light up with the first bite.

“Kunjani” (How is it) I ask.

Dedani takes another bite ignoring me.

“Sengiyadla nje ngoba phela inyama ayitshalwa kodwa angiyithandandi lento eningenze yona” (I am only eating because meat is not grown from a garden, but I don't like what you did) he says carrying on eating.

I look at Dedani enjoy his food and smile I missed this guy.



.....

Mama dropped Aza off and said she needs time alone with her husband, I can only imagine the things they will get up to.

Ntsika dropped by giving me a chance to apologize for what happened last night.

“So that’s the boyfriend” he says.

“Yes and I did warn you that he’s not friendly” I say.

“You did” he says.

“Another thing I don’t want to sound



rude or anything but you can't drop by without calling first, and no more gifts please Bandla said he'll cut your throat if you got me any more gifts." I say.

He shakes his head in disbelief.

"I thought we were building a friendship a platonic one at that" he says.

"I know but every relationship has boundaries please respect mine" I say.

"I completely understand" he says.

Aza comes out of the bedroom and looks at me then Ntsika.



“Come say hello to uncle” I say.

She drags her feet confused and walks over.

“Uyangazi mina malume” (Do you know me uncle) Aza asks.

“No” Ntsika says.

She then looks at me and shrugs.

“Akuyena umalume lona” (This is not uncle) she says softly.

I laugh and shake my head.

“Aza this is my friend uncle Ntsika” I say.

She nods her head and looks at Ntsika greeting him.



She walks back to the couch and I walk Ntsika out.

I come back inside the house and find her on her feet waiting for me.

“MaG” she says.

“Yebo” I say.

“Umshonisephi umalume wethu”
(Where is our uncle) she asks.

“Ukhona and he’s coming later with your cupcakes” I tell her.

“Mhmm okusho ukuthi ngizokuceba ukuthi onomunye uMalume” (Okay then I guess I can tell on you that you have another uncle) she says going back to watching her show.



I look at her shocked by her statement. I swear if anything Dedani's ancestors are working overtime.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 031

OKUHLE

Her mother joins her in the kitchen and sits down.

Okuhle closes the pots and puts on the kettle to make her some tea.



Her mother heavily sighs ever since Avethandwa died she's never been the same.

Sometimes she cries and sometimes she's just angry,angry at herself for allowing Ave to get involved with Dedani and angry at Dedani for getting her killed.

“What did the police say” she asks.

“The same thing they told me months ago,he's out on good behavior” her mother says.

“But Mama we all know that he wasn't arrested for killing Ave nor was he responsible” Okuhle says.



“I don’t care all I know is that your sister died because of that man,my grandson died because of that man. To me it’s all the same he killed them and I want him back in that hell hole” her mother says.

Okuhle heavily sighs it’s this vendetta that will destroy her mother.

“Mama Dedani has been kind to us” she says softly.

“Kind! Oh please he’s just trying to clear his conscience” her mother says.

Okuhle shakes her head nothing she ever says gets heard.



“How far are you with getting close to him” her mother asks.

“Not far he doesn’t like me in that way and I am glad” she lies.

She likes him but the man was her sister’s fiancé and having these feeling for him feels like betraying her sister.

“Try harder Okuhle if not for me then for your sister” her mother says.

“Mama” Okuhle says softly.

She hates how his mother always uses her dead sister to get her way.

“Ave was my baby she was your sister surely that should count for



something,all we need is something to set the police on him” her mother says.

“The Ave you’re talking about loved Dedani and I am sure she wouldn’t want this” Okuhle says.

Her mother wipes her tears and sighs.

It’s always the tears and some how they always get to her.

It’s been five years but still she won’t allow herself to heal.

It’s been months since Dedani got out of prison and she won’t let him be.

“Ngiyakucela Okuhle I am not saying sleep with him just entice him and



find anything that will help us put him back in prison” her mother says.

She swallows hard the thought of hurting Dedani doesn't sit well with her.

“Will you do it my baby” her mother asks..

Okuhle slowly nods her head and grabs her phone.

She types Dedani a text and presses send.

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ZABELO

It's a Saturday and I am hosting my favourite people in the world.

It's been a rough couple of weeks but I am surviving and that's the only important thing.

I am happy and even though the situation with my father tends to dampen things at times, but I am happy.

Well Dedani has made it his life mission to make me happy.

The guy has practically moved in and I am over the moon.



After Azamahle outed me he decided to sleep over every night.

In his words “Ngivikela ingane yami” (I am protecting my child) as if I would do anything to harm the baby or with Ntsika.

“The last I checked Cebo has a vagina” Lethu says.

Kwazi laughs shaking her head.

I laugh too Lethu’s had one to many glasses of wine.

I look at the guys and Cebo is in her element.

Banzi seems to be embracing her in ways I didn’t think he would do.



“Cha kodwa lihle leli ibhantiti lakho”
(Your jail bird is handsome) Kwazi
says.

I look back to the guys and smile.

God sure took his time and an extra
day creating Dedani.

“He’s not a jailbird” I say.

“Whatever he’s handsome” Kwazi
whispers.

I look at the guys once more and find
Dedani looking.

“I think I will join my man” I say.

I leave my cup in the sink and walk
over to the guys.



Dedani makes spaces and I sit on his lap,he grabs the fleece blanket and covers me up.

“Bahlupha kabi abantu abajolayo belokhu begonana into engapheli” (That’s the problem with couples they alway cuddle) Bandla says.

“Ukahle sthandwa sam” (Are you okay my love) he asks.

I nod my head and nestle on his chest.

He kisses my forehead and holds me tight.

“Buka usephenduke ismumu uZabe” (Look Zabe has turned mute) Cebo says laughing.



Bandla joins in and laughs too.

These two are fast becoming best friends.

“Ungabanaki sthandwa sam” (Don’t mind them my love) Dedani says.

Kwazi and Lethu join us, Kwazi sits on the rug next to the heater while Lethu sits next to Bandla.

“Leave my sister alone you two” Kwazi says.

I am grateful that she’s making efforts to get to know Dedani.

She told him off the first day I properly introduced them.



His phone pings off and I hand it to him.

He violently coughs and quickly gives Cebo his beer.

“What’s wrong” I ask.

“Nothing” he says putting his phone face down on the side table.

I look at the phone then him.

“Please borrow me your phone Mapholoba” I say.

He clears his throat and gives me a nervous smile.

I try reaching for the phone but he grabs it first.



“Yini manje” (What now) Bandla says.

“Dedani” I say.

“Zabe calm down” Kwazi says.

I realise I am getting worked up.

“Bafo just give her the phone” Bandla says.

I am already on my feet as he hands me the phone.

I page through it and find a WhatsApp text from Okuhle.

I open the chat and see a picture of her in a sexy lingerie.

I scroll up and this man has been send her money.



“Yini le” (What is this) I ask.

“Nami angazi MaGodide” (I also don’t know) he says.

“Wothi sibuke nathi” (Let us see)
Bandla says.

I pass him the phone and he passes it around to everyone.

Bandla whistles shaking his head.

“Uyahishwa kanti uhishwa ubufebe”
(You’re chocking because of you’re whoring ways) I say.

“You asked me to distance myself from Ntsika but here you are receiving nudes” I say.



“I think this is our cue to leave” Lethu says.

“And leave Zabe to kill Dedani” Kwazi says.

“On second thoughts were staying” Lethu says.

“She’s seeing red” Cebo says.

I grab the pillow and throw at him.

“Nudes Dedani and you’re sending her money too” I say.

“Are you sleeping with this girl because that’s the only reason she would send you her naked self” I say.

“Sthandwa sam I am not sleeping



with Okuhle” he says.

“Then why is she sending you naked pictures” I ask.

“Zabelo” Kwazi says scolding me.

I turn and look at her.

“Uyangijolela uDedani” (He’s cheating on me) I say.

I fail to hold it in and burst into tears.

“MaGodide please” He says.

“I think we should leave asambe Cebo” Bandla says.

“Nim’saphi uCebo ngoba phela umngani wethu” (Where are you taking Cebo because she’s our friend)



Lethu says.

I look at Dedani and he's just staring at me.

I grab the fleece blanket and throw it at him

“Basangana kakhulu masebemithi asambeni engakasikabhi sonke)”
(They act more crazy when they are pregnant,let's leave before she hits us all) Bandla says.

“I am not leaving before MaGodide hears me out” Dedani says.

He takes his phone and calls Okuhle.

The phone rings and she picks it up.



“Okuhle yini lento ongithumela yona, angukutshelanga yini ukuthi nginomuntu” (Okuhle what is this you’re sending me, didn’t I tell you that I am taken) he says.

“She’s there isn’t she that’s why you’re saying this” She says.

My knees almost give up that statement alone puts doubt in my head.

“Okuhle” Dedani says in a stern voice.

She remains silent and cuts the call.

“Amen” Lethu says clapping her hands.

“Let’s go Mapholoba” Cebo says.



He turns and walks out with Bandla following them.

“Hawu yaze yawuchitha umuzi ka Sihayo lengane enemicondo kaThekwane” Bandla says closing the door behind him.

I shake my head Dedani has a death wish this man clearly doesn't know me.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 032

ZABELO



I thought by now I would've come down but I am still taken aback by last night, I am anything but okay.

Kwazi left last night Mdu picked her up and Lethu stayed behind.

We haven't seen or heard from from Cebo but I know she's in good hands with Bandla.

"Zabe" Lethu shouts.

I realise the stove is too high and the eggs got burnt.

I move the pan and look at her, I feel horrible and the only thing I can do is cry.



“Lethu I am carrying his child he can’t do this to me” I say.

She pulls me into her arms and sighs.

“I love him and I don’t want lose him” I say.

“You won’t lose him because he’s not cheating on you” she says.

I shake my head I have heard one too many stories about men leaving their pregnant girlfriends.

“Then why else would that girl send him nudes” I ask.

“I don’t know but that man loves you and I doubt he would jeopardise your relationship for anything” she says.



She's saying all the right things but that picture says a thousand words.

A knock comes through and Cebo walks in followed by Bandla.

I look behind them and Dedani is not here.

“We left him home” Cebo says.

“Lethu ngikuthembe kangaka usungaze ushise amaqanda pho” (My whole trust in you and you burn the eggs) Bandla says.

“Bandla phuma kimi” (Bandla leave me alone) Lethu says.

“Zabe can we talk” Cebo says.



“Okay” I say.

She leads the way to the balcony and I follow.

“How are you feeling” she asks.

“My emotions are all over the place” I admit,

“I understand but I want us to talk about yesterday and how you reacted, I am not saying you were wrong but you could have handled things a lot better. You could have handled things without us being in the room” she says.

“I know and I am sorry” I say.

Kwazi gave me a lecture before



leaving,I guess I really can't guess control my feelings or reactions.

“I am not the one you should be apologising too,your man looked like a Zombie on our way to Bandla's place. At first I will admit I didn't think he was good enough but the guy loves you and he swore that nothing is happening between him and that girl” she says.

“If anything during this time you shouldn't be stressing or worrying about anything,it's not good for you or the baby” she says placing her hand on my belly.



“Bandla” she calls out.

Bandla walks over holding a cup.

“Leyangane ayithandani no Dedani inamanga” (That girl isn’t dating Dedani she’s lying) Bandla says.

“What’s to say you two aren’t lying for him” I say.

“Really Zabe” Cebo says.

I look at her suspiciously she’s suddenly for the boys and has forgotten about us.

“Pregnancy brain apparently it’s real” Lethu says.

“Ngiyezwa kuthiwa inqondo iyancipha



niphenduka olamthuthu inkukhu yomshini” (I hear the brain slows down and you turn into battery hens) He says.

That’s an insult but knowing Bandla he doesn’t care.

“Mina bengithi asimfune untombazane lona sithi ukuxoxa naye” (I was saying let’s find the girl and have a talk with her) Lethu says.

“I totally agree” Bandla says.

“Vele uzovumelana naye angithi ningophuma silwe” (Of course you’d agree isn’t you’re both hooligans) I say.



They erupt into laughter and I shake my head walking away from them.

I am starting to think introducing Bandla to these two was a bad idea.

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DEDANI

He's sitting across Okuhle failing to understand what drove her to send those pictures.

He wonders if he's ever given her the impression that he wants her.



“I am sorry” she says.

“Why” he asks.

“It’s not like I led you on or made a move on you,so why would you send me those pictures. What are you trying to do or gain from doing all this” he asks.

“Because I like you Dedani” she says.

“I was engaged to your sister Okuhle you can’t like me” he says.

“Well I do and I can’t help it Ngcobo” she says softly.

He lets out a frustrated sigh and chuckles.



He wasn't born yesterday he knows she's lying but he doesn't know why.

"I am sorry but I don't have any feelings for you and I never will, I love only one woman and that is Zabelo the woman I plan to marry and spend the rest of my living days with" he says.

"Here's what's going to happen, you and I are done no more money and no more favours. I was helping because of Ave but she's gone and she's never coming back meaning I have no ties to your family. Whatever you're trying to do stop it angiyona intanga yakho mina Okuhle" she



swallows as he stands up and takes out a few notes from his wallet.

He drops them on the table and looks at her.

“Tell your mother to stop going to police and asking about me,I am a really nice person Okuhle and I would hate to have to hurt anyone of you” he says walking out.

He reaches the door and receives a text from Zabelo and hurries to his car.

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ZABELO

I look at Bandla,Cebo and Lethu eat,my stomach is in knots and I can't put anything down at the moment.

They are gobbling up food like savages and I am glad Aza is sleeping.

Mama dropped her off and mentioned something about a meeting between Nkanyiso's parents and them.

I guess Nkanyiso finally decided to involve his parents on the matter.

As if that will change anything clearly



Nkanyiso doesn't know my father.

The door opens and Dedani walks in, I get on my feet and our eyes instantly meet.

He looks at the three musketeers then me, he's confused but he still walks over to me.

He places his hand on my belly.

"Why aren't you at the hospital" he asks.

"Because the baby and I are fine" I say.

I sent him a text letting me him know something didn't feel right.



He sighs in relief and kisses my forehead.

His lips are warm and in his arm I feel the safest.

“I swear I’ve never slept with her and there’s nothing going on between the two of us” he says.

I pull him to the balcony and close the sliding door.

This man has been nothing but calm since the beginning of relationship, and that I have calmed down I believe him.

He deserves all the love and respect I can give.

“I was helping them with the money



because I felt guilty, but I am cutting ties with them and I've already told Okuhle" he says.

I want to ask about the guilt but that could drag.

"I am sorry Mapholoba for lashing out like that in front of our friends" I say.

He frowns clearly he wasn't expecting this.

"I am sorry that I allowed my emotions to get the better of me, I am sorry that I disrespected you and put our business out there for all to witness. I hate fighting with you Mapholoba, all I want is to be happy



with you and no one less. The thought of losing you to someone else scared me and it scares me even now but that doesn't excuse my behaviour and I am sorry" I say.

He smiles and holds my hands.

"You are sorry" he says.

I nod my head smiling.

"You shouldn't be sorry MaGodide in fact I would have been offended if you didn't go crazy like you did last night" he says with a huge smile on his face.

If this man isn't crazy then I don't know.



He sighs and clears his throat.

“I don’t know what to do or say to show you that I only love you, that you’re the only woman for me.

Whatever voices you’re hearing in your big beautiful head about losing me don’t listen to them” he says wiping my tears.

“Alingabi likhulu mahala ikhanda MaGodide alisebenze” (Don’t let this head be big for nothing it much function) he says.

I laugh and he smiles beautifully.

“I love how gentle and kind you are with me Mapholoba” I say.



He gently pulls me close and holds me tight.

“I love you and I am not going anywhere, you keep saving me MaGodide” he whispers.

He kisses me and grabs my arse.

“You and the baby are the two most important people in my life and I would never ruin this for anything” he says.

The sliding door opens and we both pull away.

Aza runs to Dedani and he lifts her up.

“Sawubona Malume” she says happily.



“Sawubona Azamahle” Dedani says.

He puts her down and she walks over to Bandla.

“We’re dropping Lethu off at her place and we’re taking Aza with” He says.

He closes the sliding door and Dedani hooks his arms around me.

“Seems like we have the house to ourselves” he says.

He kisses me and rests his forehead on mine.

“I love you Fuze” I tell him.

He smiles and I smile too realising



this man is good for me.

My legs are rested on his lap and he's feeding me cut up fruits.

"When is your family coming to mine with regards to the pregnancy" he asks.

"I don't know but I will let you know as soon as my mother tells me" I say.

He looks at me as I chew and puts the bowl down.

"How are things with your father" he asks playing with my fingers.

"Still the same but my mother says



he's doing fine" I tell him.

"I promise I will make things right with your father" he says.

I know he will and I hope my father meets him half way.

He moves closer and gets in between my legs.

"You're beautiful" he says kissing me.

I hold the back of his head and open my legs wide giving him space.

"Move in with me Zabelo" he says in between the kiss.

The door opens and he quickly gets off.



I close my legs and sit up straight the man just asked me to move in with him.

He takes the pillow and places it over his boner.

Bandla walks in followed by Cebo who is holding Azamahle.

I need to have a serious talk with the guys at the gate.

“We got you something to eat” Cebo says.

Aza runs to the couch and sits between Dedani and I.

“Benginikhumbule yazi” (I missed you) she says.



“We missed you too” I say.

She happily looks at Dedani and puts her hands under her chin.

“Weh Malume yini iy’febe” (Uncle what are whor*s) Aza asks.

Dedani coughs and the house goes quiet.

He angrily looks at Cebo and Bandla.

“Where did you hear that word from” Dedani asks.

“Ngizwe ngoLume ethi uzothengele uNcane ngoba ziyadayiswa futhi zimnandi, MaG ngisacela ningithengele nami” (I heard Uncle Bandla say he’s going to buy them for



Aunt Cebo because they are delicious, MaG can you please buy them for me too) She says.

“Awu ngeke lethani usawoti nopelepele” (Oh hell no bring the salt and chilli) Bandla says.

Cebo laughs.

“Ngeke Cebo mina ngithi ayifakwe upelepele khona sizobona ukuthi yingane ngempela yini leh” (No ways Cebo I say let’s put some salt and chill so we can see if she’s really a child) he says.

I almost laugh but hold myself.

“Khuzeka Bandla” Dedani says.



He turns and looks at Aza.

“No one is buying anything and Aza that word is a bad word don’t ever says it again” He looks at Bandla and Cebo.

“Makhulu mahala amakhanda intambo afiyiki ku paraffin” (Useless big heads that don’t work) He says shaking his head.

“Nizongithengela yini” (Are you going to buy them for me) Aza asks.

Dedani shuts his eyes.

“Awu kodwa lengane” (This child) Bandla says defeated.

I hold in my laugh looking at



Azamahle and an annoyed Dedani.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 033

ZABELO

He's clinging on to me gently
brushing my belly,he had a nightmare
another one.

He cries in his sleep asking his
mother to stop.

His tears wet my shoulder and he
wipes them off.



I place my hand over his and swallow hard,there's nothing painful like carrying someone you love emotionally. You hurt when they hurt and you are the happiest when they are.

“Tell me about it” I say.

“It's about my mother” he says softly.

“What about her” I ask.

“She was beautiful,kind and loving.

She always had a smile on her

face,she never left my side or

Bandla's we were everything to her.

And now that I am older I realise that

some of the things she did,she had



no control over them” he says.

“What things” I ask.

“She was sick and one day when it was just the two of us,she had one of her many episodes. I remember she closed all the windows and locked all the door because the monsters wanted to get to us” he says softly.

I realise his drifted off and is now telling me about the day he got he scar.

I remain silent and allow him to speak.

“I called my father and he asked me to leave the house,he actually begged



me to run but I didn't she was my mother Zabe and I couldn't leave her in that state. But then suddenly everything happened fast I remember her grabbing the knife and holding me, I was scared but there was really nothing I could do. I should have run when my father told me too, she cut my throat that day and if my father hadn't gotten there in time I wouldn't have made" he says.

I move his hand and turn around facing him.

This hideous scar he has he got from his mother.



I don't know how he does it speak so softly about her.

"I am sorry" I say placing my hand on his face.

He takes my hand and kisses my palm.

"I miss her so much" he says.

"One moment she was there and the next she was gone,I came home Zabe and my mother was gone forever. She was supposed to wait for me so I could assure her that it wasn't her fault" I wipe his tears and blink mine away.

"What happened to her" I ask.



“She went to bed and didn’t wake up that’s what my father told us” he says.

I pull him into my arms and hold him close.

He tries pulling away but I hold him tight the same way he does me.

“It’s okay to be vulnerable Mapholoba you’re human, crying makes you human you’re not weak for showing your emotions” I say.

He lets go and eases into my arms.

“I love you so much” I whisper.

He silently breaks down and holds me back.



The little boy inside him misses his mother he can't bear it,he never got to say goodbye and that hurts like hell.

I realise I need to fix things with my father and brother,anything can happen and I don't want to have any regrets.

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I called Bandla and asked him to hold the fort then called in sick at work.

I then made the last call to my mother and asked to see Azamahle.

With Dedani not okay she's the one



person that can make my day.

She pokes my belly and laughs.

“Usuthi” (You are full) she says.

I laugh and shame head my belly is growing and so is the baby.

“Cha” (No) I say.

“Pho yini isisu sakho sibe sikhulu” (Then why is your belly this big) she asks laughing and poking me again.

“That’s because there’s a baby growing inside me” I say.

Her eyes widen and she covers her mouth.

“Uqinisile kunengane lah” (Are you



serious there's a baby in here) she says.

I nod my head smiling and she puts her ear against my belly.

She knocks and pulls away looking at me.

She laughs and shakes her head.

“Udlala ngami MaG” (You're playing wit me) she says.

“Ngqiqinisile Aza” (I am telling the truth) say.

“Uyazi uzoboshwa MaG ungayifaka kanjani ingane eswini” (You're going to be arrested how can you put a baby inside you) she says.



She pulls up my shirt and laughs.

“Asiyikhiphe phela” (let’s take it out) she says.

“We can’t take it out now the baby has to grow and be strong enough” I say.

She smiles and places her hand on my belly.

“Hello Ngane” she says playfully.

A knock comes through and I stand up to get the door.

I open it and Bandla walks in luckily his bestie Cebo is working.

I have long given up on the security



guys on letting Bandla and his brother in.

One of the guys told me that the Mapholoba brothers are good people, that was after Bandla gave them a bottle.

Who am to compete with a bottle of whiskey or was it brandy.

“Lume” Aza says.

He picks her and kisses her cheek.

“MaGodide” he says.

“Sawubona Bandla” I say.

He looks at the stove then back at me.



“Awuphekile” (You haven’t cooked)
he says.

One thing about Bandla he seems to forget that I am dating Dedani and not him.

“I was waiting for your brother to wake up and take us to the mall, but now that you’re here you can take us”
I say.

“How is he” he asks.

“He’s still asleep, I gave him something” I say.

He nods his head and puts Aza down.

“Can I see him” he asks.



I nod and he makes his way to the bedroom.

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He's been complaining about me not making up my mind,I want to cook something special for Dedani and I need the right ingredients.

I turn to the other side of the isle and my eyes land on Ntsika,I haven't seen him in a long time and he looks good.

He smiles and raises his hand,I raise mine and we both laugh.



“You’re pregnant” he says.

“Yes I am” I say.

“I guess you’ve been for a long time”
he says.

“I should have told you” I say.

“It’s okay it’s not like we were dating
or anything” he says.

I nod he’s right about that.

“You look beautiful by the way
pregnancy likes you” he says.

“Umthetho wakho wena awuzwa”
(Your problem is that you don’t listen)
We both look to the side and Bandla
makes his way to us with Aza sitting



inside the trolley.

She's chewing on gum and drinking water.

“Ufuna ngize ngikufake inhlamvu khona uzohlukana noZabelo” (You want me to shoot you so you can leave Zabelo alone) he says.

Ntsika just looks at him calmly.

“Bandla please not in-front of the child” I say.

He casually puts his hands over Azamahle's ears.

“Lalela ngeke uze ulinuke ela Bafo lekhekhe,uyangizwa ngithi eyabafo legqe hambo uyofuna eyakho” (You



will never taste Zabelo do you hear me,go look for your own p*ssy) he says.

I shut my eyes out of all the things he could have said he chose that one.

“It was good seeing you Zabelo”
Ntsika says walking away.

I turn my head and look at Bandla.

“Next time please learn to mind your own business,and don’t ever speak about me in that way” I say.

“Ngiyaxolisa” (I am sorry) he says.

“Thank you” I say.

“kodwa ngisasho wena umuntu



kabafo and I love you and I will protect you from vultures” (But I am still saying this you’re my brother’s woman and I love you) he says.

“Thank you Bandla” I say

This is probably the sweetest things he’s ever said him loving and protecting me that is.

He just scored himself a point in my books.

“Uyabona wena Zabe uyiyshebo zabhuti wam futhi uma bekushela fuze ngabe uyamemeza,ubatshele ukuthi inomnkikazi” (You see Zabe you’re my brother’s meal and if they



ask you, you're supposed to shout and tell them the p*ssy had a owner) says.

I roll my eyes minus one point he had to go and ruin it.

I look at him and he shrugs handing Aza a packet of chips.

“Uyawafuna uma chips MaG” (Do you want some chips MaG) Aza asks.

“Cha” (No) I say.

“Ingane iyawafuna mina” (The baby wants them here) she says.

I close my eyes and breathe out.

“Woosah” I say.

“Ey nami ngangiwushaya loshuni



wona uyasebenza” (I used to do that and it works) he says blissfully nodding his head.

“Yala ngami nkosi uze ingavumi ngami somandla” I say shaking my head.

I turn and walk away before I kill someone if only I had waited for Dedani to wake up.

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MR NGCOBO (VUMANI)



He heavily sighs rubbing his eyes,he's been here before and he never thought he would be back.

He wipes his sweaty palms off his knees and sighs once more.

The nightmare began and never stopped,it's that day over and over again.

"Maybe you should tell your sons the truth" His therapist says.

His eyes widen telling his boys the truth will result in him loosing them.

"Anything but that" he says.

His therapist looks her notes then back at him.



“Mr Ngcobo we’ve tried everything,my methods have helped but the true solution here is telling the truth” the therapist says.

“You’re supposed to fix me but you’re telling me this nonsense” he says.

The therapist smiles sympathetically

“You’re not broken and I am not a fixer” she says.

“Then what I am paying you for” he asks.

“To help you with your problem and what you’re going through,however it isn’t the trauma alone that haunts you. You’re battling your conscience



and that's why this won't go away. You're feeling guilty because you chose your sons over your wife and you honoured her wish in the process" The therapist says.

"I killed my wife" he says softly.

The pain surges through his whole body paralysing him.

He struggles to breath as tears fill his eyes.

"Breathe Mr Ngcobo just keep breathing" She says giving him a glass of water.

He looks straight into the therapists eyes and swallows.



He takes a sip and puts the glass away.

“I killed the only woman I’ve ever loved wholeheartedly” he says.

Tears fall and he covers his face.

“You had no choice” The therapist tells him.

He shakes his head he had choice and that was not to be weak to Nobuhle”s pleas.

“She was schizophrenic and her manic episodes had gotten worse and who knows what her next one would have been like. You saved both your sons and your wife,I am sorry



that you had to take such a hard and painful decision but sometimes life pushes us to do the unimaginable”
The therapist says.

He shuts his eyes remembering how she painfully cried and begged him not to take her back to the hospital.

She hated it with all her heart but at the same time she was finding it hard to live after hurting Dedani.

His wife was tired and not being herself and it hurt seeing her go through that.

He leans back on the couch and shakes his head.



“Where do I begging telling them what happened” he asks.

“From the beginning and then take it from there. Mr Ngcobo the first step to healing is to forgive yourself” The therapist says.

He doesn't say anything and remains silent,he can never forgive himself for what he did and he knows his boys won't forgive him.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 034



DEDANI

He asked for a meeting with Zabelo's father, he wants to fix things between the two of them before his family meets him.

He understands the man's frustrations and concerns but he loves Zabe and there's really nothing the man can do about it.

He clears his throat and brings his hands together as a sign of respect and bring nervous.

"Bab'Ntuli I am not trying to disrespect you if anything I am here



to plead my case” he says.

Mphemba looks at him without any emotions whatsoever.

“Then why am I here Dedani”

Mphemba asks.

“Because you and I got off on the wrong foot,our past playing a huge role in the matter. I never once said I am perfect or holy but you wouldn’t know that because you never gave me a chance. I would like to apologise for kidnapping your daughter and forcing your hand,and I apologise for ever disrespecting you and your family” he says.



“And what about Zabe can you honestly tell me that you never planned any of this, can you truthfully tell me that you love my daughter and that you bare no certain resentment or hatred towards her because of me” Mphemba asks.

The conversation he once had with his father comes to mind.

Not once has he ever had any evil thoughts about Zabe and surprisingly neither about this man.

“All I ever wanted was to forget about you and move on, I didn’t wake up one day and wish to bump into your



daughter. But I did and it's been the best thing to ever happen to me. I love your daughter baba and I am not sorry for loving her, the only thing I am sorry for is not doing things the right way. I am sorry for getting between you and your daughter and causing a drift in your relationship" he says.

"She hasn't been okay since she left her home without your blessing and I want to make all that right" he says.

He clears his throat and nervously takes a sip of his water.

"Empeleni baba bengingathanda ukuthumela omalume,ngemvumo



yakho bengicela ukwenza ingane
yakho umakoti wase Mapholobeni”
(In all honesty I would like to send me
uncles,with your permission I would
like to take your daughters hand in
marriage) he says.

Mphemba violently coughs as if his
drink went down the wrong tube.

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ZABELO

“Someone’s here to see you” Lethu



says.

“It’s not lunch time yet” I say.

“Come on Zabe you’ve been working all morning” she says.

I let out a sigh and put on my shoes.

I am starting to think Aza has always been right me being lazy.

The pregnancy is starting to get to me, I find it hard to wake up and come to work.

I pass Sam by reception and follow Lethu to the outside.

My lips spread into a smile when I see Dedani holding pink balloons and



flowers,Lethu picks up the gift box and smiles looking my way.

I wipe tears from the corners of my eyes walking over to him.

He pulls me into his arms and holds me tight.

“Sawubona MaGodide” he says softly.

I pull away and kiss him.

He pulls away and looks at me smiling beautifully,it’s been a rough couple of weeks.

He hands me the flowers and there’s a card in them.

*To the most beautiful baby mama in



the world* I laugh at the note.

He places his hand on my belly still smiling.

“Thank you MaGodide for everything,thank you for loving me and standing by me. Thank you for putting us first instead of yourself. Meeting you that day was the best thing to has ever happened to me,you are the most amazing woman I have ever met. Ngiyakuthanda MaGodide ngakho konke okwami” he says.

“Ngiyakuthanda Mapholoba” I say.

“I will take these inside” Lethu says.

I remain with Dedani and he takes out



a gift box from car.

My face drops here I was thinking it's food.

He opens the box and it's a diamond necklace.

"This is for you sthandwa sami" he says

My jaw drops at the breathtaking sparkling gift.

He opens another compartment under and a small diamond bracelet appears.

"And this" he says taking it out and placing it on my palm.



“This is for our little princess” he says.

He’s now obsessed with having a baby girl.

“I love it... I love it so much” I say.

I breathe out heavily with tears coming out.

“I am sorry I didn’t mean to make you cry” he says.

“It’s okay I cry when I am hungry” I say.

He chuckles and brings me closer kissing my forehead.

He walks me over to the other side of the car and opens the door for me.



I get in and he closes the door jogging to his side.

He gets in and reaches for a paper bag at the bag.

“You know I wouldn’t come here empty handed” he says.

I look inside and there’s food and more tears come out,I am happy.

He laughs and I smile through the tears.

“I love you” he says.

I take out the wings and place them on my lap.

It feels as if I haven’t eaten in days



my mouth is watering.

“Zabe I love you” he says letting out a laugh.

I look at him then the wings I am not sure if I should take a bite first or respond.

My brain is rather acting slow now.

He laughs and shakes his head.

“Dlana sthandwa sam” (Eat my love) he says.

I take the first bite and close my eyes, drop my shoulders and deeply exhale.

I smile and look at this man.



He brought me food and expensive jewellery this man is definitely for keeps.

“I love you more” I say.

“Weh” he says.

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It's been a long day and I am tired,my feet are swollen and I miss my mother's cooking.

I miss everything about home so much that I drove here straight from



work.

I want to drive in but I haven't been home in such a long time,I don't know if I should.

I look at the gate from where I am parked and break down.

Sure the freedom is nice and everything but the loneliness gets to me,when Dedani is working late and I have to be alone in the house.

I miss Snqumo walking into my bedroom just to check on me,I miss Azamahle sleeping with me and snuggling up against me and I miss my parents. I miss my home and



everything single thing about it.

A knock on the window startles me, I look at person knocking and it's Snqumo.

He steps back and I get out of the car.

“Magcina” he says softly.

My lips curve and I bite my lower lip.

“Ngiyaxolisa thunjana ka ma” (I am sorry lastborn) he says.

“You're my brother you're supposed to love me no matter what” I say.

“I know and I am sorry MaG” he says.

“You don't even know my place, you don't care about me” I say.



He sighs and gives me a hug.

“I was angry Zabe and I couldn’t think straight,I shouldn’t have acted the way I did but you’re my baby sister and I am supposed to protect you. What you’re saying is not truth I love you and I know your place,but I could never find the courage to walk in” he says.

“Really” I say.

“Yes now lets go home” he says

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MR NTULI (NHLAKA)

The aroma hits him as soon as he walks through the door. He's exhausted and still taken aback by what Dedani said.

The man apologised and asked for Zabe's hand in marriage.

He had to park by the side of the road and digest the news.

That criminal wants to want marry his daughter,he heavily sighs he still needs to wrap his head around the matter.

So many things need to be



discussed,Zabelo's pregnancy needs be reported despite the father and his family knowing.

He makes his way to the kitchen and smiles seeing his wife.

His blood pressure instantly lowers and he breathes calmly.

"I was about to call the police" she says.

"Woman I am the police" he says laughing.

Aza runs in and looks at him.

"Sawubona Mkhulu" she says.

"Sawubona Nkosazane Aza" he says.



“Qagela kukhona bani” (Guess who’s here) she says.

He looks at Nontobeko and she smiles.

His heart fills with joy and he almost tears up.

“Kanti kudliwa nini kulomuzi” (When are we eating in this house) Zabe says walking in.

It’s seeing her in the same kitchen she used to run barefooted in and bump her head in every corner that gets him emotional, knowing that there’s a man out there wanting to make her his wife cause his heart to



act up.

“Sawubona Baba” she says.

He pinches his nose bridge the past months have been horrible.

Knocking on an empty bedroom and not seeing her.

He didn't want to say it to Ntobe but he's been miserable without his baby girl, he misses his full house and he even feels sick now thinking about her getting married.

“I missed you guys and I know that I have been away from a while but I am not used to doing this life thing without you guys” she says.



He blinks his tears and clears his throat.

“Maybe I should leave” Zabelo says.

“Don’t leave this is your home and I’ve missed Magcina” he says.

She slowly drags her feet and he opens his arms.

He wraps his arms around her and she breaks down holding him back.

“I made a mistake mntanami and I am truly sorry for everything” he whispers.

“MaG uyakhala” (MaG you’re crying) Aza says softly bursting into a cry.



“Yini manje Aza” Nontobeko asks.

“uMaG uyakhala nami ngiyakhala”
(MaG is crying and I am crying) she
says

Ntobeko picks up but she cries for
Zabelo.

She hands her over to Zabe and
Mphemba embraces the both of
them.

“Buya ekhaya MaGodide” (Come
home MaGodide) he says.

Nontobeko gasps and Mphemba
looks to her direction.

Kwazi walks in with blood on her shirt.



“Kwazi what’s going” Ntontobeko asks.

“Niyambona uNkanyiso yena nomkakhe amaDemoni straight” (You see Nkanyiso and his wife are demons straight) she says.

“What did they do” He asks.

“They took me to home affairs to get me to change my baby’s surname to his,ey ngababhonya baba ngabahlanganisa ngamakhanda kulamule lona isecurity” she says sounding disappointed.

He doesn’t understand why Nkanyiso would do that knowing how Kwazi



poured water over him the last they were here.

“And then nina nobabili nikhaleni” (Why are you two crying) she asks pointing at Zabe and Aza.

He shuts his eyes and sighs this is not the full house he was missing.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 035

ZABELO

This is the last weekend we will



spend together in my little nest,my father asked me to move in back home.

I really enjoyed my little freedom and having to stand up on my two feet but I missed home.

I think every young girl needs to pass this phase of staying on their own that is.

He's massaging my feet while I stuff my face with this delicious pasta that he cooked.

I don't know who said Zulu man don't cook but mine does.

“So what's going to happen to this



place” he asks.

“It’s going to be leased to another tenant” I say.

“And what’s going to happen to us now that you’re moving back home” he asks.

“We’re still in a relationship Dedani nothing has changed and I think my father will get used to the idea of us dating” I say.

Reporting my pregnancy went well so I figure my father will be okay as time goes on.

“Do see a future for us MaGodide,do you see yourself spending the rest of



life with me by your side and not as your boyfriend or baby daddy but husband” he asks.

“My mother used to say I would know, and with you I know it’s strange and it’s difficult to explain but I know and I want to spend the rest of my life with you” I tell him .

He stops massaging my feet and gets in between my legs.

It’s a good thing the let’s not bath syndrome didn’t attack me this morning.

He takes the plate and puts it on the table.



“Wenzani Mapholoba” (What are you doing Mapholoba) I ask biting my lip.

“Ngiyakuzwisa” (Giving you a taste) he says laughing.

He pulls down my underwear and throws it over the couch.

His fingers massage my coochie and he lowers his pants.

He positions himself and lowers himself pushing the tip of his d*ck in.

I gasp and wrap my arms around him.

He heavily breathes and swallows heaps of air.

I move my waist underneath him and



he closes his eyes groaning.

“Kahle phela yima kusebenze mina”
(Wait let me do the work) he says
softly.

I move my waist side ways and dip in
and out,his mouth hangs open and
his eyes close.

“I love you” he says resting his
foreahead on mine and slow going in
and out of me.

He pulls out and slowly thrust in
watching it as it goes in and out.

He gets harder by just watching.

I close my eyes as my toes curl this
man knows how to feed my soul.



“Oh baby” I say.

He moves his waist slowly thrusting in and out, his strokes have me questioning my moving back home decision.

Once you taste the forbidden fruits trust me there's no going back.

“Oh fuck Zabe” he says.

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MR NTULI (NHLAKA)

Aza is playing with her toys while



they go through the kids photo album.

“You gave me three beautiful children Ntobe ngiyabonga” he says.

She smiles and kisses him.

“We raised them well mkami and to be honest none of them gave us a problem,it was just me as a parent being disappointed and wanting what’s best for them” he says.

“I am glad you see that we raised remarkable adults and now we doing it again with this one” she says looking at Aza.

He laughs and smiles proudly.

“She’s going to be the top of the



cream” he says.

“I guess you’re going to die when she has a boyfriend” she says.

“I will pray for this one” he says.

“You know Ntobe I am a man myself and I understand how this boy feels about Zabe, I think I am ready to give him and his family a chance. I met with his father yesterday and the man is humble and well established, the boy comes from a good family but you know kids and choosing their paths. I don’t want my daughter fearing coming home because I dislike this boy and fears me saying I



told you so” He says.

She holds his hand and smiles.

“You’re a good father Mphemba and these kids know that,I know that and I love you myeni wami for loving and protecting us. I love you for the man you are and I thank God for the day we met” she says.

He leans close and kisses her.

Azamahle giggles and covers her eyes.

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ZABELO

We're having a braai saying goodbye to the place and this time Snqumo is here, surprisingly enough he's getting along with Dedani more than Bandla. Well Bandla is still holding a grudge you would swear he is the one who was beaten up.

The table is filled and I am sitting next to Dedani, if it were up to me we would chase them away and have the house to ourselves.

“Cha umuntu usezolamba yazi Zabe u selfish” (Now a person is going to go



hungry Zabe you're selfish) Bandla says.

He's been complaining about me leaving and not giving him notice.

"Thola umfazi Bandla" (Find a wife Bandla) Dedani says.

"He's right get a wife" Cebo says.

Bandla looks at Lethu and smiles.

"I am taken" Lethu says looking at Snqumo.

Bandla turns and looks at a Kwazi.

"Uyabona kemanje udlalela ezitsheni ezifayo" (See now you're playing with danger) Mdu says.



Mdu then looks at Kwazi.

“Awuphinde uhambe wedwa” (You will no longer go alone) he says.

We all laugh and Kwazi shrugs.

“What did she do” I ask.

“Ningamboni ethule kanje phela uGoliath lona,uhamba eshyaya bantu yena” (Don't see her this quiet she's Goliath,she goes around beating people) Mdu says.

“Ngixolisile nje kodwa sthandwa sam” (But I apologised my love)
Kwazi says

Dedani looks at me and smiles.



“Nawe ushaya abantu” (Do you also beat people) he asks.

I shake my head and Snqumo laughs.

“Do you remember the time I locked the gate and you couldn’t get in” he says.

“Bhuti hayi” I say.

“One thing about Zabe’s anger it makes her cry” Lethu says.

Dedani keeps his eyes on me as I shake my head.

These people like embarrassing me.

“That day Baba came home and opened the gate for her, she got in



and all she could do was cry. She was so angry she couldn't speak, she asked to bite me and only after biting me did she come down" Snqumo says.

They all laugh and I hide my face on Dedani's shoulder.

"Kodwa ngike ngasho ngathi no maan iyalumana intombi kabafo, awahlobisile lamazinyo anomsebenzi" (I did say that no maan my brother's girlfriend is a biter, these teeth aren't decorating they have a purpose) Bandla says.

Everyone laughs trust Bandla to say



something silly.

“Unjalo phela wena” Cebo says.

Mdu looks at Dedani and laughs.

“You’re in for a very bumpy road,atleast mine beats people yours bites” He says.

“Hey these my are sisters” Snqumo says.

“Yobe Sbari” Mdu says.

Dedani smiles and kisses my forehead.

“Don’t listen to them they are lying” I say.

“You can bite me I don’t mind” he



says.

“I need the toilet” I say.

I stand up and make my way to the toilet.

I take a few minutes and come back to find everyone on their feet.

I look at Dedani and he’s standing by the balcony.

JP Coopers song plays and I smile this song is just beautiful.

🎵 The only reason God gave me eyes was to see you

The only reason God gave me ears



was to hear your voice

Say, I will al, I will always love you

And when the wind gets cold

I'll wrap my arms around you

We shared our dreams,endeavors
and many things

We never could tell a soul before

I saw you smile through the tears that
fell to the floor

I'm sure I knew

The only reason God gave me hands
was to hold you

And he finely tuned the drums of my
ears just to hear your voice



Say, I will al, I will always love you
And when the wind gets cold
I'll build a fire to warm your hands
I'll wrap my arms around you🎵🎵

He walks over and takes my hand
into his.

“I feel as if Aza should be here that
little Angel is the reason we met,she
spilled coffee on my laptop and you
the feisty aunty was ready to murder
me. I love you Zabelo and I feel as if I
don't say it or show you as often as I
do then I won't be doing justice to out
love. Some people get it right the first



time around but I am getting it right the second time around. You are amazing MaGodide your light shines brighter than the sun, you are loving and kind and I don't want to be just your boyfriend of the man that gives you babies. I want to wake up next to you MaGodide, I want to love you in the most softest ways a man can love a woman. I want to love you in all your seasons Zabelo and grow old with you" he clears his throat and goes down on one knee.

I am ugly crying and Lethu is taking a video.

"Sthandwa sami you can bite me



whenever you want I don't mind" I wipe my tears and laugh looking Snqumo.

He takes out an envelope and hands it to me.

"MaG Ntuli will you marry me" he says.

"Where's the ring Mapholoba" I ask. The envelope is for my father I want the ring.

"Ngitheni" (What did I say) Bandla says.

"Lethu" Dedani says.

Lethu walks over and gives him the



ring box..

He opens it and I smile nothing like a bright stone to make one's day.

“Will you marry the guy” Snqumo asks.

I nod my head and give him my hand.

He puts the ring on and laughs standing up.

“I love you so much” I whisper kissing him.

“You've just made me the happiest man in the world today” he says.

I turn and show Kwazi,Cebo and Lethu my ring.



“I am getting married” I say emotionally.

“Uzoquleka uMphemba kodwa ngithi halala praise” (Mphemba is going to faint but congratulations) Bandla says.

Dedani wraps his arms around my waist placing his hand on my belly.

“I want to fuck you tonight MaGodide” He whispers.

I almost cum and bite my lower lip squeezing my thighs men who buy diamonds deserve it all.

3 months later.



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[10/20, 20:24] o: 036

ZABELO

It's been a beautiful three months and I have been loving every moment. Dedani paid lobola last month and that was it, my father asked us to take our time choosing a wedding date. One thing about this man he's not in any hurry to have me leave the house. He was even reluctant on giving the



Mapholoba's a date.

He's dragging his feet and the baby is due next month, but I understand his reservations and I want to look beautiful on my wedding day.

My father wants to do everything from

Umembeso, umbondo, umgcagco, umkhehlo and ingqibamasondo.

I remember how Kwazi cried thinking the man was derailing things for her, but mama set her down and told her that these were necessary things.

“Azamahle hamba uyogeza”

(Azamahle go and bath) Mama says.



“Angifuni” (I don’t want) she says.

“Habe nayi ingane ngithi hamba uyogeza” (This child,I said go bath) Mama says.

Aza clings on to me and shakes her head.

Mama sighs and places my food on the table.

“Thank you Ma” I say.

“How are you feeling today” she asks.

“Lazy today we’re both lazy” I say.

The doctor wrote me off work and put me on bed rest a while back because of my high blood pressure.



“That’s because you sleep a lot and that’s not good,kuyothi mabethi pusha ivele ilale ingane” she says.

She walks away and I grab my plate.

“Woza ngikufunze” (Let me feed you) I say.

She shakes her head.

“Baby what’s wrong” I ask.

She doesn’t say anything but holds me tight resting her head on my belly.

A call from Dedani comes through and I pick it up.

“Sthandwa sami” he says.

“Mapholoba” I say.



He chuckles putting a smile on my face.

“Are you coming to the doctor’s appointment” I ask.

“That’s why I am calling,I can’t drive you but I will meet you there after wrapping up my last meeting” he says.

I guess I’ll just have to drive myself.

“Should I bring you something” he asks.

“Just cake” I say.

“Aza do you want Malume to bring you something” I ask.



“No” she says.

I let out a sigh this girl has been moody all morning.

“What’s wrong” he asks.

“I don’t know but I think she’s sick or something, she’s not her usual self” I tell him.

“I will bring her something to cheer her up” he says.

“Okay” I say.

“I have to go I love you” he says.

“I love you more” I say.

I end the call and look at Aza.

“Asambe siyolala” (Lets go and



sleep)I say.

She stands up and pulls my hand.

I get up from the couch and take my plate with me heading to the kitchen first.

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DEDANI

He looks at the view from the window running his hand down his chest.

“We have another delivery coming up soon and I need to know you can



deliver” Dlabazane says.

“I don’t play with my moment like that I have never disappointed you Dlabazane” He says.

“I know I just wanted to make sure” Dlabazane says.

“I hear you’re getting married” Dlabazane says.

“To the most beautiful and kind woman in the world” he says.

“Are you sure you making the right decision considering the type of business you’re doing” Dlabazane says.

“Are you trying to tell me something



Dlabazane” he says.

“Not at all Sihayo” Dlabazane says.

“Remember Dlabazane a man without a family can not be trusted, and if anyone ever tries to come for me or my family. I won’t hesitate to kill them and their next of kin, ungangizami Dlabazane ngeke ulunge” he says.

“Ayidle izishiyele Sihayo” Dlabazane says.

Dedani ends the call and clicks his tongue.

The door opens and Bandla walks in.

“What’s wrong” Bandla asks.



“Do you think I am making a mistake marrying MaGodide” he asks.

He needs at least another person to assure him he’s not.

“Are you having second thoughts because if you are I will never forgive you” Bandla says.

Dedani smiles he can safely say that Bandla loves MaGodide more than he loves him.

“I just got off a call with Dlabazane and he asked if I am sure about my decision to marry” he says.

Bandla shakes his head.

“That one who has been divorced two



times,I wouldn't take anything he says seriously and if that was his way of threatening you then he's got another thing coming" Bandla says.

"Ngeke balinge Bafo" (They wouldn't dare) Bandla says.

He nods and looks at the time he needs to to get ready for his last meeting.

"Sibonge Mapholoba" Dedani says.

"Look I know that sometimes you're scared for MaGodide but I am here and I will protect her and the child with my life,I have never seen you this happy and at peace before she's



good for you. I love her,I love her for
you Mapholoba and I know you will
never let anything happen to her.
Heck no one will mess with her not
when her father is Mphemba” he says.
“Thank you Bafo” he says.

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ZABELO

I am sitting at the doctors waiting for
Dedani,he called and said he would
be late.



“I think we should start” I say.

The doctor’s assistant brings the Doppler fetal monitor to check the heartbeat.

The last doctor’s appointment went well and I was told everything is going well.

The assistant looks at the Doppler monitor then me.

“When last did you feel any movement” The assistant asks gently pressing my belly.

I think about it and the last powerful kicks were yesterday in the morning, after that everything was



just soft flutter but I figured we were being lazy.

“Yesterday morning and today I think, is everything alright” I ask.

“Yes uhmm please excuse me” She says walking out.

She walks back in followed by the doctor.

“Zabelo” The Doctor says.

“Doc” I say.

He reaches for the monitor and does the routine check up.

He puts it down and brings the ultrasound machine closer.



“Is my baby okay” I ask.

No one is saying anything but their facial expressions aren't good either

“We'll know in a few minutes” he says

He runs the scan and I look at the screen seeing my baby.

We've come a long way and I can't wait to meet him.

He keeps running the scan around my belly and I realise I haven't heard the baby's heartbeat.

Panic sets in as the realisation hits hard.

“What's wrong why isn't there a



heartbeat” I ask.

“Call the ambulance tell them we have an emergency” The doctor says.

“Doctor what’s wrong” I ask.

Tears are already coming out as this is uneasy feeling hits me.

“We can’t find the heartbeat” he says.

The door slam shuts and I raise my head to see Dedani.

“What do you mean you can’t find the heartbeat” he asks.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 037



DEDANI

They were rushed to the hospital because the doctor couldn't find the heartbeat. He watched Zabe pray in tears praying to God to save their child. His seen her pray but not like this not so desperately and painfully.

The doctor makes his way to him and he stands up.

He was asked to to leave the room and give the Doctors space to work.

His heart is beating fast faster than it's ever did.



“Mr Ngcobo” The Doctor says.

“How’s my fiancé and the baby” he asks.

“I am afraid we couldn’t find a heartbeat” He almost loses his balance but the Doctor helps him to the chair.

“What do you mean you couldn’t find a heartbeat, what’s so hard about finding” he asks.

“Sir there’s no easier way to say this but your baby is dead” The Doctor tells him.

His heart slowly sinks.

“A miscarriage” He asks.



“A miscarriage usually occurs between week 1 and 20 of the pregnancy, this is classified as a stillbirth it occurs before birth. It happens due to many factors such as the mother’s high blood pressure, problems with the umbilical cord and in most case it may happen due to preeclampsia. I am truly sorry for your loss Mr Ngcobo” The Doctor says.

He blinks his tears away and clears his throat.

“What’s the way forward” He asks.

“We have to remove the baby in the



next coming two days to avoid any womb infections and bleeding, we normally give the mother medication to induce labour it will be hard and painful however this is the most preferred method than a caesarean” He nods his head and heavily sighs.

He’s confused and his heart is breaking ontop of losing the child she has to give birth to it dead.

“How is she” He asks.

“We haven’t told her but she’s been asking about you” The Doctor says.

“Thank you” He says.

The Doctor walks away as Zabelo’s



parents approach.

He gets on his feet and clenches his jaws.

“Ndodana” Zabelo’s mother says.

“How are you? How’s Zabelo and the baby” She asks.

He opens his mouth but fails to say a word.

Tears fall and he moves his hand to wipe them.

“Mkhenyana you’re scaring me” she says .

He clears his throat and man’s up.

“Ma we lost the baby the doctors



couldn't find a heartbeat" he says.

Zabe's mother covers her mouth as her eyes glisten with tears.

Now that he's saying it himself out loud the pain hits him hard.

Mphemba's face drops and sorrow fills his face.

The old man takes a few steps closer to Dedani and gently pulls him in for a hug.

Dedani clenches his jaws tighter fighting his tears.

"I am sorry Mapholoba" Mphemba says stepping back.



A thank you would suffice but what would he be thankful for.

He's lost a child before and it hurt but at least Ave wasn't here. He carried his own pain but now there's someone else's pain to think off. He doesn't know if he can handle watching Zabe in pain, he doesn't even know if he can carry her pain without breaking apart.

He's standing outside Zabe's room as her parents walk in and close the door behind them.

He asked her mother to break the



news to her.

A loud piercing cry comes out of the room and he closes his eyes.

She screams and desperately asks to see the doctor.

He finally gathers the strength he needs and walks in.

She's sobbing his her mother's arms but stops when she sees him.

He raises his eyes and they lock with hers,one of a thousands ways to break someone's heart is to look them in the eyes and tell them the devastating news of losing their baby.

“uMa uthi ingane yami ishonile” (My



mother tells me that my baby is dead)
she says in between hiccups.

He walks over to her and sits on the
bed looking at her.

She doesn't deserve he thinks to
himself.

"Baby remember what the doctor said
about not finding the heartbeat,they
tried sthandwa sami but it was
already too late" he says softly.

"Unamanga" (You're lying) she says.

"I am sorry Sthandwa sami) he says.

She shakes her head.

"Ma unamanga" she says looking at



her parents.

She then turns and looks at him.

“Mapholoba unamanga” she says.

“He’s not lying Magcina” her father says.

She closes her eyes and shakes her head in tears.

“Eya... eyami ingane” (My baby) she says placing her hand over her chest with tears falling.

He slowly nods his head and she covers her face sobbing.

“Dedani no” she says shaking her head.



He holds her tight as she cries in his arms.

“Iyoh... iyoh mama” She says.

He steps back and allows her mother to take over.

“Ingane yami, mama ingane yami”
(My baby ma) she says.

The Doctor walks in followed by a nurse.

“We can’t have her be this hysterical it’s not good for her health” The Doctor says.

The nurse walks over and injects her with a sedative.



“Ngenzeni mina mama yini
uNkulunkulu angiphuce ingane yami”
(Ma what have I done for God to take
my baby) she asks crying in her
mother’s arms.

“Baba” she says.

“Shsss it’s okay” her mother says.

He looks at Mphemba and his heart
breaks even more. The man is just
standing there with tears coming out
of eyes. One thing about fathers they
would die for their sons, but they
would kill for their daughters. The
man is in pain seeing his daughter
cry, he wishes to kill the person



behind her tears but how when death is the cause of all this.

She slowly drifts to sleep and her mother gently lets go.

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He left the hospital after speaking to Zabe's parents about the way forward concerning the baby.

He parks his car next to Bandla's and steps out walking inside the house.

He finds Bandla and his parents



waiting for him.

“Good we’ve been waiting for you”

His father says.

“Can we start already I have things to do” Bandla says.

He pulls the chair and settles down, his body is here but his mind is elsewhere. The confusion and hurt renders him silent and unable to tell them.

He fears opening his mouth and breaking down in the process.

His father clears his throat and starts talking about their mother.

“Your mother was suffering and there



was really nothing anyone could do about it, it wasn't only too much for us but for her too. The fire, forgetting Bandla in the bathtub and the final straw was almost killing Dedani. She couldn't live with herself after that and she took a decision a hard one for all of us" He says.

He raises his head and looks at his emotional father.

"What did you baba" He asks.

Bandla looks at him confused.

"What do you mean, Baba wouldn't hurt uMa" Bandla says.

"Baba" Dedani says.



He's getting impatient.

"It was the only way I am sorry" his father says.

"Mapholoba what did you do" Dedani asks.

"I gave her a sedative that put her to deep sleep and stopped her heart"
His father says breaking down.

"No" Bandla says.

"She wanted to throw herself at a moving train, your mother wanted to end her life in the most cruel way and I couldn't let that happen. I waited it out for weeks hoping she would snap out of it but every time I turned



around she would try to take her own life. I didn't want to do it but I was protecting my boys ridding her the guilty of taking her own life." his father says.

"You killed my mother" Bandla stands up and charges towards their father.

"Bandla hayi" Their mother says.

"MaGodide lost the baby" Dedani says standing up.

Bandla lets go of his father and shakes his head.

Everyone is shocked he should have said something the minute he walked, and maybe that would have



stopped his father from further tearing his heart apart.

“We lost the baby today” Dedani says

“Phephisa Khehla” His mother says standing up.

She pulls him into a hug and holds him tight.

His father tries to comfort him but he shakes his head.

“Don’t touch me baba” he says.

Bandla sits down and buries his face in his hands.

He breaks down sobbing like a boy.

He’s not tough as he wants the world



to believe.

“You killed her” Bandla says in a shaky voice.

Dedani walks over to him and pulls me up.

He takes his brother and heads for the door.

“Khehla please don’t leave lets all sit down talk,you can’t drive in this state” his mother says.

“We can’t stay here Ma not after what he said” Dedani says.

“Okay let me drive you then please” she says.



He shakes his head.

“I might not be your biological mother Dedani but I am your mother and it breaks me seeing you boys like this” she grabs the keys to Dedani’s car and walks over to her husband.

She gives him a hug and holds his hand in assurance.

“Someone needs to be there for them” she says softly.

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[10/20, 20:24] o: 038



ZABELO

Everyone is here crying but she's silently cradling her belly.

A part of her still hoped for a miracle but nothing, she begged the doctors for another check up but still they couldn't find the heartbeat.

It felt like her heart was being ripped out of chest and being stomped on.

For a brief moment she herself had stopped breathing.

She's not used to this having everyone in one hospital room, but those are perks of having money.



Lethu is safely in Snqumo's arms crying.

Everyone was looking forward to meeting the baby, she was excited about becoming a Godmother and somehow Snqumo was going to be the Godfather a perfect combination.

Kwazi is sitting next to her brushing her hair backwards it's calming and she doesn't want her to stop.

Cebo hasn't said much but she's been sitting beside her too.

The door opens and she quickly looks, Bandla walks in followed by his mother.



Her heart sinks as she looks behind them and Dedani is not there.

Dedani's mother walks over and hugs her.

"I am sorry for your loss sisi" she says softly.

"Ngiyabonga Ma" (Thank you Ma) she says.

She looks at Bandla standing by the corner and sighs.

"I think we should go get some coffee" Kwazi says.

The room clears as they all walk out leaving Zabe with Bandla.



“I don’t know what to say” Bandla says.

“You don’t have to say anything” Zabelo says.

He walks over and sits on her bed.

“I am so sorry MaGidide” he says.

She nods pursing her lips and watches as tears fall from Bandla’s eyes.

Panic sets maybe something is wrong with Dedani she thinks.

“Bandla what’s wrong” she asks.

He covers his eyes with his hand and sobs.



“He killed our mother” He says.

Her eyes widen as confusion sets in.

“Who killed your mother Bandla” she asks.

“uBaba killed our mother and he confessed yesterday, he sat there Zabe and told us that killed her for us. How do you separate a mother from her own kids,how” he says.

She pulls me close to her chest and holds him tight,tears fall down her cheek.

How can God take her baby away from her.

“I wish he didn’t tell us because now



a party of me hates him” he says.

“I am so sorry Bandla” she says till holding him tight.

He eventually pulls away and wipes his tears.

“I am the one who should be sorry for dumping all of this on you, and am sorry about the baby” he says.

She holds his hand and swallows.

“Where is Dedani” she asks.

She’s worried about him.

“I don’t know” he says.

“Okay,here’s what I want you to do okay. I want you to go to your



mother's grave and look for him there" she says.

He nods his head and heavily sigh.

"Go look for him" she says.

"Okay" He says walking out.

Her parents walk in and she quickly wipes her tears.

They both walk over and embrace her tight.

She lets out a sigh and looks at her mother.

"Please tell the doctor I am ready" she says.

"Zabe it's too soon" her father says.



“Will waiting bring my baby back” she asks.

He remains quiet and sighs.

“Kubuhlungu baba ingane ikhona ngaphakathi kodwa ayiphili” (It hurts Baba my baby is inside me but dead) she says breathing heavily.

“It’s okay sisi I will talk to the doctor” her mother says.

She nods with her lips trembling.

“But Ma this is not fair,it’s really not fair” she says.

Her mother wipes her own tears and gently pulls her into arms.



“I know that it’s hard and it’s still going to be harder, but you have us and we will be with you every step of the way. It doesn’t make sense and it never will but you’ll learn to live with the pain, I don’t want to lie to you and say you instantly heal from something like this. I wish I could take away your pain mntanami and hide you from all of this, I am sorry that you’re going through this Thunjana wami I am really sorry” her mother says.

She breaks down in her mother’s arms and grabs on her clothes.



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DEDANI

He took a taxi to the cemetery and now Bandla has driven him to the hospital. He doesn't know how to feel or what to say.

“I am sorry that you lost the baby, I know you were looking forward to seeing her” Bandla says.

“How are you feeling after what Mapholoba said” Dedani asks.

Bandla shrugs and looks outside the



window.

“Bandla” he says raising his eyebrow.

“I am angry and I don’t want to see him” Bandla says.

Dedani nods his head and sighs looking at him.

“I am sorry he took her away from us but he’s still our father at the end of the day” He says.

A moment passes and he clears his throat wiping his sweaty hands.

“I should get inside” he says.

He steps out of the car and makes his way inside the hospital.



He makes his way to Zabe's room.

He walks in and finds her with her parents,he greets them before they excuse themselves giving them some privacy.

He looks at her puffy red eyes and holds her face.

He then places his hand on her belly as his lips tremble,she looks at him and leans close resting her forehead on his.

He's been holding it in but now he can't anymore.

"I am sorry Sthandwa" he says.

Her arms wrap around him and his



around hers.

Normally when they did this the baby would move but not today.

“Bandla told me what happened,I am sorry” she says softly.

He pulls away and frowns Bandla was wrong to say anything in the first place.

“How are you feeling” she asks.

He shakes his head he’s not doing this to her.

“Don’t worry yourself about me,how are you feeling” he asks.

“Sad” she says softly



He hugs her tight this time.

“We are going to get through this together okay, whatever you need I am here” he says.

He lets go and wipes her sweaty forehead.

“Should I call the doctor” he asks.

She’s shakes her head and holds his hand breathing heavily.

“I am in labour Mapholoba” she says.

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It's now midnight and still they haven't heard anything from the Doctor.

He looks at the time and cusses under his breath.

They've been in there for hours now but still nothing.

"The doctor did say it was going to be difficult" Snqumo says.

"I know but it's been hours" Dedani says.

"I know but everything is going to be okay she's got the best doctors" Snqumo tells him.

"He's right Zabe is in good hands"



Cebo says.

He turns his head and looks at Lethu sitting with Mphemba.

He never thought he would see the day where this giant was hopeless and helpless.

“Mr Ngcobo” He looks at the Doctor.

“Please come with me” The Doctor says.

He follows the doctor to another room and find Zabelo’s mother and Kwazi.

“Where’s Zabe” he asks.

He can’t lose her too.



“The nurses took her back to her room” Kwazi says.

“It’s a girl” Zabe’s mother says.

“You were right all along” Kwazi says.

He walks over and looks at the baby.

Her eyes are closed and so are are tiny fists.

A perfect princess he holds her tiny hands as tears drop ontop of her.

Why is life so cruel he thinks to himself.

“Did she see the baby” he asks in a shaky voice.

“She didn’t want too” Kwazi says



softly.

He gently picks up the baby and places her on the bed and wheels her out making his way to Zabe's room.

He finds one of the nurse with her and asks for some privacy.

“MaGodide” he says.

She remains silent and turns her head to the other side.

He sighs and picks up the baby walking over to her bed.

“Mapholoba please I don't want to do this” she pleads.

This is harder than he thought but



this is for her own good.

“She’s our baby Zabelo,we created this perfect human being and she’s beautiful.I know this is hard but if you don’t do this you’ll never forgive yourself. You’ll always wonder how she looked like and if she was ever as you imagined” he says.

“It’s too painful Mapholoba” she says.

“I know my love but holding her and seeing her will ease some of the pain,ngiyakucela MaGodide” he says.

She sits up straight and looks.

Her lips quiver and she covers her eyes bolting into a loud sob.



Dedani hands her the baby and hugs them both clenching his jaws.

“She’s so cold” she says opening her gown and placing the baby on her chest.

He looks at her as she rocks the baby back and forth.

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ZABELO

She opens her eyes and the pain is still there,it hurts so bad she’s never



felt something like this.

She sits up straight and slowly steps out of the bed.

She's in pain her breasts hurt and there's no baby breastfeed.

Tears fill her eyes as she thinks of the baby clothes she bought, the jewellery Dedani got.

She slowly walks over to the window and opens it looking down.

The emotional pain surpasses the physical one.

She thinks about Dedani but he probably thinks she's useless, she couldn't even keep their child alive.



She's angry at everything her body for failing her and the baby, and God for allowing it happen.

She shakes her head this isn't how things were supposed to be, she's too young to be burying her first child. She's not strong enough to answer people and their many questions about the baby.

They might not forgive her but at least she won't feel this pain anymore.

She grits her teeth and carefully lifts her leg stepping over.

The wind is breezy and forceful it



seems like a good day to let go.

She stands over the ledge as her one foot hangs in the air and closes her eyes.

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DEDANI

“Thank you for everything your support means a lot to the both of us” he says.

“We’re friends and we wouldn’t be



else where but here” Cebo says.

“She’s right whatever you need guys we are here for you” Lethu says.

“We know and thank you” he says.

He lets out a sigh as everyone turns and walks away.

It’s been a long hard two days and he’s tired.

He makes his way to Zabe’s room and opens the door.

His heart sinks to his knees as he looks at the empty bed and an open window.

“Zabe” he shouts.



He runs over to the window and she leaps.

“No” he shouts grabbing her by her arm.

“Ngiyeke Mapholoba ngiyeke” (Let me go. Mapholoba let me go) she says.

He uses all his strength and pulls up bringing her back inside.

“Please don’t fight me” he pleads.

They both fall back and he looks at her shaking his head and hitting his forehead with his fist.

“What the hell are you doing” he asks.



He shakes his head in disbelief.

“What about me Zabe” he asks.

“It’s hurts Mapholoba,I don’t want to feel this. It feels like I have a hole in my heart. I want to hold my baby and love her. I want to hear her cries so bad I can’t breathe” she says.

“But this is not the answer” He says.

“Ngifuna ingane yami Mapholoba” (I want my baby) she says.

“I know but she’s gone sthandwa sami,she’s gone” he whispers.

“Mina ngifuna ingane yami” (I want my baby) she says.



He gets on his feet and lifts her up walking over to the bed.

He gently places her down and looks at her face wiping her tears.

“I should have been more careful eaten better food maybe then my body wouldn’t have failed me” she says.

He shakes his head.

“This is not your fault Zabe,losing the baby is not your fault and I want you to get that thought out of your head. The Doctor said such things happen and it’s never anyone’s fault. You carried our baby so beautifully and



lovingly that I looked at you everyday and thanked God for you. I don't understand why this is happening to us but I promise you it's going to get better. One day we're going to have more babies and we will always hold Owenkosi in our hearts" he says.

"I want you to cry,cuss if you want question everything but don't leave me Zabelo. Don't make me go through life without you by my side,I can't do this this without you MaGodide. I need you sthandwa sam and we are much bigger than this" he says.

"What if I can't go through another



day,what if the pain gets so much I can't stand it" she asks.

"You don't have to go through this alone,I am here and I am not going anywhere. You're not alone Zabe ngikhona mina sthandwa sami,khalela kimina" he says.

"Kubuhlungu" she says in a shaky voice.

"I know but me you won't do this ever again" he says.

She nods and he nods too.

"I love you" he says kissing her.

"Even when we don't have a baby" she says.



“Yes even though we don’t have a baby I still love you” he says.

The door opens and her mother walks in.

Dedani pulls away and steps back.

She greets them both before hugging Zabe and kissing her forehead.

“How are you feeling sisi” Her mother asks.

Zabe shrugs and her mother looks at Dedani

“Ma I don’t think she should be left alone” Dedani says.

“What do you mean” her mother asks.



“She wanted to jump out the window”
he says.

Her mother’s eyes widen and tears fill
her eyes.

“Awu kodwa Zabelo usufuna
ukubulala mina manje” (Zabe so now
you want to kill me) she says.

“Ma please” he says softly.

One thing he’s certain about Zabelo is
not herself at the moment.

She going through grief something
she’s never had to deal with.

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NONTOBEKO

She packs a change of clothes for Zabe and feels her emotions get the better of her.

She's now scared more than anything, what happens if Zabelo tries taking her life again.

She's a mother and she understands her daughter's pain.

Mphemba walks in and sits next to her.

He holds her hand and they just stare



into space.

It hurts knowing that their daughter was in so much pain she thought dying was the only answer.

“This has been her room all her life” Nontobeko says.

The memories of her daughter happy come rushing she can't bare thinking of a depressed Zabe.

“Your daughter tried to jump off a building this morning from her hospital room,if Dedani hadn't walked in we would be mourning her. Ingane yethu is hurting Mphemba and there's really not much we can do” she says.



“We are bringing her back home today we can take care of her here” Mphemba says.

“I have a request Mphemba,I know that they are not married officially but I am asking myeni wam. Can he come see her whenever he wants or whenever she wants,this boy is good for her and maybe she'll heal faster if they go through this together as a couple. I know I am asking for too much but I don't want to lose my daughter to her grief and pain” she says.

Mphemba heavily sighs.



“If this will help Zabe heal then I am not against it Ntobe,if this happened to us in our younger days then I would definitely wanted to be by your side everyday” he says.

“Thank you” she says.

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ZABELO

She’s back home and the void is still there.

Tomorrow she’s laying her baby to rest.



It's crazy how life can change in just a space of four days.

Death is so final for those left behind she wonders what was ever the reason to live.

She misses Azamahle but Kwazi took her for a few days.

She gets up from her bed and walks out making her way to the kitchen.

She grabs a refuse bag and walks back to the bedroom.

She opens her wardrobe and takes out all the baby clothes and stuffs them inside the bag.

She struggle to breathe but keeps on



stuffing the plastic.

“Zabe” she turns around and looks at Dedani.

She doesn't want to cry but it hurts and she can't help herself.

“Don't you think it's too soon for that” he says.

“If I keep them I am going to go crazy” she says.

“Throwing them away makes it seems like she was never here” he says.

“But she was never here Mapholoba the truth is she never opened her eyes, she didn't cry she didn't even



wrap her tiny hand around my finger like I dreamed” she says.

“Well maybe to you but my daughter was here” he says.

She lets go of the plastic and sighs.

“I don’t know what to do,I don’t know if I am coming or going. I can’t close my eyes without seeing her and my heart wants to hold her. I want her so bad I am afraid I might do something stupid, I have never felt anything like this Mapholoba and I am asking myself will it ever get better” she says.

He closes the door even though Mphemba told him the door remains



open.

“Buya la” (Come here) he says.

She slowly walks over and he lifts her up.

He places her on the bed and gets in behind her.

He spoons her and kisses her neck.

“It does get better with time and you have to remember no one is expecting you be fine. We’ve just lost our baby and we’re not okay” he says.

She turns and looks at him.

“I am sorry I couldn’t give you a baby” she says.



He uses his thumb and wipes her tears.

“We have the rest of our lives ahead of us, and you did give me a baby except she was an angel” he says.

The door bursts open and Aza walks in.

“MaG” she says excited.

“Hawu Malume nawe ukhona” she says.

Dedani picks her up and puts her in between them.

She looks at Zabe and puts both her hands on her face and kisses her.



“I missed you” Aza says.

Zabelo holds on to her small hands and releases a sigh.

She’s not about to cry in front of Azamahle.

“I missed you too” Zabe says.

“Uthi ugogo ngingakuhluphi,ngeke ngikuhluphe uyezwa ngizokuhlupha kancane” (Granny says I shouldn’t trouble you,I won’t trouble you okay but I will trouble you a little) She says.

Zabe let’s out a chuckle and looks at Dedani.

They both smile as Zabe looks into his eyes.



The door opens and Mphemba walks in with two chairs.

There's no privacy in this house and after what she did her father wanted to remove all the locks.

Dedani gets out of the bed and clears his throat.

“Mkhulu liphi itiyē” (Mkhulu where's the tea) Aza asks.

“Your grandmother is bringing it” He says.

Zabe's mother walks in with a tray in hand.

“I should go” Dedani says.



“Sit down Mapholoba” Her father says.

He awkwardly sits down and looks at Zabe.

She subtly shrugs she doesn't mind the crowd,she doesn't mind having her man around.

“Aphi amakhekhe gogo” (Where are the cookies gogo) Azamahle asks.

1 month later

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 040



ZABELO

It's hard but I am still breathing,I still can't believe I was in so much pain I wanted to end my life.

I am grateful Dedani came in when he did,now that I think about it I am scared of what's on the other side,and I am envious of what I will be leaving behind.

If only there was another way of finding out what's behind death,is truly eternal life for those who did good and lived a righteous life and



hell for those who did evil things and sinned.

But then again we've all sinned at some point in our lives.

Now back to the not knowing what goes down on the other side.

A few days ago I woke up and all I wanted to do was to go to the garage, get in the car and start the car and just end it all.

Then it hit me will the circle of life ever end and will the judgement day come or the circle of life will just keep at it and the dead will remain dead.



I swear when all these thoughts came to mind I stopped and realised that as complicated and questionable life is it's still precious.

I am taking it one day at a time, sometimes I wake up with a smile on my face and sometimes I wake up weeping thinking of my baby. It's an unpleasant emotional circle and I don't know when it will end.

"We are too old for the club" Kwazi says.

"Since when" Lethu asks.

"Since I beat Nkanyiso and his wife, I



am still on probation” Kwazi says.

She invited us to her place for a braai her ways of getting me out of the house.

“Umshado ukulona ijele” (Marriage is not a prison) Lethu says.

Kwazi laughs and checks on the pap.

I turn my head and look at the guys.

Dedani is wearing black pants and a black polo neck he left work and came straight to Kwazi’s.

He’s sitting down with his legs slightly spread holding a beer on one hand.



He looks dangerously handsome smiling and slightly nodding his head my thoughts betray me.

I realise he's on his fourth beer and sigh.

He's been drinking a lot lately and I am worried about him.

I feel he was thrown in the deep end finding out about his mother and losing the baby.

"You're awfully quiet" Cebo says.

"Uyablusa" Kwazi says.

I smile and take my eyes off him.

"I miss him" I admit.



“Kahle wena azikapholi izititch” (Wait a minute your stitches haven’t healed) Lethu says.

I shake my head laughing I had forgotten how they can get.

And I won’t say this but Dedani took care of my stitches.

The man has been doing more than my mother in that department I am even embarrassed.

“That’s not what I mean” I say turning and looking back at Dedani.

“What do you mean” Cebo asks.

“He’s been emotionally distant lately, I am trying to get through this wall



he's slowly building but the harder I try the more high it gets" I say.

"Have you spoken to him about this" Kwazi asks.

"No, work has been keeping him busy" I say.

"I suggest a romantic dinner just the two of you and talk to him then, you two have been through a lot and it's understandable that you'd be both emotionally tired" Lethu says.

"Wakhuluma Dokotela" Bandla says.

Cebo smiles her bestie is here no let me rephrase that her better half is here and we are about to be non



existent.

He greets the ladies and stands by me.

“How are you” he asks.

“I am okay” I say.

“That’s what we want for you to be okay” he says.

I nod my smile who knew that Bandla would like me this much.

“I thought you weren’t coming” I say.

“And miss free food” he says.

He laughs and hooks his arm around Cebo’s neck walking away with her.

“She’s not you’re friend” Lethu shouts.



“Yeka umona Lethu umuntu oka Nkulunkulu” Banzi says.

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I dish up for him and bring him his plate,he faintly smiles and looks at the food.

“Ngiyabonga sthandwa sam kodwa angilambile” (Thank you but I am not hungry) he says.

“Eat just the meat then” I say.

He takes the plate and I sit next to him.

“You are tired” I say.



He swallows and I hold his hand.

“You’ve been working hard day and night,taking care of me and loving me but no one’s been taking care of you” I say.

“You know that’s not true you’ve been taking care of me,it’s just that I miss everything I lost people that I care about and I can’t help wonder if I am cursed,I can’t help but think will I lose you too” he says.

“You’re not cursed we both know that and you won’t lose me,we are in this together. I love you and will still love you even when you’re old and angry” I



say.

He laughs.

“You’ll be the most handsome granpa bae ever” I say.

“And I will only have eyes for you and only you” he says.

I lean over and kiss him.

“I love you” I say.

“I love you” He says.

He puts the plate down and makes me sit on his lap with my arms wrapped around him neck.

I almost fall off when I catch a glimpse of Lethu and Snqumo



signalling each other.

Snqumo stands up first and makes his way inside the house, Lethu follows after a few seconds of waiting I bet her clit couldn't wait for minutes.

I try standing up but Dedani pulls me back.

“Badala labantu phuma ezindabeni zabo” (Stay out of their business they are old enough) he says.

I open my mouth and he raises his eyebrow.

“Ngiyakukhuza MaGodide” (I am warning you MaGodide) he says



firmly.

I shrug and fold my arms pouting, I just want to go see so I can have something to tell Kwazi and Cebo.

“Ngishonelwe mina” I say softly.

He laughs till tears come out of his eyes.

“I know sthandwa sam” he says shaking his head.

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ZABELO



I look at Azamahle and the pots on the stove, the food and this little rascal will have to do.

This is a gamble and I am hoping it pays.

Bandla slept over which is a good thing.

All I had to do was wake up early and drive here to cook.

A knock on the door and I get it.

Dedani's parents walk and I close the door behind them.

"Makoti" They both say with smiles on their faces.



I take them to couch and Aza excitedly stands up to greet.

“How are you feeling sisi” Dedani’s father asks.

“Some days are better and some are worse but I am fine Baba,how have you been” I ask.

He heavily sighs.

“I have never gone this long without my sons and I can’t comfort the eldest,so it’s been hard ngane yami” he says.

I look at my mother in law this better work for all our sakes.

“Uyabona ukube uMapholoba



akukuthandi ngabe kade
ngizithathela wena” (You see it
Mapholoba didn’t love you I would
have long taken you for myself)
Bandla says.

He stops on his tracks and looks at
his parents.

“Bandla kade ngisho thola umfazi
uhlukane nokubuka uMaGodide”
(Bandla I’ve been telling you to find a
wife and stop looking at MaGodide)
Dedani says.

He stops too and looks at his
parents,he then looks at me.

“What is this man doing in my house”



he asks.

“This man” His father says.

“Zabelo ufunani uMapholoba emzini wam” (Zabe what is my father doing in my house) he asks.

“Ubizwe yimina and I am hoping that today the three of you can talk and sort out your differences, you’re not the same Dedani you need uBaba more than you can admit. And Bandla you have admitted more than a hundred times to missing him and telling me things you should be telling him. So please if not for your sakes then for uMa because this is hard on



her too” I say.

“I am not doing this I won’t be in the same room with him) He says heading for the door.

“Dedani please he’s your father and you both love him the least you can do is listen to him” I say.

“Mina Mkhulu Ngiyakuthanda akahambe uMalume angithi akakufuni emzini wakhe,hamba Malume” (Mkhulu I loveyou uncle should gob isn’t it he doesn’t want you in his house,go uncle) Azamahle says looking at Dedani.

Bandla looks at her and shuts his



eyes.

“Uyabona wena kunesalukazi esacasha lakuwe” (I swear there’s an old woman who hide inside you) He says.

Dedani turns and I walk over to him. I knew having Aza would help somewhere.

“I understand you’re hurting but you are not acting like the man I love the man who talked me down, stood by me and loved me even when I pushed him away” I say.

“You had no right Zabe” he says.

“Pho uzokwenzani uzongishaya” (And



what are you going to do hit me) I ask.

He tries the I am angry with you stare but eventually breaks and smiles.

“Will you talk to him” I say.

“Yes” he says.

I quickly perk his lips and smile.

“Thank you” I say.

.....[10/20, 20:25] o: 041

ZABELO

My feet are covered in a foot scrub



while he gently massages my shoulders,he made me a bowl of fruit salad and poured me some freshly squeezed juiced.

Things have been going great with his father.

And we are also doing good,it's hard some days but we are there for each other.

“Ma wengane yami” he says.

“Babakhe” I say.

We've gotten past the fear of not using these.

He stops and walks around and kneels in front of me.



He takes my feet and places them inside the basin washing them.

“I am happy MaGodide” he says.

He stops and looks at me.

“Things are getting better with my father and it’s all thanks to you,I know that am stubborn sometimes but somehow you know what’s good for me” He says wiping my feet.

He puts on my slippers and helps me up.

“Where are we going” I ask.

“Outside” He says

We make our way outside and he



asks me to close my eyes.

I close my eyes and he stands behind me wrapping his arms around my waist.

“Ngike ngiwe Mapholoba” (Should I fall) I say.

“You won’t I’ll catch you” he says.

“Open your eyes” he says.

I open my eyes and Bandla is standing in the middle of the driveway.

I fold my arms and look at Dedani is Bandla supposed to be surprise.

“Sawubona Bandla the man I see



everyday,the man who eats my food for free and refuses to get himself a wife” I say.

“A wife is temporary MaGidide” He says.

“Don’t mind him and he’s not the reason I brought you outside,It’s not much I just want to say thank you for everything. Not only were you there for me but you’ve been there for Bandla too,abantu bambona ephapha nje abazi ukuthi uyatetema” Dedani says.

“Tshelani izwe lonke Dedani” (Tell the whole world Dedani) he says.



My jaws drop in amusement I think this is the first I've heard him call his brother by his name.

“As I was saying I am happy” he says handing me a small box.

I open the box and it has car keys inside.

The gate opens and a car drives in I look at the drivers and it's Cebo and Lethu.

“For making me happy sthandwa sam” he says pointing at the car.

Cebo and Lethu step out of the car with flowers, balloons and champagne.



“Ezazalwa zembethe ezafika zifumbethe” (The lucky one) Lethu says ululating.

I look at Dedani with my mouth open and look at black Gelandewagen.

“This is mine” I say.

He nods smiling.

I scream and wrap my arms around him.

“You are a man amongst man
Ngcobo, Mapholoba, Mashiya amahle
engathi uzoshumayela, fuze elihle
elithanda mina ngedwa ngiyabonga” I
say.

He looks to the side smiling.



“Ngizokushaya weZabe buka wenzani” Bandla says.

I get on my toes and wrap my arms around this man’s neck kissing him.

“Maybe we should end our mourning period to tonight” I say.

He deserves some kitty.

“We made a promise MaGodide and we’re close to the finish line” he whispers.

I nod we agreed to abstain sex for six months.

I guess he’s just fine with the blow jobs then.



I look back to the car and walk to do a mini dance with the girls.

Lethu takes pictures I am still in my gown.

I look at Dedani and he has his phone out too.

I walk back to my man and kiss him.

“Even in the next life I would still choose you” I say.

He leans over and kisses me.

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I am sitting across my parents and



my father hasn't said anything.

I showed them the car and my mother prayed for it.

"Zabelo" he says.

"Baba" I say.

"That's a car outside a big and expensive car" he says.

I nod and he opens his mouth but nothing comes out.

He's at a loss of words.

"I have never bought your mother such an expensive gift" he says.

"Clearly you've never loved me Mphemba, Dedani even got her and



Owe matching diamond necklaces.
And now he's gotten her a car simply
for making her happy. Mina I have
given you three kids three! ngisho
ullollipop Mphemba" Mama says.

"Nontobeko this isn't about us" Baba
says.

"You retired and promised me that
we would travel but we're still here"
She says.

I lean back and watch as they go
back forth with each other.

"Ntobe please asingaxatshani swa
imoto kaZabe" (Ntobe please let's not
argue over Zabe's car) he says.



“At least my son in law spoils my daughter unlike someone I know”
mama says standing up and walking away.

He lets out a sigh and looks at me.

“I am happy that you’re happy but he has a history Zabe and such expensive gifts don’t sit well with me”
He says shaking his head standing.

“Who in the right minds buys such a car because he’s happy Mxm ,now I have a bitter wife” He mumbles walking away.

“Ntobe buya sikhulume Mkami” he says.



I once asked Dedani about his criminal ways and he promised that he left all that behind.

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I made a stop at Kwazi's and showed her my car.

Mdu got quite a stare but I won't lie my brother in law spoils Kwazi.

I pick up a few things for Azamahle before heading to the till.

I am picking her up today in style



today.

I am so excited I feel like a kid who just got a new toy expect my car is a beast.

I stand in line next to a lady holding a baby.

She looks at me and laughs shaking her head.

“I am sorry but can you please hold her for a second,I forgot her carrier at home and I couldn’t exactly leave her in the car” she says.

I look at my hands then the baby.

“Are you okay” she asks.



“Yes” I respond taking the baby.

She nestles in my arms and I look at her tiny pouted lips.

She’s a few months old and she’s beautiful.

Her skin looks so smooth she sticks out her tongue and opens her eyes looking at me.

I run my finger down her cheek and wonder if Owe’s skin would have been this perfect.

The lady pays and turns to look at me.

“Thank you so much” she says.



I snap out of my thoughts and hand her the baby and step out of the line quickly walking out.

By the time I make it to the parking space I am in tears and shaking.

“Zabe” I wipe my tears and turn around to Ntsika.

“I called out your name but you didn’t hear me” he says.

“I am sorry I didn’t hear you” I say.

“You’re shaking what’s wrong? Are you okay” He asks putting his hands on either side of my shoulders.

“No,I am not okay” I say.



He pulls me to his chest and wraps his arms around me.

I break down and he lets me be.

“You’re okay” he says.

I pull away and wipe my face breathing out heavily.

“I am sorry” I say letting out a nervous chuckle.

He looks at me from head to toe and smiles.

“Motherhood I heard it can get quite stressful” he says.

“Ntsika I lost my baby” I tell him.

“I didn’t know Zabelo I am sorry” he



says.

“Thank you,uhm I should get going I am picking up Azamahle from school” I say.

I look at my wrist watch and I am already late.

“Can I drive you” he says.

“I don’t think that’s a good idea” I say.

If Bandla by chance sees him with me then he’ll definitely kill him this time around.

“Can I atleast drive behind you it’s clear you’re not in any state to drive” he says.



“Okay” I say.

He waits for me to get in the car before jogging to his.

He meticulously drove behind me till we reached the school.

I step out of the car and so does he, he walks over to me and smiles.

“How are you feeling now” he asks.

“Much better thank you for taking your time to make sure I am okay” I say.

“I am glad I could help” he says.

“I should get going you be okay Zabe”



he walks away but turns around walking back.

“Loosing a child is a pain like no other,I am really sorry that you had to go through this Zabelo” he says giving me a hug

He pulls away and our cheeks touch.

He looks into my eyes and gently brushes my cheek leaning close.

“Ntsika” I say gently pushing him away.

“MaG” I look to the side and Aza is standing with Dedani.

I quickly move my hands from Ntsika’s chest and step back.



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[10/20, 20:25] o: 042

(THIS IS A SPONSORED INSERT)

ZABELO

“Mapholoba” I say.

“Let’s go home Aza” he says.

They walk to his car and he carefully puts her in making sure the seatbelt is on.

“Sthandwa sami it’s not what it looks like I can explain” I say.



“She’s right man I am the one who overstepped,I am really sorry” Ntsika says.

Dedani looks at him disgustingly then me.

I stomp my feet and look at Ntsika.

“Stay out of this please” I say.

Dedani walks over to his side of the car and I follow him.

“Fuze” I say.

He gets in the car and drives off without saying anything.

I walk back to my car and get in following behind them.



He drives to the nearest McDonald's and I follow behind still, I wait as they collect their order and drive out.

I grab my phone and there are a few missed calls from Dedani and my mother.

I drive behind them till we reach home, he drives in and I park behind his car.

They both step out and I walk over to them.

“Go inside my angel” he says.

She hugs me and runs to the house.

“Mapholoba” I say holding his arm.



He looks at my hand disgustingly and I move it.

“Please don’t look at me like that” I say.

“Suka endleleni yami Zabelo” (Move out of my way) he says.

“It’s not what it looks like,I would never cheat on Dedani” I say.

“Yet not so long ago you were in the arms of another man,outside Aza’s school” he says.

“We met by chance Mapholoba,I was in a bad state and he comforted me that’s all. He offered to drive behind me just to make sure I was going to



be okay” I say.

He chuckles and shakes his head.

“You were so comfortable in his arms,I am asking myself have you been seeing him behind my back,do you love him Zabelo ” he asks.

Whoa how are we moving this fast he’s taking all of this out of proportion.

I shake my head and bring my hands together.

“I love you and only you” I say.

“Then why does he keep popping up everywhere you are,what you guys call each other” He asks.



“No” I say.

“Did you ever sleep him because that’s the only reason he wouldn’t stay away” he says.

“I have never slept with him I swear on my baby” I say.

“Musa ukufaka ingane yami emanyaleni akho” he shouts.

“I swear nothing is going on between me and Ntsika” I say.

“That hug says otherwise” he says.

He lets out a sigh and shakes his head.

“If you can easily find comfort in



other man then why am I here” he asks.

He moves but I block his way.

“I saw a baby and I was emotional and he just happened to be there” I say.

“Why didn’t you call me or pick up my calls I would have driven straight to you” he says.

I shut my eyes I wasn’t thinking.

“Move out of the way Zabe” he says.

I shake my head and lean against his driver’s door.

He looks hurt and defeated.



“Zabelo” he shouts.

My mother comes running.

“Kwenzenjani” (What’s going on) she asks.

Dedani says nothing and walks away heading for the gate.

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You would swear I killed someone, Kwazi has been eyeing me and shaking her head.

She sips her tea and claps her hands



in disbelief.

My mother straight out told me she didn't give birth to a harlot.

All of this is getting out of hand.

"So he buys you a car and you cheat on him" Cebo says.

I look at her in total shock, Bandla's persona is slowly rubbing off on her.

"So all of you think you I would cheat on Dedani" I say.

Do they have so little faith in me and I have never cheated.

"No but that's what he thinks, because he found you hugging another man



and apparently you were about to kiss him. Your hands were on his chest Zabe” Lethu says.

I look at Cebo all this he got from Bandla and Bandla from his brother of course.

“Awu kodwa Zabelo” Kwazi says.

My sister is ashamed and shocked on my behalf.

“I didn’t do anything with Ntsika” I shout.

“But you allowed him to drive behind you and comfort you,the same guy Dedani asked you to stop seeing” Cebo says.



“The same guy we all know wants to get into you pants” Kwazi says.

“You guys don’t understand I was having a bad moment and he happened to be there,I am sorry that I am human and I allowed him to comfort me but I love Dedani and I would never hurt him like that. I long told Ntsika that him and I would never be,he tried kissing me but I pushed him that’s why my hands were on his chest. He might want me but there’s only one man for me and that’s Mapholoba” I say.

“Well I think you should tell all to Dedani” Cebo says.



I reach for my phone and make a call but he doesn't answer.

"Still no answer" Kwazi says.

I nod.

"Maybe you should go to his house it's better to explain in person than over the phone" Lethu says.

I look at the time and it's still early for me to drive there.

I hate driving in the dark,I call him again and he doesn't answer.

"Excuse me" I say walking away.

I make my way outside and call Bandla.



He picks up on the first ring.

“I shouldn’t be answering your calls”
he says.

“Stop being dramatic” I say.

“I am disappointed in you MaGodide
but I still love you” he says.

“Cha kodwa vele nina bantu
besifazane anikaze nalunga kusekela
kudala ebhayibhelini,ngisho uEva
mina owahlula unkulunkulu no Adam
behlange” (You women have never
been loyal even from the Bible,I mean
look at Eve even God and Adam were
defeated by her) He says.

I fail to hold in my laughter.



“Bandla where is your brother” I ask.

“I left him at some hotel restaurant for a meeting but he should be home by now” he says.

“Ukwenzi nje ngempela ubhutiwami usungaze umbhanqe nomajazane” (What has my brother done for you to cheat on him with that coat guy) he says.

“Keep talking like that and you’ll see who will cook for you” I say.

“Kungenaphi manje ukudla kulengxoxo” (What’s food got to do with this now) He asks softly.

“Qhubeka nje wena” I say.



He heavily sighs.

“Thina Zabe asina mama nibosizwa ubuhlungu nibuye nganeno” (Zabe we don’t have a mother so hurt with caution) he says.

I shouldn’t be laughing so I hold myself and clear my throat.

“Bye Bandla” I end the call and mama my way inside.

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DEDANI



He chuckles and shakes his head he's raging on the inside,he can barely breathe thinking about Zabe in the arms of another man.

He a drunk today and he doesn't care,the thought of Zabe loving another man and being with him drives him crazy.

He didn't know she could be that comfortable in the arms of another man beside him.

He downs his forth drink and clenches his jaws,maybe Bandla was right and he should just kill the man.

But then the guy is innocent and a



part of him believes Zabe but this is the same guy he found in her house.

This is the same guy who was there for her when he wasn't.

And maybe a part of her likes him but she isn't willing to admit it.

He looks at his phone ringing and cancels the call.

"If it isn't the big man himself" He turns his head and looks at Mpilo.

His eyes move up from her long smooth looking legs all the way to her sculptured figure and breast.

She sits next to him and smiles looking at at his veined arms.



He swallows as her perfume and smile enchants him.

“Mpilo” he says clearing his throat.

“It’s close to a year now and you still haven’t called” she says.

There are many people he didn’t call and decided to leave in the past and she’s one of them.

“And say what Mpilo” he asks.

“How about hey Mpilo it’s me Dedani and I am back can I take you out for coffee” she says.

He looks at her and she’s still beautiful as the last day he saw her.



“I should have Mpilo but I didn’t” he says.

She nods her head and asks the waiter to bring her the same thing he’s having.

She gulps down her drink and places her hand on Dedani’s lap, she runs her hand all the way to his crotch and looks into his eyes.

“Mpilo” he says softly.

“Kanye nje Mapholoba” she says leaning close and brushing her lips against his.

He wants to pull away but she keeps massaging his crotch.



He's drunk horny,frustrated and angry at Zabelo.

His phone rings again and Mpilo reaches for it switching it off.

She takes his hand and places it in between her legs against her warm flesh.

His restraint flies out the window,his pants tighten even more.

She stands up and shoves her thong in his pants pocket walking away.

He breathes heavily and orders another drink before standing up.



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[10/20, 20:25] o: 043

ZABELO

It's midnight when the key rattles and Dedani walks in.

He locks the door behind him and turns the light on.

He makes way in and gets the fright of his life when he sees Zabe sitting on the one sitter couch in her pyjamas.

She looks at him from head to toe



and and lets out a sigh.

He looks drunk but she won't say anything lest this turns into an argument.

She puts down her cup of hot cocoa and stands up.

“MaGodide” he says.

She wants to ask him where he's been but she's afraid of the answer he might give.

“I've been sitting here racking my brain,asking myself if this man truly knows me or he claims to know me. You made it sound as if I keep meeting with Ntsika on purpose,you



asked me to stop talking to him and I did. This was the second time I bumped into him ever since you asked me to cut ties with him. I am sorry that I couldn't be strong enough after a stranger asked me to hold their baby and all I could think off was our baby. I should have told him to leave me alone but I didn't, I am sorry I was human and needed comfort and he was there. If you knew me then you would know that my love and respect for you wouldn't let me look at another man like that" she says.

He swallows still standing there.



“I really hope whatever you were doing was worth it” she says.

She folds the fleece blanket and places it on the armrest of the couch.

“You can take the spare bedroom” she says walking away.

“I was in a meeting it ran late” he says.

“I didn’t ask” she says.

She makes her way too the main bedroom and closes the door behind her.

She leans against the door and bites her lip God knows if he cheated she’ll kill him.



A soft knock comes through and she opens the door,he walks in and clears his throat.

“Bengicela ukushintsa”(May I change clothes) he says.

She doesn't say anything and moves out of the way.

She watches as he takes off his shirt then vest,he then takes off his pants and briefs.

She swallows catching a glimpse of his hard standing weapon.

They are both starved and frustrated.

He turns around and her clit start throbbing,she flesh needing her



urgent attention.

“I am sorry that I came home late MaGodide” he says softly.

He takes a few steps towards her still naked.

He looks into her eyes and runs his hands down her waist.

His weapon pokes her and she decides to hold it.

He lets out a soft moan closing his eyes as her warm hands wrap around his hard dick.

“I am sorry for not believing you” he says slipping his finger inside her flesh.



She's so tight he wonder if he'll last.

It's been long too way too long and she knows she needs this.

"Fuck me Mapholoba I don't want to wait anymore" she says.

He doesn't waste time and lifts her up,he stumbles to the bed.

Zabe's pants get tossed in the air and her

legs spread for her man.

He doesn't need guiding but she holds his dick and rubs it against her slippery hole so much to her pleasure.

He's not inside yet but he can feel



him self ready to cum.

Her soft smooth body and moan against his ear drive him insane.

He slowly pushes it in as it struggles with the tip of his dick only popping inside.

He looks into her eyes and tears fill his up, this almost feels like the first time.

He kisses her forehead and pushes hard groaning.

She moves her waist and hips while he thrusts in and out.

“Oh Mapholoba I missed you” she says.



“I love you so much” he whispers.

He pulls out and looks at her flesh close,he swallows and uses his fingers to part her pussy lips.

He thrust in and watches as she opens up and stretches for him,her walls tighten around him and he groans closing his eyes this is the best feeling ever.

It's early in the morning and Zabe is in the kitchen making breakfast,she's happy and humming along to Jp Cooper's song The Only Reason.

Last light was everything they



needed, she places the food on the table and walks back inside.

It's amazing what a sex workout can do poof she's forgotten all about him coming late.

She bumps into Dedani and he wraps his arms around her pulling her close.

He kisses her and pulls away smiling.

"Good morning sthandwa sam" he says.

"Morning Mapholoba" she says.

"Breakfast is out side" she says

"Thank you" he says.

He grabs her arse and kisses her



walking away,he makes his way to the outside.

Zabe makes her way the bedroom to get her phone,she looks at the clothes on the floor and picks them up. Something falls out of Dedani's pocket and she carefully looks at the thong and swallows.

She picks it up and looks at it,it's definitely not hers and it gets her heart pounding.

Tears fill her eyes but she blinks them off,and she shoves the underwear in her gown pocket walking out.



She passes the kitchen and washes her hands and opens the knife draw.

She pulls out one of the huge knives and heads outside.

“What’s with the knife” Dedani asks.

She forces a smile and hands it to him.

“It’s a bit blunt can you sharpen it for me” she says.

“Now” he asks.

“Yes please” she says settling down.

He stands up and makes his way inside the house to sharpen it.

He comes back after a few minutes



and places the knife on the table.

“This looks amazing thank you sthandwa sam” he says.

She forces a smile and watches him eat, had she known earlier she probably would have put poison in his food.

Hell she wouldn't have allowed him inside her.

She reaches inside her pocket and pulls out the underwear, she throws it at him and it falls on his plate.

He looks at the thong and violently coughs his coffee going down the wrong pipe.



She grabs the knife and stands up putting it against his heart.

His eyes widen and he looks at the knife.

“If you move I am going to plunge this knife into your heart” she says.

“What the hell is this Dedani” she asks.

“It’s nothing Maka Owe” he says.

“Ubona isinakaka uma ubuka mina”
(Do you see fool when you look at me)
she shouts.

She presses the knife and he clenches his jaws.



“MaGodide mana ngichaze” (Wait let me explain) he says breathing heavily.

“Chaza ngilalele” (Explain I am listening) she says.

“I am sorry sthandwa sam” he says trying to move but she presses the knife harder.

He swallows and she looks him straight in the eyes.

“Ngizokubulala mina Dedani” (I’ll kill you Dedani) she says.

Tears fall from her eyes and his glisten with tears.

“Why” she asks.



“Nothing happened I swear,we met at the bar and she kissed and I kisses her back that’s all” he says.

“Okay ungibulisela kuMawakho”
(Okay then great your mother for me)
she says.

Blood comes out as she presses the knife and he groans in pain.

“She took off her underwear and put my hand in between her thighs,she then left me at the bar and went up to her room. I ordered my last drink and ran for my life,I asked the hotel chauffeur to drive me around to clear my mind. I swear to God I didn’t do



anything with that woman” he says through gritted teeth.

“Ngqo ngqo ekhaya” She turns around and looks at Bandla.

Dedani manages to pull back the chair and stand up,he holds her from behind and takes the knife away.

“Leave me alone Dedani” she says softly.

“I didn’t do anything with her” he says

“Bafo what’s going on” Bandla asks.

“Please leave me alone” she says.

“I am sorry that I let it go that far,but I didn’t anything more” he whispers.



“You’re a hypocrite Dedani, you were so angry about Ntsika but went out and did far more worse” she says.

“I know and I am sorry” he says.

She covers her face and breaks down while he holds her from behind.

“Please let me go” she says.

He lets her go and she wipes her tears.

“Uma ungasangifuni shono hayi ukuthi ungizwise ubuhlungu” (If you no longer want me tell me rather than to hurt me) she says walking away.



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ZABELO

It's been a day and I am reeling from what happened,he hasn't called my parents and I haven't said anything to them.

Bandla too promised not to say anything.

I go looking for my father and find him in the garden.

I sit next to him and rest my head on his shoulder.



“Being an adult is no fun” I say.

He chuckles and takes my hand into his.

“Whatever it is I am sure it’s not that bad” he says.

“I almost stabbed Dedani” I tell him.

His hands loosens but eventually tightens over mine.

“I was angry baba and I wanted to plunge the knife into his chest” I say.

“Your need for revenge has always scared me” He says heavily sighing.

“What did he do” he asks.

“I think he cheated but he says



nothing happened,I don't know if I should believe him when he didn't believe me" I say.

"Believe you for what" he asks.

I tell him everything that happened from the Ntsika incident to the Knife one, he shakes his head lets out another sigh.

"You two are about to be married yet you are behaving like kids,what's so hard about sitting down and talking about things. You were wrong to find comfort in that boy when you're wearing another man's ring. And Mapholoba was wrong too for what



he did,however two wrongs don't make a right. And I am not saying cheating is okay but being human is to error we all make mistakes" He says.

I shake my head.

"You once told me that once a person decides to cheat on you it means they are ready to lose you" I say.

"I know but it's not always that simple what you need to know is that temptations come in all form and shape. There will always be someone out there more handsome,sweet and maybe more romantic than your



current partner. But the most important thing is to resist the temptation, remember the grass is not always greener on the other side. Relationships aren't hard Magcina but people make them hard, by their lack of trust, truthfulness and insecurities. In a month's time you're going to be his wife officially yet you don't trust each other" he looks at me and smiles.

"Are you ready to love this man and take him with the good and the bad, not the cheating but the ugly parts of him that will have you wanting to walk away. And is he



ready to do the same because this silly argument has just made wonder if you two are ready” he says.

He stands up and kisses my cheek.

“I love you Ngane yami and whatever you decide I will support you” he says.

“I’ve never raised my hand on your mother and she’s never done the same to me,we didn’t raise violent kids so please never ever resort to violence it’s unfitting” he says.

“I love you baba” I say.

He walks away leaving me to stew in his question.



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We've been sitting here for the past thirty minutes without saying anything, I pull away from his hold and look at him.

The truth is I am the luckiest woman on earth to have this man.

He says nothing more happened and I believe him.

I let out a sigh and clear my throat.

"I am sorry" I say.

"I am the one who is sorry, I shouldn't



have allowed things to go that far. I shouldn't have disrespected you like that ngiyaxolisa MaG" he says.

I nod my head and he takes my hands into his.

"It's not that I don't trust you or didn't believe you,it's just that I was hurt that he was there and I wasn't. That he held you when I was supposed to be the one holding you. I love you Zabelo so much and sometimes the fear of ever losing you gets the better of me" he says.

"Your very smart,beautiful,kind and loving angisayibali keh eye stove



sivutha bhe,you're a great cook and everything a man could ever want. I fear that the likes of Ntsika see what I see and more" he says softly.

"And in all that you forget to mention how I love you and only you, you need to stop thinking like that and start living in the moment. You need to believe in our love and trust on the foundation we've built, I am not going anywhere anytime soon. I want to spend the rest my of life with you and take you with everything that you come with. Trust,communication and understanding is important and we need to strengthen that. I don't want



anyone else but you and I am sorry for putting the knife against your chest” I say.

He chuckles and shows me where the knife was.

“I still can’t believe you made me sharpen the same knife that was going to kill me” he says.

“And if you ever touch another woman’s pussy again I am going to bury you alive Mapholoba, leaving enough room for you to breathe but we both know you are claustrophobic so it doesn’t matter” I say.

“Angiyithandi lento Zabe” he says.



“Then don’t cheat,I’ve seen what cheating does to people it breaks them. I’ve seen my sister go through enormous pain because of Nkanyiso and it wasn’t fun” he wipes my tears and kisses me.

“I am so sorry that I hurt you and I promise I will never do it again,I don’t ever want to see that look on your eyes” he says.

I am not sure if he’s talking about her hurt or murderous look I had.

“We’ve been through a lot MaGodide and I don’t want cheating and the hurting each other to be part of that



statement,I want you to be happy
Sthandwa sam and to give you the
world. I want to be enough for you
because you're enough for me" he
says.

I put my hands on either side of his
face and kiss him.

"Sthandwa sam you're enough for
me" I say.

My phone rings and I pull away
answering it.

"Tell me you did not try to kill
Dedani,what the hell is wrong with
you. Awuyibulali indoda ekupha
kamnandi embhedeni instead you act



crazy burn his clothes or break his car that way you're leaving room for make up sex and reconciliation . You don't get him to sharpen the knife and use it kill him Zabe that's psycho" She lets out a sigh "Now that I've gotten that out of the way when's the funeral Bandla didn't say if he's alive or dead" Lethu says.

I look at Dedani and smile.

"He's still breathing" I say.

"Cebo kuthiwa umngcwabo uhlehlile boh" she shouts.

"Oh okay we love you bye" she says ending the call.



“Let’s go to Paris” he says.

“What” I say.

“Lets give the elders their wedding and go to Paris for as long as you like” he says.

I nod my head and he leans close.

Three months later

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 044

DEDANI



He looks at her sleeping with her mouth slightly open, and smiles looking at the sweat covering her forehead.

Paris was just beautiful being away from everything and loving Zabe has been the thing ever.

For a moment he almost lost this, one stupid moment and he almost lost everything. It's quite strange but he doesn't remember life without Zabe.

He kisses her lips and gently shakes her waking her up.

She yawns and stretches looking at



him, the way she looks at him will sure be the death of him.

He leans close and kisses her.

“Ungivuselani” (Why are you waking me up) she asks in a shaky voice.

“I miss you” he says.

“Pho ungivuselani mina” (Then why are waking me up) she asks.

“Ngiyaxolisa Sthandwa sam” (I am sorry my love) he says.

Her lips curve and she blinks her tears away.

“I just want to sleep” she says.

“Buya uzolala phezu kwami” (come



sleep ontop of me) he says.

Her face lights up and she moves.

“I am sorry for waking you up” he says.

She lets out a sigh and puts her hand inside his pants.

He swallows and closes his eyes as her warm hand handles his cock.

She pulls down his pants and briefly licking her lips and biting the lower one. She takes off her thong and squats massaging his dick one more time before sliding down.

He breathes heavily and swallows as she closes her eyes and starts



moving her arse.

He raises her dress and places his hands over her waist looking at her clean shaven pussy.

She looks into his eyes and places her hands on his chest ridding him.

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The guys are here and the music is playing softly in the background, each one of them drinking their poison.

“How was your trip” Mdu asks.

Dedani chuckles everyone’s been



asking him that question.

“You’re a brave man,I know she’s my sister but I would have left her”

Snqumo says.

“Aren’t you the same person smashing Lethu” Bandla says.

“She’s different” Snqumo says.

The guys starting laughing.

“Yeah right wait until you cheat” Mdu says.

“The trip was great and no my wife did not try to poison or kill me”

Dedani says.

“So for real for real you didn’t smash”



Mdu asks.

He leans back and looks at Snqumo.

“Mistakes happen Mapholobola no one is perfect” Squmo says.

Bandla looks at him waiting for his answer.

“It’s as I told my wife I ran for my life that day” he says.

“Good because Zabe is a good person and I wouldn’t want to choose between the two of you” Bandla says.

Dedani laughs and leans back.

“And who would you choose” Snqumo asks laughing.



“I know who I would choose just don’t ask, and don’t do crazy things to hurt these people because honestly I would choose them over you guys”
Bandla.

“Phixiphixi ndini” (You traitor) Dedani says

“At least now you know so don’t put me in a compromising position please” Bandla says

“Are you sure he’s your brother”
Snqumo asks.

“I am asking myself the same question” Dedani says looking at Bandla.



Bandla gets on his feet and stretches looking at the guys.

“I know where my loyalties lie and I miss my Cebo” he says heading to the kitchen.

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ZABELO

The minute I heard Paris I didn't even look back,I planned every traditional ceremony that need to be done and we had a small white wedding



ceremony. After that I took the longest leave at work and went on to leave my best life.

The trip was exactly what we needed and things have been great.

The man even took me to Egypt for another month and that was phenomenal, one of the best experiences ever.

“So a few things have been happening” Lethu says.

I look at her and laugh.

“I just hope you both know what you’re doing and that I won’t be stuck in middle” I tell her.



“Did he tell you something” she asks.

“No, but I saw you two at Kwazi’s house. I wanted to say something but my husband asked me to stay out of other people’s business” I say.

“Sishise Zabe angithi thina singashadile” she says.

I laugh and pick a few things for the braai.

I bend over and pick up some six gun when Lethu spans me.

“This married life agrees with you, you’re full, glowing and just beautiful” she says.

“Inhliziyo ikhululekile” I say.



She laughs and hits my behind again.

“Badla kamnandi oDedani” she says.

“Stop it” I look at my behind and sigh.

“I need to go back to the gym” I say.

“Why it’s not like you need it” she says.

I point at my belly and raise my eyebrows.

“Sooner or later this will match the bums and I don’t want that” I say.

“Mhmm anyway I think I am falling for Squmo” she blurts out.

“Have you told him this” I ask.

“I am scared Zabe what if he doesn’t



feel the same,I don't think I can handle his rejection. You know this started out as fun but now it's more than that, he's no longer my best friend's dreamy brother. He's the man that makes me scream out his name,he's the man that bends me over and fills me up" I raise my hand and shake my head I may be a tipsy but the guy is still my older brother.

"Okay that's too much information" I say.

She blushes and shrugs.

"I just want him to be mine" she says in sulky voice.



“Well talk to him and find out how he feels” I say.

“And if he doesn’t feel the same” she asks.

“We move on and find the next dreamy man that fills your heart with love and content” I say.

“And to fill me up” she says laughing.

“That too” I say.

“Thank you” she says

We both turn and bump into someone.

“Excuse me” The lady says picking up her purse.



I look at her small bump and shake my head smiling.

“We should have looked where we are going” I say.

“She’s right we are so sorry” Lethu says.

“It’s okay I am the clumsy one,with this pregnancy my mind just doesn’t function that well anymore” she says laughing.

“I completely understand” I say.

“We should go” Lethu says.

We walk past and she loudly clears her throat.



“I am sorry but can I buy you lunch” she says nervously.

I look at Lethu and she shrugs.

“I am sorry it’s just that I don’t have friends and you are the first two women to actually smile at me without me handing them a business deal or tender” she says softly.

“We are having a braai you can come along” Lethu says.

“Yeah you can come with us unless you won’t be comfortable” I say.

“I don’t want to impose” she says.

“It’s a weekend surely you don’t want to be alone and we really don’t mind”



Lethu.

“Oh okay can I bring anything” she asks.

“Just yourself and that bun in your oven” I say.

She nods smiling.

“We just invited a stranger to the house” Lethu whispers.

“She looks harmless” I whisper back

“Yes, but no one goes around with crazy written on their forehead” she says.

I laugh as she drags me to the till.

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“Is she still following us” Lethu asks.

I look at the rearview mirror and nod.

“She must be lonely and we must be stupid drunk to invite a stranger” she says.

“Says the person who invited the whole store” I say.

She picks up the empty bottle of wine and shakes her head.

“We weren’t supposed to drink this on our way there” she says.

I nod my head something about wine



makes us happy.

I drive through the gate and she follows parking behind me.

We step out of the car carrying the groceries, while she steps out of hers carrying desert.

We make our way inside the house and find Kwazi behind the stove.

“Finally I was about to send out a search party” she says.

“We come bearing gifts and a guest” Lethu says.

Snqumo walks in followed by the others.



“Guys this is Mpilo we recently met at the grocery shop, Mpilo this everyone” I say.

“Where’s Mapholoba” I ask.

He walks in followed by Bandla and stops on his tracks looking at me.

“Before I forget Bandla and Cebo are the only single people here” Lethu says looking at Snqumo.

“Sukela nini uSnqumo ejola” Bandla asks

Lethu tilts her head and folds her arms looking at Snqumo.

My brother clears his throat and smiles.



“I am very much taken Bandla” he says.

Bandla claps his hands and looks to the side.

I roll my eyes even before a guest they just have to show their colourful colours.

I walk over to Dedani and hook my arm over his.

“Sorry about that” I say to Mpilo.

She nervously smiles.

“Let me introduce you this is my husband Dedani Ngcobo, Mapholoba this is Mpilo” I say.



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[10/20, 20:25] o: 045

SNQUMO

The night is going well even the lady they picked up from the shop is starting to loosen up.

He looks at his sisters and smiles both beautiful and blessed.

Both married to loving and respectful men, he turns his head and looks at the guys the circle he never knew he



needed.

He finally looks at Lethu and smiles, how they went from goofing around about to being in each other's bed is beyond him.

She's loud, crazy, smart and beautiful a perfect combination if you ask him.

He stands up from his chair and excuse's himself, he makes his way inside the house and Lethu follows him.

"I hear you're taken" Lethu says.

He looks at her with a mischievous smile.

"Some crazy lady coerced me into



saying that” he says.

“Oh really and here I thought you are your own man” she says.

“I am” he says.

She lets out a sigh and walks over to him.

She places her hands over his chest and and looks into his eyes.

His last real relationship didn't end well,he got cheated on and now he doesn't know if he wants to go down that same road again.

“Am I wrong for wanting to be yours” she asks.



He shakes his head of course not he wants her too.

“What if it doesn’t work out” he asks.

He doesn’t want seen it sound weak but he has to voice out his concerns.

“What if we hurt each other and things never be the same” he says.

“But what if we work out,what if this will be the best thing we ever do for ourselves. What if we love each other so much this becomes a beautiful thing” she says.

The possibility is frightening yet beautiful and exciting he can’t help it but smile.



“Take a chance on me Mphemba”
she says softly.

She leans close and kisses him.

“Ngizophatha kahle” (I will treat you
well) she whispers.

He pulls away and looks into her eyes.

“Loving you scares me” he whispers.

“It scares me too Mphemba but I
want it all” she says.

He smiles and places his hands on
her face.

“I want you” he says kissing her.

“Mxm” Bandla says walking in.

They both pull away and look at him.



“Engathi ningashaywa yiZulu” (May lightning strike the both of you) he says walking past.

“Ngibanyanya kabi abantu ababukisayo” (I hate show offs) he says

They both laugh and Lethu wraps her arms around his neck.

He looks at her and sighs hoping for the best,he’s not growing any younger.

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DEDANI

He sits on the edge of the bed and heavily sighs, what are the odds of Mpilo ending up at his house. He rubs his hands together and swallows there's no way that child is his, but either way he has to tell Zabe.

Zabe walks in dressed in her nightwear, he looks at her smooth skin and her beautiful smile.

Damn he's the luckiest man alive to have such a woman in his life.

She gets on the bed and sits behind him wrapping her arms around him



and laying her head on his back.

“What’s wrong” she asks.

He remains silent and heavily sighs.

“You’ve been acting strange all evening” she says.

“I don’t know where to start MaGodide” he says softly.

“Start at the beginning sthandwa sam” she says.

He lets out a brief sad chuckle, it’s easier said than done.

“It’s about Mpilo” he says breathing heavily as his heart continues pounding.



“What about her” she asks.

“She’s the woman from that other night” he softly.

A moment of silent passes and his heart stops for a second or two.

“Is she carrying your child” she asks in the softest voice.

“I don’t know” he responds.

She lets go of him and peels the duvet getting inside.

He turns around and crawls over to her.

“Say something” he says.

She stares into his eyes without



saying anything.

“Zabe please” he says.

“Congratulations Mapholoba” she says in a shaky voice.

His heart shatters and he looks away.

Zabe turns off her bedside lamp and pulls the duvet over her head.

He walks over to her side and carefully peels the covers.

“Please don’t do this just talk to me shout,yell hit me if that will you feel better” he says.

She opens her mouth but nothing comes out,her tears falls instead.



Her lips quiver and she covers her face breaking down.

He clenches his jaws and stands up stepping back realising the depth of his betrayal.

His back hits the wall and he slowly slides to the floor.

“I am so sorry sthandwa sam” he says.

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ZABELO



I wake up to him still on the floor, I get out of the bed and kneel down gently shaking him.

He raises his head and looks at me.

“You should get some sleep” I say.

I walk past him and he grabs hold of my hand.

“Ngicela sikhulume MaGodide” (Can we please talk) he says.

“What is there to talk about Dedani” I ask.

“I want us to talk about last night and fix things” he says.

“Will talking about this change



anything, Will it undo what has already happened” I ask.

“I just want to explain please don’t shut me out” he says.

“There’s nothing to explain Dedani, you went out there and slept with her. You then had the nerve to come home and sleep next to me, you looked me in the eye and lied to me and now you want to explain” I say.

“Kube yiphutha” (It was a mistake) he says.

“A mistake is when you break a glass not my heart” I say.

He gets on his knees and holds my



other hand.

“I didn’t mean for all this to happen”
he says.

I yank my hand from his hold and
blink my tears away.

I silently cried my self to sleep and I
am not doing the crying this morning.

“I’ll be in the kitchen making
breakfast” I

walk away and make my way to the
bathroom to fresh up and head to the
kitchen.

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I made a full English breakfast fit for a king,he struggles to eat his food probably thinking I poisoned him.

I thought about it but then I wouldn't want to hurt to his family like that.

He sighs and pushes his plate away.

“Zabe what is this first you don't want to talk about this,you don't even look angry and now breakfast” he says.

I look at him lord knows I am fuming and ready to burn this house down,but the hurt and disappointment has rendered me powerless and in disbelief.



It's as if I am in a dream and soon I am going to wake up.

Him not knowing if the child is his or not means they slept together and my brain doesn't know how to process that.

I push away my own plate and stand up walking away.

"Dammit Zabelo do something say anything that shows how you're feeling right now,not knowing what's on your mind scares me" he shouts.

I turn around and face him.

"I hate you,you disgust me Dedani there I've said something. You've hurt



me in the worst possible way and I can't even explain it. At the back of my mind I always had doubts about that night, I kept waiting and waiting for some girl to show and claim to be pregnant by you. But it never came it never it and I started believing what you told me, now my worst fear has come to life and I don't know what to do. You've rendered me so helpless I struggling to breathe, you should be proud of yourself" I shout back.

"Zabe please don't say that" he says.

"Why? It's the truth you've succeeded in breaking me Mapholoba she's going to give you something I



haven't" I say.

He shakes his head.

"I don't even know if it's mine"he says.

I swallow the lump on my throat.

"Well you should find her and find out but either way I am done" I look at my wedding ring and slip it off.

He walks over and holds my hands.

"Zabe please don't do that" he pleads.

"I will be filing for divorce Mapholoba and I hope you bring your best lawyer because I am taking you to the cleaners" I walk over to the table and place the ring there.



I walk away but he pulls my arm.

“You’re my wife and you’re not leaving me” he says.

“You’re right wife not prisoner,now let go of my arm before I have you arrested for assault” he slowly let go and steps back.

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 046

ZABELO

“I am sorry okay,I made a mistake” he



says.

“This is not a mistake Dedani, you refused to hear me out and instead of talking to me you went out there and cheated on me” I shout.

“And I am sorry sthandwa sam, if I could take it all back I would but I can't. I am truly sorry Zabelo that whole night was a mistake, I messed up and I am willing to do anything to fix things” he says.

“There's no fixing this Mapholobola, if that child is yours I will never forgive you. I can't believe you slept with her and then came home home to me, I



am disgusted just looking at you” I say.

He shamefully looks down.

“It doesn’t justify what I did but we used protection that I swear on my mother’s grave” he says.

I shake my head as the tears fall.

“Fact remains you slept with her and now there’s child involved,what if you’re the father how am I supposed to forgive you,how am I supposed to move past that” I wipe my tears and shake my head.

“No man has been very hurt me like this” I say.



“Baby I am sorry” he says bringing his hands together.

I struggle to breathe and place a hand over my chest feeling light headed.

He holds me before I hit the floor.

“Breathe” he says calmly.

I shake my head struggling.

“MaGodide breathe sthandwa sam” I breathe looking into his eyes.

How can I still love him even after what I know.

“You’re doing good” he says softly.

He gently runs his fingers down my cheek.



“On my baby’s grave if that child is yours I will never forgive you Mapholoba,we can’t lose ours and you go and give someone else a child” I say.

He wipes my tears and clenches his jaws.

“I love you more than anything in this world,and I am sorry for hurting you it was never my intention” he says.

“But you did” I say.

“I know” he says softly.

He wipes my cheeks and looks into my eyes.

“I am not going to lose you Zabelo,I



know I messed up but I am not about to spend the rest of my life without you by my side” he says.

He leans close and kisses me.

I shut my eyes and let him.

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I packed a bag and called Kwazi to fetch me,I left the car and took only the bag. I couldn't bare any more of being in his presence.

I wipe my tears and look outside the window,it hurts knowing that he lied



so easily and with conviction that I believed him.

Not only did he break my trust in him he opened his huge hole in my heart.

Kwazi holds my hand and sighs.

“Magcina talk to me” she says.

I look at her and breathe out heavily.

“That woman we brought to the house is the same one Dedani cheated with, last night he confessed to not only kissing her but sleeping with her. When I asked if the baby is his he couldn't give me a definite answer because there's a possibility it might be his. He says they used a



condom but I don't believe him anymore,he lied before so what's to say he's not lying now" I say.

My stomach grumbles and I look her.

"Can you buy me wings" I say.

She nods and drives to the nearest chicken lickin and proceeds to the drive through,she orders wings and proceeds to gets the order driving up to the parking.

"Step out of the car" she says.

I step out of the car and she walks over to my side.

"I am sorry" she says hugging me.



I hold on tight and cry so hard.

“Hush now thumbu kaMama” she says softly.

She pulls away and wipes my tears.

“You want Snqumo and I to pay him a visit” she asks.

I shake my head the man is no longer my boyfriend he’s my husband.

“Okay can baba pay him a visit then” she says.

I shake my head smiling.

The last time my father paid him a visit they both ended up in the hospital.



I open the passenger door and grab my wings sitting down.

“A part of me had already reconciled with the fact that he did more that night, but now that he said it with own mouth I don’t know what to do Sisi” I say.

“I know but I am proud of you for not lashing out” she says crouching to my level.

“Should I forgive him” I ask.

“That’s up to you Zabe, you’re the one betrayed and hurting here” she says.

“I never thought he was the cheating type but I guess I was wrong” I say.



She laughs softly and sighs.

“All men cheat Zabe and that’s the most brutal truth most women don’t want to accept. If it’s not physical then it’s emotional,men are good at hiding things which is why most woman believe that some men don’t cheat. In life and in people you should always leave room for disappointment,we are humans afterall and we’re far from being perfect” she says.

I refuse to believe the notion that all men cheat.

Maybe some but not all right or



maybe I am part of those who refuse to believe the “brutal” truth.

“I am sorry that you’re hurting like this but you’ll get better, this is nothing compared to what you’ve been through and he’s a fool for cheating on you” she says smiling.

“But it still hurts” I say.

“I know” she says

“Now eat up so I can take you home” she says.

I bring the box of wings closer to my nose salivating.

I start eating and everything seems to calm down, now that I think about it I



should have stabbed his cheating
arse.

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DEDANI

He looks at his parents face and
swallows,the same look Zabe gave
him of hurt of disappointment.

“So what you’re telling us is that
Makoti left because you cheated and
got another woman pregnant” His
father says.



“I cheated Baba but that child could be anyone’s. I would never do that to Zabe, Mpilo and I used protection. And when Zabe asked me if the child is mine I said I don’t know. The condom could have burst and with that possibility there’s one of me being the father” he says.

His mother claps her hands and shakes her head in disbelief.

“You talk about not doing that to Zabe but you’re already did,you’ve hurt her” his mother says.

“Waze wanamanyala Dedani” his father says.



Bandla joins them and looks at Dedani from head to toe.

“Baba I messed up but I can’t lose her, she’s already talking divorce and leaving me. All I am asking is that we ask for a meeting with her and her parents and talk about this” he says.

“There’s nothing to talk about you cheated” Bandla says.

“It was a mistake” Dedani says.

“Yeah right mr righteous” Bandla says.

“I am human Bandla and I made a mistake” he says.

“No, you don’t get to blame being a shitty cheating husband on being



human” Bandla says.

“That’s enough” Their father says.

Bandla turns and looks at his parents.

“Ningamzisi myekeni uZabelo amashiye she deserves a loyal man,someone who only has eyes for her and only her” he says.

“I am warning you Bandla” Dedani says.

“Mxm ufuna ukwenzani you’ll cheat on me too and get yourself another brother” Bandla asks.

“Bandla please” his mother says.

“He could have hurt anyone but he



chose Zabe,why?” He asks.

“I was drunk,angry and I couldn't get the picture of her in that guy's arms out of mind” he admits.

“Well then your mistake has cost you your wife” Bandla says.

Their father heavily sighs.

“Bandla is right and if uMakoti wants to leave you then there's nothing we can do about it,you chose to do this now you need to deal with the consequences of your actions. I won't lie I am truly disappointed in you Dedani” his father says.

Bandla shake his head looking at him.



“I am disappointed in myself too Baba for hurting my wife and breaking her,she was crying Baba so please help me make things right with my wife” he says.

“Shame” Bandla says walking away.

He lets out a sigh Bandla did ask for him not to be put in a compromising position.

He looks at his ring God knows he would rather lose it all but not his wife,he sighs once again the first step is to find Mpilo and ask about her pregnancy.



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[10/20, 20:25] o: 047

DEDANI

It's been a week since Zabe left the house,he feels like a failure and regrets ever looking at another woman.

The house feels so cold without her,he only comes home to sleep and bath.

He can't even call or send a text because she blocked him on all



social media and blocked his calls too

He grabs his phone and logs on to his emails.

Dear Mrs Ngcobo

I don't think it's fair to start off without apologising from the bottom of my heart. I deeply apologise for my indiscretions and as per my last email, I would love to meet and discuss our marital issues. Your anger and hurt is warranted and felt however I believe given the chance I



can soothe the wounds from which your pain comes from.

It is with great sadness that I type this email, the house feels empty and dull without you. Ngiyakukhumbula MaGodide.

Sincerely

Mapholobola

He sends the email and puts his phone down, from being the happiest man a week ago to being miserable now.



“Dedani” he raises his eyes and looks at Mpilo.

She pulls the chair and settles down.

“I swear I didn’t know she was wife” she says.

He nods his head and sighs.

“Is the baby mine” he asks.

She shakes her her No and relief washes over him.

“I slept with someone else and he’s the father,at first I wasn’t sure and I thought maybe the condom broke because we were both drunk and not in our right minds. But when the doctor calculated it showed the guy



as the father. I am really sorry if I cause you an trouble” she says softly.

“It’s not your fault I should have walked away that night but I didn’t,I am the married one here and I should have known better” he says.

“You don’t look so good” she says.

“My wife left me after I told her the whole truth,I am not okay” he says looking at the time.

“Maybe I can speak to her and make her understand,I am the one who seduced you” she says.

He shakes his head and stands up.

“I could have easily said no Mpilo



despite my drunken state but I didn't,talking to my wife will only make things worse please stay away from her. Goodbye Mpilo and good luck with the pregnancy” he walks away with some weight off his shoulder.

The truth is he wouldn't have made a good father to that child.

He cheated yes but his intentions was never to make a child,he wasn't thinking that day and now that whole night has cost him his wife.

He walks to the car and gets in logging onto to his emails.



He almost breaks the phone when he sees she hasn't responded.

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ZABELO

She's sitting on the floor facing the tv and drinking her smoothie when Aza walks over sizing her up.

She's cutting down on food and hoping her work at the gym shows.

Aza reaches for the tv remote and changes the channel taking her



remote with her to the couch.

This has been happening for the past week, you would swear she's not welcome.

"MaG" Aza says.

"Yebo" Zabe says.

"Uhamba nini" (when are you leaving) Aza asks.

Zabe almost chocks on her drink.

"Angihambi" (I am not leaving) she says.

"Usuzohlala nathi futhi" (Are you going to stay with us again) Aza asks.

Zabe nods her head.



“Ngobani” (Why) Aza asks.

“Because I miss you guys” Zabe says.

“Mhmm okay but don’t touch my remote okay, you can use the other tv but this one Mkhulu said is mine” She says softly.

Zabe tilts her head looking at her serious face.

Since when is Aza president of this house but then again toddlers are demons.

Her parents join them and great before sharing a couch and cuddling.

She misses this being held and kissed on the forehead.



She misses waking up to her husband, calling him to bring something she forget from the shop and laughing because he's good at making her laugh.

“Baba since when does Aza own the tv remote” Zabelo asks.

“On weekends she wakes up early to watch her cartoons” he says.

Yeah Aza hogs has been hogging and hiding the remote all week.

“Well she told me not touch her remote” Zabe says.

Aza folds her arms looking at her.

“Uyangiceba MaG”(Are you telling on



me MaG) she says softly.

Zabe shakes her head.

“Ngizobiza uMalume akuthathe engathi uzosihlupha niyambona kodwa gogo” (I am going to ask uncle to fetch, it seems like you are going to trouble us) Aza says.

Mphemba laughs and looks at Zabe.

“You need to do your hair your in-laws are coming this evening” Her mother says.

“She looks good” Mphemba says.

“Mphemba she looks like a homeless person” Her mother says.



“I am still right here Ma” Zabe says.

“I know and what you should be doing is going to the salon” Her mother says.

Zabe rolls her eyes and stands up it's too early for such.

With work and going to gym she's got no time to make herself pretty.

She makes her way to her room and closes the door.

Cutting down on calories has been hard her body is struggling to adjust.

She gets on the bed and closes her eyes sleeping.



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Mphemba asked that the meeting only be between Zabe her husband and the parents.

Mphemba looks at Mapholoba senior and sighs,they've become more than just in-laws. They have become friends and occasionally play golf together,they have more in common than they ever thought.

It's funny how they have been brought together by these two



people, and now suddenly their friendship and family stand on the line.

Mapholobola senior clears his throat and looks at Zabelo, his beautiful daughter-in-law.

“It’s good to see you Makoti even under such circumstances, Dedani told us what happened between you two. As your parents we want you to know that we will accept anything you say and wish. I have seen how you’ve loved my son and brought joy into his life, today we’re speaking because of you and it breaks my heart that he went outside of your



union. We can sit here and ask for your side of the story and convince you to forgive him, but we are not the ones betrayed and it wouldn't be fair to tell you how to feel and deal with this matter" Mapholobola senior says.

"Mapholobola is right times have changed and we can't force you to do something you don't want, we can't force you to go back to your husband if you don't want that" Mphemba says.

Dedani clears his throat and asks to speak.

"MaGodide I am not trying to force you to do anything, I know that I



wronged you sthandwa sam. I know that you're hurting and it's because of me I know that and hate myself for making you go through this. All I am asking for is another chance Zabelo and I promise I will make it up to you for the rest of my living days. You said if that child is mine you would never forgive me, I spoke to Mpilo and the child is not mine. I love you Zabelo and only you please give me a chance to show you how sorry I am" he says.

"Zabe" Her mother says.

She raises her eyes and look at Dedani.



She reaches for the brown envelope and pushes it across the table to him.

“I spoke with my lawyer so I advise you to speak to yours and go over these papers. I don’t think I can trust you again Mapholoba, I love you and I probably will never love like this again but my heart refuses to be with a man who cheats and lies. And please stop sending me emails if you wish to discuss anything with regards to our marriage you can contact my lawyer” she says standing.

Dedani opens the envelope and looks at the divorce papers.



His hearts races and he stands up.

“Wathelwa ngenyongo MaGodide you can’t do this” he says.

“You should have thought about that before you slept with a woman that wasn’t me” she says

“Zabe please” he pleads.

“Zabelo” her mother says.

“Mama please don’t this man knows how much I love him,he knows that this isn’t an easy decision” Zabe says.

“Then don’t do it” Dedani says .

Zabe shakes her head and walks away.



Her vision gets blurry and she misses a step hitting the floor.

“Zabe” Dedani says rushing to her.

“Ntobe amanzi” Mphemba shouts.

“Call an ambulance Mawabo”
Mapholoba says to his wife.

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 048

ZABELO

She opens her eyes and finds Dedani next to her holding her hand, she tries



to take her hand away but Dedani holds on tight.

She looks around and sighs the last time she was here they had lost their baby.

She must have hit the fall real hard if they brought her in.

“How are you feeling” he asks.

“Tired” she says.

“You haven’t been eating right MaGodide” he says.

“I am on a diet” she says.

“Why, because you’re perfect just the way you are” he says.



“Yet you still cheated” she says.

He lets go of her hand and rubs his forehead.

Until she heals all their conversations will always come back to this.

“Yes I cheated on you Zabelo,not because you lack anything but because of my own selfish reasons” he says.

“Then I guess you nothing but a selfish man” she says.

He lets out a sigh nods.

“I won’t sign those damn paper,you might want a divorce but I don’t so just like you I am not going to



something I don't want" he says.

She chuckles and looks at him in disbelief.

"Tell me you're joking Dedani,tell me this is a fucken joke you hurt me and refuse to do the right thing which is letting me go" she says.

"Right for who" Dedani asks.

"Right for me,my mental health as well as emotional well-being" she says.

"What's right for you is to start eating right and taking care of yourself and that baby you're carrying" he says

She looks at him for a good while and



blinks confused by his statement.

He smiles and places his hand over her belly.

“We are pregnant MaGodide” he says softly.

She looks at him maybe this is his way of wanting to trap her.

“You fainted because you’ve been denying your body the right nutrients and it affected you blood pressure” he says.

“Me” she says softly.

He nods his head and looks at her eyes well up.



She places her one hand over his and covers her her mouth with the other.

“A baby” she says.

He nods his head and tears fall from her eyes.

“Ungimithisile Mapholobola” (You got me pregnant) she says laughing.

She laughs as her emotions get the better of her.

He nods his head once again and smiles.

She stops smiling and looks at him.

“What’s wrong” he asks.

“What if something bad happens and



we lose this one too” she says.

“Nothing is going to happen to our baby,I spoke to the doctor and he assured me that with regular monitored check ups everything is going to be fine. I promise I won’t cause you any stress Zabe,if you want me to stay away then I will stay away for as long as you want” he says.

The door opens and Lethu followed by Cebo walk in.

He clears his throat and stands up.

“I love you and thank you” he says kissing her lips.



She looks into his eyes there's no doubt that this man loves her but he wronged her.

"I will be outside" he says.

He turns and greets Lethu and Cebo walking past them.

"I hear we are having a baby" Cebo says.

"Seniqabulana futhi" (You're now kissing again) Lethu says.

"It's not what it looks like" she says.

"Qhubani Zabe asinijaji" (Carry on we're not judging" Lethu says.

They walk over and give her a hug.



“All those crunches and dieting kanti there’s a person inside you” Cebo says.

She smiles still in disbelief she’s happy and sad, these news come at a complicated time.

“Now everything makes sense, my appetite and weird cravings and also the sex. Oh the sex I am horny as we speak and I don’t know what to do” She says.

Cebo laughs.

“We can buy you some toys” Cebo suggests.

Lethu looks at her and laughs.



“Ngifuna umsipha Cebo” (I want the real deal) Zabe says.

Lethu laughs and sighs.

“Well you know your situation so I think we should go with Cebo’s idea and get you toys” she says.

“Or you could reach an agreement with Mapholoba, I mean anything to keep mother and baby happy right” Cebo says shrugging.

Zabe looks at them Cebo’s idea sounds better than toys.

She doesn’t want to do all the work and what will happen if she goes for toys.



She breathes out heavily and leans back resting.

“I miss him” she admits.

“We know” Cebo says.

“And I don’t think I can do this alone,my last pregnancy was beautiful it was everything I prayed for. But now I am angry and hurt but at the same time I want him to be here for us,am I stupid for not wanting to do this alone and wanting him by my side” she asks.

“Your not stupid you’re a mother and you want the father to be present,you don’t want him to miss out on



anything and you need dick in between” Lethu says.

Zabe laughs and shakes her head.

“She’s right you’re not stupid,you’ve done this before and there were complications along the way so no is going to blame you for wanting him to be there when you need him” Cebo says.

“Ey kodwa the universe has a funny way of doing things,talk about a bad joke. But we’re here for you and this little human you have inside of you. We want you to know to that whatever decision you take we’ll



support you,I am not saying forgive him but no one is perfect Zabe” she says.

“I know but it still hurts” Zabe says.

Thinking about it ignorance is bliss and she would have been fine going about her life not knowing.

“And that is why you should take your time” Cebo tell her.

She nods maybe time will make things clear.

“I am pregnant” she says smiling.

“And we’re happy for you” Cebo says.

Lethu’s mouth drops and she smiles.



“I am going to be the best Malumekazi” She says excitedly.

They look at her

“Phela lengane izothi malume endodeni yami” she says proudly.

Zabe laughs trust Lethu to think for the future.

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DEDANI

With that IV the doctor said she could go home,he parks out her father’s gate and releases a sigh.



“How are you feeling” he asks.

“Overwhelmed by different emotions but grateful that I am carrying another child” she says.

He nods and looks at her ring she’s still wearing it.

If she hadn’t given him the divorce papers he would be hopeful.

“I thought about it and I am going to sign the divorce papers, it’s selfish of me to want you to forgive me after hurting you and lying. I don’t want to cause you any more stress MaGodide and I don’t want anything bad to happen to the baby. I want to be there



for you and the baby with no expectation that's if you allow me to be there" He says softly.

She looks at him and nods her head.

"I don't know if I will ever forgive you or if I will ever look at you the same way I did before, but this baby changes everything. A few hours ago I wanted nothing to do with you and now I don't know. I want you to be there at every doctor's appointment, I want you to hold my hand and tell me that our baby is going to make it. I want to pray with you for this life I am carrying, I don't want to go through what I went through because I am not



strong enough” she says softly.

He holds her hand and blinks his tears.

“I shouldn’t have walked away that day,I should have stayed and listened” he says.

“It doesn’t matter anymore Mapholobola what’s done is done” she says.

He looks at her and forces a smile.

“If you want me to be there then I will,you can call me anytime of the day or night and I will be there” he says.

She clears her throat and looks



outside the window.

This is embarrassing and somewhat desperate but unlike her first pregnancy,sex is what she wants and thinks about.

“I have needs Mapholoba” she says softly.

“Its okay you don't have to worry about anything foot rubs,back rubs,cravings I'll do it all” he says.

“I have other needs Fuze” she says looking at him.

He swallows realising her other needs means sex.

“You'd want me to help you with that”



he says.

She nods her head looking down.

He smiles like a fool maybe just
maybe not all is lost.

“Anytime you need me just call” he
says.

He lifts her chin up and leans close
brushing his lips against hers.

He kisses her softly and pulls away
still holding her chin.

“I am sorry for breaking us sthandwa
sam” he says.

He leans in again and kisses her
softly, she surrenders to his warm



touch and wraps her hands around his neck.

A knock on the window and they pull away.

Zabe opens the door and doesn't dare look at her father, Aza climbs in holding her remote.

“Malume” she says excitedly.

Dedani reaches for her and sits her on his lap.

“Sawubona Mkhwenyanya” Mphemba says.

“Yebo baba” Dedani says.

He looks at them and smiles walks



away.

Aza pokes Zabe's belly and laughs.

"Mkhulu said you swallowed another baby" she says.

Zabe shakes her head news sure travel fast in this family.

"Mina ngiyakuboleka Gogo said I should be nice to you because you going through a lot, she says you're a squatter but I should be nice still" she says handing Zabe the remote.

Zabe laughs and takes the remote.

"Thank you baby" Zabe says.

She folds her arms and looks at Zabe.



“You need to stop swallowing babies it’s wrong okay” she says slowly.

Zabe nods her head smiling.

Dedani looks at her and sigh there’s a lot of making to do here.

He needs to stop saying sorry and prove that he’s sorry,he needs to gain her trust and make her believe in their love again.

He grew up with both parents and he wants that for his children too.

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 049



ZABELO

It's early in the morning and I am standing outside his doorstep,we've been doing this for two weeks now and each moment leaves me wanting more.

It turns out this baby was made on the very same night he cheated,what are the odds. I am starting to think Lethu was right and the universe is playing some bad joke on me.

All along I thought this pouch was all fat little did I know,I was holding a



person.

I tap my foot looking at the time,he knows I pass by for quickies every now and then.

I ring the bell once again and sigh,if I don't leave then I will be stuck in traffic for nothing.

I grunt walking away even the simplest of things are too much for him these days,but no not cheating he's number one at that.

“Woosah” I say.

I shake my head this thing isn't working for me.

I click my tongue and get into my car



driving off.

I get to work and find Lethu already here.

“Good morning to you too Zabe” she says.

“Morning” I say.

I was looking forward to having these doughnuts but I’ve lost my appetite.

“And then what’s with the long face”Lethu asks.

“I passed by the house and Dedani wasn’t there” I say.

“Oh” she says.



I look at her after going out of my way to get her these doughnuts that's all she has to say.

“Really Lethu” I say.

I don't know what for but I need comforting, some emotional support would do.

“Oh come on Zabe it's not like he's dead or something, he probably went out for a jog or maybe he had an early meeting” she says.

“And he didn't tell me” I say.

“Was he supposed to tell you MaGodide” she asks.

“He's still my husband Lethu” I say



softly.

“One you are getting a divorce from” she says.

“Do you think he’s seeing someone” I ask.

She lets out a sigh and shrugs.

“I don’t know but between servicing you and work I doubt he he has time for other things” she says.

“Maybe I should go to his office and surprise him” I say.

She tilts her head to the side with her eyes wide open.

“Is this you talking or the hormones



because I don't know anymore" she says.

She's judging me yet when Snqumo calls she leaves everything for him.

"I miss him Lethu seeing him every morning makes my whole day" I say.

She laughs and claps her hands.

"You mean having him every morning makes your day" she says.

Same difference.

"Don't judge me you've given yourself up to Snqumo and no one is saying anything" I say.

"Khona ngizinikeleli shame endodeni



yami bandla ngingayifela ngisho ukufela,uyabona kulesa sifuba ngilala ngize ngikhohlwe ukuthi nginomndeni eyakho no Cebo angisayibali” (I’ve given myself to that man,I would even die for him. I sleep on his chest and forget that I have a family) she says laughing.

“But your case is different Zabe you’re able to shag him because you still love him dearly,and he loves you too but what happens when all this stops and he signs those papers” she asks.

I shrug honestly I don’t want to think about all that,I just want to enjoy



what's left of this marriage and exhaust my conjugal rights.

“I need to call Cebo you're stressing me out” she says.

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DEDANI

He's sitting up straight chairing a board meeting when the door opens and Zabe peeks. She waves at Bandla then looks at him with the brightest smile on her face before closing the



door.

He looks at Bandla and clears his throat.

“Gentlemen please excuse me I have an urgent matter to attend to” he says standing up.

He grabs his phone and walks out heading to his office.

Bandla follows behind him.

“Uyaphi” (where are you going) Dedani asks.

“To your office I want to see Zabe” Bandla says.

“She’s not your wife Bandla” he says.



“I know but she’s yours and that makes her my sister in law and favourite person in the word” Bandla says.

They get up his office and walk in finding her sitting on Dedani’s chair.

He’s left no choice but to sit on the other chair.

“MaG” Bandla says.

She looks at Bandla and smiles.

“Aw sukanini madoda angibazi mina ubuhle obunje” Bandla says.

She blushes and looks away leaving a smile on Dedani’s face.



Despite it all he chose well his wife is beautiful.

Zabe turns and looks him.

“Mapholoba” she says with a mischievous smile on her face.

“MaGodide” he says.

He knows that look very well.

“I came by the house this morning and you weren’t there” she says.

“I spent the night at Bandla’s place” he says softly.

Zabe looks at Bandla for confirmation.

“The man is tired Zabelo” Bandla



says.

“You’re overworking him and he needed a break that’s why he slept at my house” Bandla says.

“Konje uyisilima wena” Dedani says.

Zabe looks at him and swallows.

“Ngiyakuhlupha mina” (I am troubling you) she asks.

He shakes his head and Bandla laughs.

“Ak’simina sthandwa sami yiqolo” (It’s not me my love it’s my back) he says.

“But don’t worry I gave some Zulu



concoction he'll be fine" Bandla says.

Dedani give him a look and he raise his hands standing up.

"It was good seeing you MaGodide"
Bandla says walking out and closing the door.

"Awusafuni yini" (You don't want anymore) she asks.

He smiles and walks around to her.

He kneels in front of her and puts his head on her lap.

He would do this after a long day at work.

She places her hands over his head



and strokes him.

“I do, but work has been hectic and I am tired MaGodide” He says softly.

“I am sorry” she says.

He raises his head looking at her and smiles.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you” she says.

The door opens and they both look.

“Oh I am sorry Mr Maphumulo you left your things in the boardroom” the woman says walking in.

He gets on his feet and clears his throat.



“Thank you” he says.

“Pleasure” she says placing his belongings on the table.

“Uhm Kelly this my wife Zabelo Ngcobo, MaGodide this is our new accountant Kelly” he says introducing them.

“It’s a pleasure meeting you Zabelo” she says.

“Mrs Ngcobo” Zabelo says.

“Of course Mrs Ngcobo” Kelly says smiling.

“I will be in my office in you need anything” She says to Dedani before walking out.



Zabe swallows and lets out a sigh, the little green eyed monster has got its grips on her.

Dedani helps her up and holds her hand walking over to couch.

They both settle down and he lifts her chin up.

“She wants you” Zabelo says.

“I am a married man MaGodide and I learnt my lesson, slowly losing you is hard sthandwa sam. Being in that house alone is hard and not waking up next to you is hard, but I did this to us and whatever happens I need to accept it as hard as it is” he says.



She licks her lips and nods her head.
She looks at him and smiles looking away.

“Khuluma nami MaGodide” he says.

She breathes out heavily still looking away.

“I love you that you should know Mapholoba, but I am afraid that if I forgive you you’re going to hurt me again. I don’t want to be a bitter woman because of a man, I don’t want my kids to resent me one day because I turned bitter because of their father. I cry myself to sleep Mapholoba that’s how much I want to



come and that's how much I miss you but I am scared Fuze" she says.

He wipes her tears and swallows.

"I understand sthandwa sam you don't have to explain, the thing with cheating on someone is that not only does it hurt that person it changes them. Its breaks the trust and so much more, I should have done better but I didn't and I will forever be sorry for hurting you" he says.

"You're the most incredible woman I have ever met and I messed up big time" he says.

She sadly smiles and moves closer



resting her head on his shoulder.

“Bengisacela ungiphe eyendlela kancane nje” (Can I have one for the road just a little) she says softly.

He chuckles and shakes his head.

This baby better come fast his sweet innocent wife has turned into a machine.

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ZABELO

Dedani and I sat in his office and just spoke about everything and



anything,I missed him and and I miss him now but I promised to give him a breather.

Aza walks in and dumps her bag on the floor,she heavily sighs dropping her shoulders and sits next to me.

She puts her hands under her cheeks,I swear this child has problems for days.

“Rough day” I say.

She nods her head and pulls her school bag closer.

She pulls out a note and hands to him.

I look at the huge heart on the note and laugh.



“From Billy to Azamahle” I read that out aloud and laugh.

Billy boy doesn't give up I guess he doesn't have that bone in him.

“What did Baba says about boys” I say.

“Billy is not a boy he's my friend” she says.

“Billy again” My father says joining us.

If it's not his mother's jewellery then it's his grandmother's garden flowers.

God bless that young man's heart he's already on that bhejing train.

“What did I say about Billy” my father



asks.

She folds her arms and looks at me.

“Girl I have my own boy problems” I say.

“Whatever Billy says or asks the answer is no” my father says.

“Mkhulu” Aza says.

“Yebo” My father says.

“Uthi uBilly uzongishada” she says pouting.

“Amen” My father says shutting his eyes.

I lean back and laugh talk about being a gone girl and what are they



six/seven.

“Zabe” My mother calls out.

“Ma”

“Someone’s asking to see you outside” she says.

“Engabe iyozala nkomoni” my father says.

I get on my feet and slip on my sleepers heading out.

I get to the gate and step out finding Dedani leaning against his car.

He stands tall when he sees me and opens the door to the driver’s seat.

He turns up the volume and extends



his hands.

I shake my head and meet him half
way.

He hooks his arms around my waist
as the music plays.

🎵 You looked inside my fantasies
and made each one come true

Something no one else, had ever
found, a way to do

I've kept the memories one by one,
since you took me in

I know I'll never love this way again

I know I'll never love this way again



So I keep holdin' on, before the good
is gone. I know I'll never love this way
again

Hold on, hold on, hold on 🎵🎵

He twirls me around and stands
behind me placing his hands on my
belly, I place my hands over his and he
buries his head on my neck as we
slowly dance under the full moon.

I blink my tears and close my eyes, I
feel safe in this man's arms my heart
too was safe and I want that feeling
back.

The night he proposed floods my



mind,we've had good times with this man.

🎵 A fool will lose tomorrow reaching back for yesterday

I won't turn my head in sorrow if you should go away

I'll stand here and remember just how good it's been

And I know I'll never love this way again

I know I'll never love this way again

So I keep holdin' on before the good is gone



I know I'll never love this way again

Hold on, hold on, hold on 🎵🎵

“I will always love you Zabelo” he
whispers.

Tears fall and I sadly smile it's truth
what they say even good memories
can make you sad .

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 050

ZABELO



I am trying not to think about last night, but it's hard, something was off about that surprise. In a way it felt weird as if the man has given up on us.

I am trying but I can't shake off the feeling that he's lost all hope in his heart.

"Let me guess you are thinking about your soon to be ex husband" Baba says.

He settles next to me and takes off his glasses.

"It's okay to miss him Magcina" he



says.

“What about forgiving him?” I ask.

“Forgiving someone means setting yourself free. The decision to forgive him is totally up to you and no one else, you’ve probably noticed that no meeting has been held since that one. It’s not because we don’t want you two to fix things, but because we understand the depths of such betrayal so we’ve decided to let you be,” he says.

“I’ve forgiven him Baba the thing is I don’t know if I can trust him anymore.” I admit.



“Trust is built Zabelo and it can also be rebuilt” he says.

“And what about the people? I ask.

He shakes his head and lets out a sigh.

“Bazongahlulela Baba another woman who has forgiven her cheating man, but if the roles were reversed the man he wouldn't have forgiven,” I say.

“Whoever told you that all men don't forgive cheating lied to you, some men forgive and some men stay. It's not always about what the society has projected and made normal.



Sometimes all that matters is what's in here." he point to my chest and smiles.

"The problem starts when you think about what people are going to say, and forget how you feel. This is your life and people's opinions shouldn't matter. The same women or rather people you are talking about cry and forgive for their partners, and come to social media to tell you otherwise" he says.

We both laugh because we've seen it happen.

"Let me tell you something, that boy



loves you, I am a man and I know. I see how he looks at you and I am still disappointed by his actions. You are telling me that you have forgiven him, yet you don't see yourself trusting him again. If you can't trust him or fully forgive him then let him go, I am saying this because the moment you tell him that you've forgiven him and want to try again. That means you having to rebuild the trust that is lost, it means trusting him to lead again. Forgiving him and trying again means trusting him with your heart and everything else. It means not bringing up his infidelity in



your future fights and throwing his mistakes in his face. I know it's hard but if you forgive him do it from the heart" he says.

"You're a wise man baba" I say.

He wraps his arm around my shoulder.

"You should tell Aza that" he says.

"I doubt she will listen, especially with her future husband promising to marry her" I say.

"Would I be wrong to threaten that boy Magcina?" he asks.

"Very wrong baba" I tell him.



“I guess I am going to have to wait till he’s older then,” he says.

He lets out a sigh and stands up.

“I love you” he says.

“I love you Mphemba” I say.

He walks away and Aza bumps into him.

“Phephisa Mkhulu” she says.

She comes and sits next to me.

“Sizombona nini umntwana” (When are we seeing the baby) she asks.

“Soon” I say.

She places her hand on my belly and brushes it.



“MaG” she says.

“Yes Aza” I say.

“Usuhlala nathi futhi” (Are you back home) She asks.

“Yes” I say.

“Ngobani” (Why) she asks.

I tilt my head, did I maybe touch her remote again

“Ngoba ngiyanithanda futhi”
(Because I love you guys) I say.

“Okusho ukuthi awusamthandi uMalume” (Then it means you don’t love uncle anymore) she says softly.

I shake my head because I love that



man more than anything

“Awusamthandi MaG?” (You don’t love him MaG) she asks.

Tears fill her eyes and she pouts.

“Mina ngiyamthanda” (Well I love him) she says softly.

I smile, of course she does and Mapholoba loves her too.

“Nami ngiyamthanda” (I love him too) I tell her.

“Umshiyeleni pho?” (Then why did you leave him) she asks.

I wish I could make her understand but she’s too young.



“How about we go visit him today so we can cook and watch a movie together,” I say.

She smiles and nods her head.

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I should have asked Snqumo to take us to the mall, my back is aching and my feet are acting up.

“Thenga lokhu MaG” (Buy this) Aza says pointing at the bottle of wine.

“Ingane uyakuphuzi lokho” (The baby



doesn't drink that) I tell her.

“Isichwensi sengane” (Spoilt brat) she says.

I laugh shaking my head, normally that's what my mother would say to her.

I push the trolley down the aisle and spot Mpilo holding hands with a man.

I look at my belly then hers, had things turned out differently we would be carrying siblings.

They would be born on the same month and they would probably look like Mapholoba.

She turns her head and sees me, she



whispers something into the man's ear and lets go of his hand walking towards me.

"Zabelo" she says.

I bite my lower lip shaking my head.

"I have nothing to say to you" I say.

"Please just hear me out" she says.

"Not today Satan." I whisper.

"I am sorry" she says.

I look at Azamahle, if it wasn't for her loud mouth and repeating skills, I would have long told Mpilo off.

"I understand and I don't blame you, what happened was a huge



mistake and I am truly sorry for what we did. When I met you I swear I didn't know who you were, I would have walked away had I known. That's all I wanted to say, that I am truly sorry for playing a part in causing you pain" she says.

She slightly nods and walks back to her man.

I breathe out heavily and grab some snacks and biltong.

As much as she didn't do anything and owes me nothing, I am mad at her too.



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I should have called but I figured a surprise would do just fine.

I used my key to get inside the house and cleaned up,not that the place looked like a pigsty or anything. He had just the dishes in the sink and some laundry.

Aza is in the living room watching Raya And The Last Dragon,its been keeping her busy while I cook.

I am dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, I needed to be comfortable and his



clothes are just that.

I wipe the stove and check on the rice, in a few minutes it will be done.

I look at the table and sigh, I missed being in my house, I missed cooking in my own kitchen hosting and playing Madame.

I hear a few giggles and the door opening.

“Ladies” Bandla says.

The two girls walk in and look at me, my heart starts pounding coming here was a mistake.

“MaGodide” He says fairly shocked.



Dedani walks in and looks at me.

I should have known he wouldn't beg for long, that whole surprise was probably him saying goodbye.

"Aza take your things we're leaving" I say.

"Babe" Dedani says.

"Aza" I shout.

"Ngisabuka nje" (I am still watching) she says, folding her arms.

"Baby" Cebo shouts.

She walks in and looks at me.

"Zabe" she says walking over to me.

She gives me a hug and pulls away



still smiling.

I don't know what's going on but I am confused.

“You know I'd strangle him first before he even thinks of another woman” Bandla says.

Dedani is looking at me like a lost sheep, not saying anything.

I look at the girls and sigh, clearly Bandla and Cebo's type glammers in their own way.

I clear my throat and look at Mapholoba.

“I cooked” I say.



I don't know when she stood up, but she's looking at the girls and slowly moving her index finger towards the holes of their pantyhose.

"Yey wena" I say.

She giggles and jumps hiding behind Dedani.

"Uhm ladies it was nice really but we are family oriented" Bandla says.

Cebo nods her head, you would swear they are siblings.

And since when is Bandla family oriented.

These two are so afraid of commitment, I doubt they will ever



settle down.

“He’s right” she says shrugging.

“But I thought we were going to use the jacuzzi and have some fun” one the girl’s says.

I tilt my head looking at Bandla,they better not be talking my jacuzzi.

“I think I have a headache” Bandla says

“Let me escort you out” Cebo says walking them out.

Dedani walks over to the sink and pours himself some water,I stand next to him and let out a sigh.



“I meant what I said Zabelo,I will never hurt you again. You’re carrying our child and I won’t do anything to put both your lives in any danger. I would never bring a woman into our home,never” he says.

“I know and I am sorry that jumped to conclusions” I say.

“It’s okay,I understand” he says.

“It’s not okay,your word should mean a lot to me. You made a promise and I should trust you would never go back on your word” I say.

“I understand because I am the one who broke the trust between us,and I



would like to fix that but it's not going to happen over night. Can we attend therapy together and talk about everything we've been through" he says.

"Another chance sthandwa sam to prove my love to you,to prove that indeed men are not the same" he says.

I nod my head,what's another chance when you love someone.

"Musa ukungibuka kanjalo,")Don't look at me like that) Bandla says.

I turn around and Aza is looking up at him.



“You make me nervous” he says.

Aza giggles still looking at him.

“Malume obani labana” (Who are those people) she asks.

“Izinto ezikhala kahle” Bandla says proudly.

“Nami ngifuna ukuba yizonto ezikhala kahle” (I also want to be like them) Aza says.

“No..no.. absolutely not” Bandla says shaking his head.

“Why” Aza asks.

He heavily sighs.

“You’re making me old and I don’t like



that” Bandla says.

“Mkhulu is old and”

He cuts her short and points at her.

“Exactly,he’s old and that’s because of you” Bandla says.

I shake my head smiling,just maybe a piece of Bandla was put inside Azamahle.

“Come here” he says.

He stands behind me and places his hand over my stomach.

“I miss you” he says kissing my neck.

“I came because I miss you everyday, I love you Mapholoba and I want us



to go at it again. I am scared but I am willing to take this risk again, I still want to be your wife and mother to your kids,I want to grow old with you Fuze” I say.

He turns me around and smiles.

“I don’t know what to say Zabelo” he says.

“Promise me that you’ll always chose me,us” I say putting his hand over my stomach.

“I promise” he says.

He kisses me and pulls away laughing.

“I really messed up didn’t I” he says



blinking his tears away.

I nod my head and heavily sighs.

“I am going to make things right Zabelo” he says.

“Just don’t hurt me again Mapholoba” I say.

I am pleading him and I hope hears me.

He nods and wipes the corners of my eyes leaning for a kiss

I am taking another chance on this man and hoping he doesn’t break me like he did.



2 weeks later

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[10/20, 20:25] o: 051

ZABELO

Strange, but it feels like it has been the longest two weeks of my life.

So many things have happened, Dedani and I have started with our counselling.

This thing is not easy I tell you, first you have to strip yourself of



everything you consider right and true about your partner.

You walk into that place not knowing if you'll come out the same person you were when you walked in.

Some truths are hard to swallow but worth heard hearing.

Initially I thought this would only be about the affair, but it's been more than that. I am getting to know my husband in ways I didn't think were possible.

"I am taking my remote with me" Aza says, marching past my open bedroom.



“Leave that thing alone” Mama shouts.

“But it’s mine”

She walks back and peeks in.

“Good morning Zabelo” she says.

My eyes widen she never calls me by my name,unless she’s having a bad day.

“You can’t take the remote,Kwazi has remotes at her house” Mama shouts.

Aza folds her arms and looks at me.

The two have been at each other’s throats all morning.

I never knew packing could be this



stressful and funny, until my mother and Aza happened.

Aza's eyes run around my room and settle on the big stuffed bear Dedani got me.

"That's mine," I say.

"MaG bengisacela ungiboleke" (MaG can you please borrow it to me) she says.

She sometimes sleeps on the damn thing.

I let out a heavy sigh, you'd swear she's leaving forever but it's only for a few weeks.

Somehow Ntobe finally managed to



convince her husband to take that trip she's been longing for.

They are leaving for Greece and miss remote here is going to her mother's.

She's excited and taking everything that belongs to her.

My phone rings and she quickly grabs it.

"Aza"

She giggles and hands it over to me.

I look at the call and it's Dedani.

"Mapholoba" I say.

"Kahle Zabe usalele" he says.

And this is why I hate video calls,he's



judging me right now.

“Ushilo umkhulu wathi ingane izovilapha njengo nina,angithi MaG”
Aza says.

“Get out of my room”

She shrugs and walks away.

Dedani laughs and looks at his wrist watch.

“Aren’t you hungry?” He asks.

I shake my head,I rather eat him instead.

“When are coming back?” I ask.

He’s been away for a business trip and I miss him.



Well my coochie misses him more
and he knows that.

“I will be there first thing in the
morning” he says.

He looks at the time again and smiles.

“I have to go, I love you” he says.

“I love you” he blows a kiss before
ending the call.

“Magcina”

I look up and my father walks in.

“Scoot over” he says.

I move aside and he sits next to me.

He heavily sighs and wraps his arm
around me.



“Baba it’s only for a few weeks” I tell him

He chuckles.

I swear the people in this house are dramatic.

“I know but I am going to miss you” he says.

“I am going to miss you more” I say.

“How things with you and Dedani?” he asks.

“Good” I say.

“Just good” he says.

I can’t tell him that the sex is great and sweeter,so good will do.



“He’s very good baba” I say.

“Is he treating you well?” he asks.

I nod,he’s not entirely perfect but he’s never failed in that department.

“Uyazi uMaGodide ezinye izilonda azipholi ngane yami, kodwa ke ziphenduka izibazi ezingunaphakade.

I know it took a lot from you to shut the world out and listen to your heart only,but I am happy you decided to put your happiness first. I want you to know that whatever happens,we will always be there for you and support you. Siyakuthanda magcina” he says.

“I know baba and I love you,all of you”



I say.

“Let me go help my wife pack” he says.

He gets off the bed and kisses my forehead.

So many emotion are written on his face but he settles for a smile.

“You’ve grown Magcina” he nods and walks out.

I look at him disappear and realise all my life I’ve been closer to him than anyone else.

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I am sweating and shaking with anger, my father keeps clicking his tongue.

We're rushing to Kwazi's house, I don't know what's going on, but we were having dinner when she called hysterical. She mentioned Mdu hitting her and things getting out of control.

I couldn't hear the rest of it because she screamed and the call cut.

I know Kwazi can be stubborn at times. Yes she might have once



beaten up Nkanyiso and his wife, but she's not a bully and she would never start a fight with any man except Nkanyiso of course. That one is an exception in her books.

I shake my head a whole Mdu, I just can't believe he would lay a hand on my sister so much for liking him.

The car stops at the gate and we all hurry out, Snqumo's car parks behind us and he steps out followed by Lethu who's holding Aza's hand.

This night was supposed to be about them, see these two decided to make the relationship public. And my



parents wanted to host their future daughter in law,as if they have don't know Lethu.

See what I mean about my family being dramatic.

“Awu kodwa Jehova ingane yami”
mama says.

I follow my father but Snqumo blocks my way.

“You're pregnant stay with Aza” He says.

I look at my mother and she nods.

I am taken aback surely a pregnant woman can throw a lamp or two at Mdu right,I am not entirely useless.



They hurry inside the house leaving me with Aza.

A few seconds later Lethu comes out to get us, she doesn't say anything except lead the way inside the house.

My heart is racing as I drag my feet, it dawns on me that I've never had to do life without big sister and I don't wish to.

She's always here at reach and I don't see life being any other way than it is now.

I am holding my breath when the lights come on.

“Surprise”



Tears fall as I look at the the Ngcobo family and mine standing together with Dedani in the middle.

It's not the surprise that get the tears rolling,the relief and shock.

My eyes scan for Kwazi and she's standing next to her husband grinning like a fool.

I want to punch her in the face for going along with this.

Dedani walks over and hugs me,he pulls away and wipes my tears.

I am happy to see him.

"I am sorry for scaring you" he says.



I want to punch him too, but he looks good and he's here making up for the worst minutes of my life.

"You didn't tell me you were coming" I say.

"Because then it wouldn't be a surprise" he says.

"Are you okay?" He asks placing his hand on my belly.

I nod and he leans in brushing his lips against mine.

I let out a soft moan and subconsciously lick his lips.

"Kahleni boh imikhuba" Bandla shouts.



We both laugh and pull away.

“Wamitha ngazo zona lezi” Cebo says.

I hide my face, honestly my parents shouldn't be hearing this.

“I need to ask you something important” he says.

I nod and watch as he goes down on one knee.

He takes out a ring box and opens it.

“Dedani”

I gasp, the ring is beautiful more stunning than one I am wearing.

“I know we've been here before but this time around it's going to be



different” he says.

“I cheated, lied and I hurt you ngane ka Mphemba. I am ashamed to admit this but I started our marriage on a lie and I am so sorry. I am sorry for cheating on you for hurting you, I am sorry for making you question yourself. I am sorry for breaking your trust in me and for tearing our family apart. I am thankful for this chance to love you again, to earn your trust and to be the best husband to you and father to our kids. I promise to be faithful MaGodide, I promise to protect and to choose us always and forever. I promise to be faithful and



love you till death do us apart. Zabelo Ngcobo with this ring I am asking, will you give me another chance to be your husband and to do right by us” he says.

I look at ring then him.

This is happening, a new chapter and beginning for us.

“Please” he whispers.

I nod and he stands up smiling.

He puts the ring on and kisses me.

This time the kiss last.

“Bayathanda ukuqabulana vele” Aza says.



Everyone laughs.

“Thank you MaGodide” he says.

He kisses my cheek and walks over to the guys.

The ladies walk over but still a part of me wants to strangle Kwazi.

“Congratulations Zabe”

They raise their glasses and I raise my hand flashing them.

“Kahle ukuphapha” Kwazi says.

I drop my hand and laugh looking at Dedani.

Loving a stranger sure takes guts, it takes everything in you to trust, love



and believe in them.

The only people we love growing up are our families, but then one day when you're out in the world you realise that, there's still space to love more people and so you do, wholeheartedly and without remorse.

I look at Mapholoba and smile there's no such thing as easily forgiving someone. The disappointment comes and goes, the fear of it happening again does visit you.

So no there's no such thing as easily forgiving.



The question however remains, would I rather spend the rest of my life looking back and wondering what could have been had I forgiven him? Or do I forgive this man wholeheartedly and love him with all my heart.

I choose him, and choosing him means forgiving and loving again.

He turns around with Aza in his arms and looks at me smiling.

He signals the dj and the song I sent him the day after our first session plays.

I wasn't sure what I was doing and if I



wanted to go back there again. I needed his affirmation, for him to give me something to hold on to. He walks over and takes me to the dance floor.

♪♪ Take good care of you and me
Protect us from the things that hurt
love
Jealousies that take you under
Lies that undermine
Please be fair to you and me
Don't betray the love I give to you
When you're away don't make me



wonder

If I'm on your mind

Take good care of you and me

Real love is hard to find

Look in my eyes

I'll fall in love with you

Over and over

For the rest of our lives

Hear what I say now

I want our love to be

The one that's the strongest

And the one that survives

Cause there's no one else



That makes me feel so glad I'm alive
What a sorry note to end on
If we should fall apart
Take good care of you and me
I've given you my heart🎵🎵

He wraps his arms around my
waist,and stares deeply into my eyes.

“I love you MaGodide” he says.

He kisses my cheek and lowers his
hands to my arse.

I don't like barriers between me and
my man,and this belly is one.

It is said when you fear death then do



not fear living, and so I choose to live
and love this man with all my heart.

To becoming Mrs Ngcobo again and
this time around it shall be different.

END.....

