

LOVE ON DEMAND

1.

“Come out of your shell, you are too comfortable”

KHETHELO

Getting home the house is dark which means no one is around, this is something I am starting to normalize myself to —sigh —I flicker the lights on and the brightness fills the room as I am about to close the door, Yolokazi blocks the door with her feet.

We both erupt with laughter because she almost fell since she is wearing olive green strappy heels showing white painted nails. “Is Kwanda around?” She asks, not walking in but standing on the door

step. Looking really sexy in a leather jacket and pant combo that can garner audible gasps. Her look is inspired by badass biker.

I shake my head in disagreement, “I just got here and she is not around” I tell her and she takes a deep breath.

“Go change we are going out” Is she not gonna ask whether I want to go out or not? I think not because she has a straight face plastered on. No smile. No giggling.

“I can’t I have wo...”

Before I can finish, she immediately interjects “Me too. Everyone has work tomorrow. I just said go change and for once in your life please do not wear a long dress. I am going to hang myself with a wet tissue. I will wait for you” she pushes me inside and

walks in shutting the door close.

I look at her and taking a sharp intake of breath, “I cannot be late for work tomorrow nor miss it because its my big day please understand” I try to atleast reason with her instead she gives me a questionable look taking a sit on a couch and crossing her long legs tugging the strands of her dreadlocks behind her ear.

Yes! I am being promoted from a teacher to a school principal.

“We are going to my uncle’s place. He invited us over and I thought Kwanda was around. I will make sure you are back home before midnight and you do not miss your big day” she says emphasizing on the last three words. I want to ask if he is going to be there but also either of the responses will make me wanna run far, far away where I won’t be able to find my way back.

And also you cannot say no to this woman looking at me with brown and blonde dreadlocks, she has a powerful personality with an essence of greatness and so ethereal. “Fine!” I dramatically roll my eyes and she claps her hands together.

As I am about to disappear in the corridor her voice chases behind me. “No long dresses, please. Help me!” she says and I chuckle walking into my room.

I grew up in a household where women were not allowed to wear pants nor we were allowed to use any chemicals on our hair or extensions. We are not allowed to use jewellery either, yes that is how strict my father was that even after he died we continued following this moral compass as a sign of respect.

I remember when I pierced my ears, my mother screamed with both her hands on her head and

shouting my father's clan names —a drama queen by nature —she did not talk to me for two months but eventually came around since I am now grown but when I go home I wear studs as a sign of respect rather than having something dramatic hanging on my ears and then my sister, a rebel that my mother has given up on her.

I have been digging in my wardrobe that I was finally about to give up when I come across a brown linen dress. I think this could work with weird shaped earrings and my hair loose around my shoulders.

Perfect!

After dappling lip gloss on my lips, I walk out of my room confidently and the moment I appear Yolokazi spills her drink and starts coughing rapidly.

What? I look good? That is a reaction they always give in those fashion shows.

After catching her breath she looks at me from head to toe, I think that is a disapproval. “Were you swallowed by a cow?” The smile that was on my face disappears like a deflated balloon and I look down over my dress and sandals.

“This is the best that I have” I defend.

I look pretty, I think.

“Then clearly we need to do some shopping if that is your best. Yoh Khethelo!” she claps her hands once and throwing them in the air before she disappears in my room and comes back with a black short textured dress that I have only worn once. I do not like this dress. My sister bought it for me. It shows my legs and my thighs. It is not tight

but rather flowing. Even if that is the case, no.

Yolokazi gives me a murderous look and I have no other choice but to wear it with strappy heels.

“Better, asambe!” I keep pulling down my dress because I feel almost naked.

The moment she starts her car my eardrums bleeds from the music that is throbbing up and down. I think this is trap because it has a lot of vulgar and talking about drugs. And guess what? Yolokazi is wearing sunglasses at night they are stylish though as if she is part of the cast in The Matrix.

We drive through the gate to the mix corrugated steel, plaster and concrete for perfect blend of modern and homely. A two storey residence on a flat pot of land.

Yolokazi knocks on the door rhythmically and

singing along before the door flutters open and her uncle appears dancing while he screams, Thokazani. I remember him from the gathering they had at Kwanda's house. "Come in!" He says standing aside after he attacked us with the most welcoming hug. I pull down my dress walking into the home that has a lot of black furniture going on and a thick aroma wheezing in the air. "Where is Kwanda?" Thokazani asks, they are close.

"With her man" Yolokazi responds.

"Mfundisi?" Thokazani scowls.

"No, she is dating a peng ting now" Yolokazi responds. I am happy its just the three of us here and I am slowly becoming comfortable with the music softly playing at the background as we sit on on the couches. They said Thokozani's boyfriend is in the other room.

Thokazani sticks his tongue out and flapping his long lashes decorated with pearls in the corner and he cannot hide his excitement about Kwanda breaking up with Sambulo. “Kayise bring a bottle of wine please” He yells out and immediately my hands become cold as chicken feet in a fridge and the pigmentation changes. Everything freezes. My brain. My heart. My blood flow.

He is here? I cannot see him. I mean he cannot see me. We cannot see each other. He will think I am following him around, when that is not the case.

“Can I got to the bathroom?” I say after clearing my throat. I need to leave this place before making a fool out of myself in front of someone who has made it pretty clear that they are not interested or whatsoever. This one time he walked into me wearing an underwear and a vest. I wanted to hide. But also had to pretend that I was so confident by

putting a brave smile on my face.

Thokazani turns to me, his make-up is sophisticatedly done. “Okay darling. Kayise will show you to the bathroom” He smiles at me.

“I need to go now!” I get up pretending I am an urge to urinate and even jumping up and down then he gets up to take me there himself but in that moment he walks into the room and he was laughing at something as he was appearing but the laughter turns into a smile. A beautiful smile. My heart drums loudly against my chest. My mouth is not producing enough saliva.

He is about to say something. “Bathroom!” I remind Thokazani and we walk pass him. Before he can uttered a word. The moment I walk into the white bathroom design that is weighted by dark elements around its lower third. I take a deep breath and leaning over the charcoal vanity unit merges with

matt charcoal panels.

What is my next move?

Jumping outside the window?

It been three weeks after sending him a message and telling him that I have feeling for him, embarrassing I know but he left me with no other choice since the chemistry was there and we are compatible in so many ways but he was not making any moves.

And yes, he never responded to my message, laugh with me. Ha ha ha, I am that person with a red painted nose.

I wash my face even though there was absolutely no need for that then I stare at myself in the mirror. I

have been here for close to an hour or more.

When a tentative knock disturbs me. “Khethelo!” Jesus Christ its him. I look at myself in the mirror then towards the closed door and then the mirror again. “Khethelo!” He repeats again. I open and close my mouth but words do not come out. “I am kicking down this door” He says sternly and immediately I unlock the door. We stand face to face with my chest rapidly rising up and down. “Are you okay?”

“I am okay” I say quickly. Silence. Just staring in each other’s eyes. “Are you?” I was not supposed to ask him that especially since he did not respond to my message. “Never mind” I attempt to walk pass him but he grabs me by hand. My breath hitches.

I turn to look at him and expecting him to say something, anything but he doesn’t. “I am sorry” He says and slowly let go of my hand. Arg, what the

hell actually? “You can go” he steps back and I walk away from him. Not even once looking back. If he thinks he has an effect on me then he is right, sadly. I can feel his eyes behind my back until disappearing and shockingly the house is almost full.

Oh the queer energy dancing in the atmosphere its so beautiful and the moment Yolokazi sees me she gives me a devilish grin and I sit next to her, she hands me a glass of wine. “Just one glass. How was it?” She asks wiggling her eyebrows. “Rough or slow?”

“What are you talking about?”

She comes closer to my ear, “The quickie” she looks into my face and winks. “I know you were doing it in that bathroom. I wanted to check on you and he stopped me”

“We didn’t do it”

“Okay he fingered you?”

“No!”

“Eat you out?”

“Yolokazi!”

“French kiss?”

“No!”

“Blow job?”

I erupt with laughter and end up drinking from the glass of wine I was not planning on sipping. “No. We didn’t do anything” I tell her and she looks at me shaking her head.

“Are you guys not dating?”

“Chabo. I just like him and he doesn’t”

“How do you know he doesn’t?”

“I sent him a message telling him how I feel and did not respond”

“I am coming back. I need more wine for this” she says getting up and disappearing. She has taken off her shoes and walking barefooted.

When she comes back she is followed by Kayise behind who is laughing and then she takes my hand and leading us outside since the music is loudly playing. I was not planning on drinking but I am on my second glass already as we sit on the chairs in the balcony. He is opposite me. I ignore his gaze by focusing on the glass in front of me. “So you said he ignored your message?” The tipsy Yolokazi asks. I grab the glass and gulp it at once and pour another one. What kind of demonic work is this?

“Malume is calling you inside” Kayise says to her.

“Are you asking me to leave?” Yolokazi.

“Leave” Kayise laughs and they fist bump each other before she gets up after she kissed both my cheeks and returning back inside the house.

I can hear Yolokazi and Thokazani screaming

together, there is also loud laughter as well. I wish I was that intoxicated right now as an eerie eternity of silence moves along with the breeze.

“You look beautiful” He compliments. Something tugs in my belly and my intimate parts scream for attention.

I take a sip on a wine, “Thank you”

“Can we talk but not here”

“Here is fine”

He clears his throat, “You are mad at me?”

“Why would I be?”

“You can tell me”

“You ignored my message. If you are referring to that then no, I am not mad” I am furious and I want to grate you.

“Your eyes says the opposite”

“You could have replied Kayis e” I murmur.

“I did not want to hurt you Khethelo”

“Hurt me?”

“Look thing is...” He pauses “I am still trying to move on from someone. And by moving on I mean I am still in love with her so I am learning to let go. If I say let’s try this out I wouldn’t give you the best

version of myself that you deserve and I am not going to say wait for me either because that will be unfair on you. I have so much going on in my life and I am still trying to swift through my thoughts”

“What if I want to wait?”

He takes a deep breath, “Like I said that will be unfair on you so don’t”

Bury me!

LOVE ON DEMAND

2.

“we meet strangers in the most strangest places at the right time”

YOLOKAZI

I run out of the house with my shoes in my hand while on the other hand I am trying to fix the strappy knit mid dress that I found in my wardrobe —it was the first thing that I set my eyes on and doesn't need ironing. I am late by four hours to work and I was woken up by countless phonecalls, shoot me for drinking when I have an early morning shift.

I cannot play music because the muscles in my head are tightened and throbbing. It feels as if my brain is wearing a corset and my stomach is growling loudly so I have no any other option but start at the store to buy something to eat and painkillers, yes, I am late for four hours yet I still have time to pass by the stores.

I walk down the corridor at the store grabbing a bottle of water and immediately drinking from it because my throat felt like I had biltong stuck there

or maybe dried fruit and I have been feeling an urge to throw up. That is what happens when you mix alcohol.

Last night I was planning on having at least three glasses of wine if not four, or the whole bottle obviously. But I ended up drinking shots since there were games being played and then I opened another bottle, guess who was twerking and doing splits? Not me —but Thokazani —you thought it was me right? I was just standing aside spanking his buttocks and hyping him.

I grab another bottle and drink from it, gulping it all at once when a woman in black uniform walks towards me and she has nice maroon short hair with impeccable make up. “Sawubona” The way she just greeted me tell me I am about to throw these plastic bottles at her. I just nod my head and continue drinking water and taking another bottle that I will drink throughout the day. “You are not

allowed to do this” she says with a cheeky tone looking at me from head to toe with a nasty attitude.

“I am not allowed to do what?”

“To be drinking that water before you pay for it and therefore if you do not pay then you will be arrested” she says and I am wondering if she really thinks that I cannot afford to pay for the three bottles of waters —she has been looking me from head to toe, to what? Judge me and come into that conclusion? What next now? Do I slap or punch her.

“And you think I cannot afford these three bottles of water?” I smile sardonically, that treacherous smile you give an enemy before unexpectedly attacking.

Another trailing blaze from my white painted nails all the way to my dreadlocks. I learnt from Kwanda of whom I have discovered that she is my twin

sister that I need to make sure that my toe nails and hands are painted at all times, she preached that all the time that at times she would force me into it and I ended up normalising making sure that my nails are always looking pretty with a white gel or bright colours you can never go wrong.

We used to spend too much time together when they were family gatherings and we were inseparable, we still are. We would wear matching outfits and excitement would erupt from our stomachs when people said we had a strong resemblance that I ended up crying to my mother that I also wanted dreadlocks, she did not fight me either but she grabbed a wet towel and green sunlight bar soap then she twisted my short hair. They were looking like tiny sausages and I cried my lungs out but I was told to be patient.

Yes, I had to be patient with tiny sausages in my head and they were taking too long to grow. I would

come back from school and sit in front of the mirror to see the growth and weep. Then eventually they started growing. Thicker. Longer. And I fell in love.

Kwanda and I used to steal half empty bottles of beers at the functions and cigarette then hide in our backyard. We would drink those drops and come out pretending to be drunk, stumbling, speaking in riddles and even dancing to the rhythm of the music holding hands. Her presence filled me with amphetamine and I felt full, that I was not surprised nor shocked that we shared a womb because of the connection we shared.

“Your words not mine sisi” she responds.

I chuckle. I have completely forgotten about being late to work and I do not think I am still going there. I feel sick in the stomach not to mention the headache that is banging in every corner of my head. I am literally trembling from the hangover and

then this one standing in front of me, she is making me angry. “I would love to speak to your manager” I say and she tugs her head in.

“There is no need for that. I will pay” A voice says from behind. It is not deep nor husky. But there is something about it, so sensual. I turn around to come face to face with a man wearing nylon shorts that matches the tropical shirt that he is wearing showing his firm and bowed legs. His skin is smooth and matte pitch black if that makes sense. And no, he is not that type who makes you want to drop your underwear and spread your legs apart at first glimpse. Nor does he look like a cover page of a magazine, okay he could be on a cover page of a magazine because even the not so good looking ones are plastered there with an amazing aesthetic. His dreadlocks look unkept but they are clean. No beard. Just smooth skin. Not good looking, but he has that thing —he is attractive or maybe it's those teeth and the gap between them or the bushy eyebrows?

Most definitely not my type though.

He looks like those men who were wearing purple suits in the front row of Black Is King jumping up and down — that scene was such perfection with nothing but gorgeous black men in all shades.

The woman in a black uniform has walked away leaving me with the stranger that is looking down at me with his hands on his pockets. And no, I do not find this charming. “And I asked you to pay for me?” I ask him “Ukuphapha izinto zakho?” No really, he is forward just like his girlfriend that just walked away.

“I think she might have assumed that you cannot afford paying for your water because one you are wearing your dress inside out. And then your shoes, you are wearing right on the left and left on the right. Can you blame her? At your age uphendukezele

ingubo” I look down at my shoes and my dress. At this age, hah.

I do not even want to look at him anymore instead I shove the bottles of water at him since he said he will pay. “Enjoy your day” I click my tongue and walk away from him. I walk out of the store and explained to the security who asked me about the water I was drinking. I do not have time to talk anymore. Making my way to the car parking I call at work making an excuse about family responsibility.

“Dr Y. Ntuli!” I hear someone screaming from me and I turn around to see the ugly but attractive man walking towards me, making me wonder what does mubiza want from me. I pause from walking waiting for him walking towards him.

When God was creating him he said “I am going to give you the perfect body, you will be slim but muscular, not too much brazo it will be just

damnably sexy, with firm and bowed legs. And then you are going to have the most smoothest skin with rich melanin dripping on you and perfect teeth. Bushy eyebrows too but the face? Soze” And then the angels in heaven begged him to give him the face but he just added one teaspoon of that spice and said it was enough. That is what happened here, no other explanation or whats oever.

“You dropped this” He hands me my badge.

“Thank you”

“You’re a doctor?”

“A dentist”

“Dokotela wamazinyo?”

Haibo wenja!

“A dentist” I repeat what he said but in English since he wants to go back and forth about this.

He smiles, “Enjoy your day as well” that all he says pushing the strands of dreadlock that was falling on his face and he walks away from me. Disappearing somewhere in the car parking.

Mxm, my heart is not even beating loudly —ha ha why should it be beating loud?

I get in the car and take a deep breath before starting the engine as I am driving off. I see him again on his phone, laughing loudly as he is walking in between cars. His laughter is echoing the whole car parking. A hoot from a car behind me demands for my attention.

I should I have taken one of the bottles of waters. I am thirsty. In less than a minute I am driving through at Kwanda's apartment hoping to find her there. Knocking twice Onalenna appears behind the door. "Come in so you can help with the set up and tell me why are you looking like a child from creche" she says laughing "Kwanda come and see this!" Erupting with laughter. I click my tongue at her and Kwanda appears in a white loose dress, she is always wearing this colour now.

Ha ha I am the joke here.

I wear the dress the way I am supposed to before joining them in the kitchen as they are cooking and chopping. Onalenna pours me a glass of wine. "What happened to you?" She asks laughing. When she hands Kwanda a glass of wine, she raises a glass of juice and drinks from it.

We both look at her. We are preparing for Khethelo's

surprise celebration party since she got promoted at work.

Back to Kwanda she has a bowl of fruits next to her eating from it and drinking juice. The same person I used to steal the empty bottles of alcohol with is drinking juice and eating fruits. Her skin is glowing. “You? Not drinking? Eating fruits?” Onalenna “Actually why were you admitted at the hospital?” The other day she was throwing up —wait, no ways!

“Kwanda!” I say first “Are you pregnisto?”

“Am I what?” She roars with laughter.

“Pregnis to?”

She is still laughing, “Three weeks but do not tell anyone guys”

“Hai wena you had sex once and got pregnant before knowing all the fun of having sex? Kwanda! Uyabhayiza” I laugh and choking on wine.

“I got pregnant while still a virgin from oral sex. I only broke my virginity last night” I almost fall from the chair because of the laughter. Onalenna is running around the room laughing. This takes the cup. You see this —he he he. “This is not funny” she says also laughing and tears spilling out of her eyes from the silent laughter.

“Mongezi is my guy that one!” Onalenna says.

“Congratulations though sweetheart, I cannot wait to plan your baby shower” I say first getting off the chair and embracing her warmly. We share a hug together and then she starts crying.

Hormones, shame.

“Back to you what happened?” Onalenna says to me after we have catch our breaths and continuing with the preparations.

“Woke up late for work and I grabbed this dress and wore it inside out. I realised when a stranger at the store told me” I tell them. Thinking of him. Who was he? “He was ugly but in a good way. In a perfect way”

“Ugly in a what?” Kwanda.

“Good way” I respond.

“How is one ugly in a good way?” Onalenna says laughing, she laughs at everything this one.

“It is when you are ugly but when I look at you for at least three hours you automatically become beautiful” I tell them.

“Haibo Yolokazi!” Kwanda says laughing. The laughter that is filling this room. Onalenna cannot stand still, she is leaning on the kitchen counter and trying to catch her breath.

“Is he sexable?” Onalenna

“Yes. He is perfect in every way and he has those unkept dreadlocks. You know when you do not comb your hair and it naturally becomes dreadlocks? He is like that. You just need to give him time to see his good looks but also he has that thing”

“You took his number?” Onalenna

“What for nina? He is not my type” I say.

No really, not my curry that one.

“Doesn’t look like it to me” Kwanda.

“Look like what Mariya?”

Onalenna bangs the kitchen counter laughing, “You did not just call her Mary!” Her shoulders are moving up and down.

“Uyaphapha shame” Kwanda says wiping her tears.

“To me it looks like you like this guy”

“It looks like it to me too” Onalenna

“Just because you guys are dating that doesn’t

mean everyone wants to date”

“Let’s say he walks in here now. What would you do?”

“Haibo nothing”

“Really?” Kwanda.

“Really. He is not my type”

LOVE ON DEMAND

3.

“We made a fire, we down in flames

We sailed the ocean and drowned in waves

Built a cathedral, but never prayed

We had it all and yeah, we walked away”

KHETHELO

My bloodstream has absorbed the alcohol and my it's dramatically slowing down my nervous system. I am feeling buzzed up, not even needing a reason to kick the bucket of water in my eyes. He is holding me and leading me to my room carefully with his hands around my waist. When we finally get there he gently makes me sit on the edge of the bed. “I am going to get you some water” He tells me already standing by the door.

“I want more alcohol” I blink my eyes. I can hardly keep my eyes open. I swallow my saliva “I do not want water” His lips spreads to a smile before he leaves the room. Actually water sounds like a good idea. I do not like the way I am feeling anymore. My head is suddenly heavy and my brain is slowly becoming foggy, I cannot think straight.

My breath hitches when the door opens and he walks in with a bottle of water in his hand closing the door behind him then he opens the cap and handing me the bottle. “Thank you” I say now avoiding eye contact. My eyes feels swollen. It must be the crying that I have been doing. Even now my brain is screaming that I should cry. I choke on water as my tears involuntarily starts falling.

He takes the bottle away from me and gently patting my back then he kneels in front of me, taking my hands to his and looking up at me. “My intention were not hurting you” He says softly and my heart yells that he is lying. He knew exactly that he was hurting me.

“Well you did” I look back at him.

“And I am sorry”

His hands are so warm on mine. “The chemistry between us, was I seeing things?”

“No” He answers simply. “I care about you”

I chuckle sardonically, “You are confusing me Kayise. What makes you think I am going to hurt you the way she did? I am not her. You don’t even want to talk about this. How are you going to heal?” I look straight in his eyes. He takes a sharp intake of breath, letting go of my hand and something in me shatters. He stands on his feet attempting to walk out. “I am going to move on like how you asked me to but before that I want you to tell me if that is exactly what you want me to do. Is that what you want Kayise?” I also stand on my feet, hardly standing.

He leans his forehead on the wall. “Khethelo...”

“Is that what you want? I do not want to hear anything else from you” I have become a brave, brave girl who would have killed Goliath with just one stone, standing tall in the room with an off shoulder draped dress —it is so short and not something I would wear on any given day but right now at this moment I am glad I wore it.

He stands in front of me and his hands tightly gripping my hair and his lips are mines, and his tongue forcing it way into my angry mouth. Yes, I was angry because he is confusing me. He places his one arm around me so that I am trapped in his embrace and a feeling of comfort covers my body. What the hell is going on? We are supposed to be arguing and him giving me answers not indulging each other. Every part of my brain is fighting him but every part of my body cannot get enough of him. I feel like I would start my own little waterfall in the moisture between my legs. He picks me up and my legs are tightly wrapped around his waist. I want

him badly – so bad. I have not done this in three years. He lays me gently on the bed with the bulge in his pants firmly against my kitten. I want him even more. “What are you doing to me Khethelo?” His breath is ragged. We share a mind fucking eye contact.

I arch my back from the bed to meet his bulge with my mouth slightly opened, trying to get enough air into my lungs. “Let me in” I say softly. I pull off my own dress and throw it across the room and his eyes travel all over my body, everywhere his eyes travel something in me burns, it feels like a scorching sun before he grabs my thigh and I gasp for air breathing heavily. He runs his fingers down between my breasts and pause at my matching underwear.

“We cannot do this not when you are drunk”

“I am conscious” I answer

He moves his eyes between mines, “Khethelo...”

“What did she do to you?” Instead of responding, he places a kiss on my throat, another one on the rosy tip of each of my breast. I inhale sharply at his intimate touch and I touch his shoulder and sliding my hand across his chest and pulling off the knitted top he is wearing. “Tell me” I say. He kisses me. Then he dip his head to my breasts once more wrapping his tongue around my hardened tip and pulling on it lightly until I gasp. He pauses and looks at me, just looking, no words, nothing. I open my mouth in silent surrender and he teases me with his tongue, brushing my lips before exploring my mouth. I boldly meet his tongue, mimicking his moves until he slides his hands between my thighs. I nervously look at him. He cups me and finds me already damp and ready. He shifts until he is kneeling between my knees. I have completely forgotten about the people talking in the other room and laughing.

He has taken off his clothes and he slowly ease himself inside me and stop. “Are you virgin?” He starts to withdraw as I wrap my arms fiercely around his neck and my legs around his hips, locking my ankles.

“Haven’t done it in three years” I murmur. Then he starts to move again. I whimper meeting his succulent thrusts. He lowers himself and I meet him with a strong thrust of my hips, wresting control of our joining. He unintentionally goes deeper until he is fully seated and scream loud enough to be heard on the other room.

“Haibo!” I hear someone says in the other room clearly shocked by my screams.

When Kayise feels me flinching he holds himself still. “Did I hurt you?” He asks. I shake my head in

disagreement. He rests his forearm to protect me from his weight. He leans down and gives me a quick kiss, his tongue circling my lips. "I know I did and I am sorry" He places tiny kisses along my temple and jaw. "I don't ever want to hurt you Khethelo" I gaze at him and he is more relaxed than I have ever seen him. His profile could be found on many Greek statues. I envy him the long, black eyelashes that framed his expressive eyes.

"I know" Do I really know? I swallow my saliva again and again and again. His fingers flex around my hips and then he slams into me, the force rocking me forward.

"Yesssss!" the sound is ripped from my throat raw and unedited.

"I am leaving" I hear Bongeziwe says.

“Right behind you” Mongezi. In that moment loud laughter follows. We hear movements and the door closing then the house is silent. And we are left alone. Kayise swivels his hips before withdrawing and tunnelling back in. My lids falls heavy over my eyes, a sheen of perspiration slicks in my skin as my body welcomes the stretch. His hand skating around my hips onto my sex and his fingers drawing circles on my clitoris matching it with the rhythm on his long measured strokes. In no time at all the desire’s escalated to knife edge. Then I scream coming. Loud wet and joyously, right along with him.

We collapse on the bed and him on top of me. He rains reverential kisses on my neck, cheek and temple while he gently kneads my shoulders and upper arms.

Waking up in the morning I have expected a pair of hands around my waist and breath on my neck but I

wake up to the sun blinding me escaping my curtains. I get up from the bed grabbing my robe searching around the house and there is no one around – okay.

I prepare myself for work and after getting ready. I pack my bag and get going, gospel music filling my car singing along loudly and drumming my fingers on a steering wheel. I had people watching me whenever I would stop after the robot has turned red —I am in a good mood.

He surely left early because he had to work.

Getting to work I was introduced as the new principal at the assembly, the kids clapped their hands joyfully then our day starts.

I am seated behind the wooden desk in my office that needs few changes here and there. My phone

on the table, waiting for his call. Impatiently and I keep checking every second and finally when my phone rings, I almost fall off the chair answering it quickly. “Khethelo” my mother says on the other side. Disappointment wrap itself around me.

“Hello ma”

“Your sister told me you have been promoted” she sounds delighted.

“I was going to call you”

“Oh I am so happy for you mntanami, you must come home so we can celebrate” she says then ululate happily. I laugh but our call is cut short as I hear a knock from the outside. I hang up. Fixing my dress. That must be him maybe he wants to see me after last night with a bouquet of flowers or lunch maybe?

“Come in” I shout from the outside.

The door opens and she walks in confidently wearing an olive green female, with long braids that almost touches the floor. Her scents smells fruits. Looking sophisticated. “Miss Ndlovu” she smiles, showing her dimples. “You are young and beautiful” she says to me with a smile still on her face. “Oh. I am sorry. I am Miss Bhengu. The new teacher”

LOVE ON DEMAND

4.

“Loving actions. Loving words. Loving reminders. Loving vibrations and solutions that are deeply grounded in love”

YOLOKAZI

I am exhausted of hearing old men crying and screaming as I take their teeth out today. It is mostly ooMzwanele who sits at the corner of the tuckshop everyday with a brown bottle of intoxicating liquid arguing about how many women they have slept with and also slut shaming them. Yes —they are the ones who scream the loudest here and calling me “my sister” with swollen cheeks and rotten teeth then they ask for my numbers after they have been helped.

“Next!” The nurse who works along with me screams, she is such a sweet heart and makes sure that our patients are not uncomfortable when they enter this room —we are both new around here. I prefer working with her than the other old nurse with grey hair who draws her eyebrows into a thin line with a saddening hairline. And she is always wearing glasses and red lipstick with a grumpy face.

When I pick my head up my eyes are out of their own volition when I see him and his cheeks spreads into an unexpected smile. He has such beautiful teeth, honestly —men with amazing teeth are attractive excluding him since he is not my type. Maybe we can include him on the list. “What are you doing here?” I ask him pulling down my mask.

“Ngizokhipha izinyo” He answers, saying he is here to take out his tooth. His facial expression is enough to send my heart racing like a sport car. For what reason, I do not know maybe I am hungry because I haven’t went on lunch, that is a valid reason.

His wearing dark blue nylon shorts with matching shirts and sneakers. Le Bron really did something with this new trend. Is this like a two piece? Maybe but it looks good on him and does nothing to hide those firm and bowed legs, they are shinning.

His dreadlocks are not long but they just look like unkempt natural hair —afro —I find this look really captivating.

I look at him and he looks at me, we look at each other. “Okay I am not here for that actually” He says and his voice is sultry and lush. The nurse looks at me with a smile before she focuses on the tall frame standing in the middle of the room with a smile I would love to wipe away with just one slap. “I am here to fetch my money” Haibo, haibo.

“What money?” I ask him.

“Le engikhokhe ngayo amanzi” No, I did not ask him to pay for those bottles of water, he insisted. I didn’t run to him. Why is he acting like I was on my knees with my dress worn outside out begging him to pay for me.

I look at the time and it's already my lunch time. I announce to the nurse that I am going on lunch before asking this ugly attractive duckling to follow me. I want him to get a piece of my mind and by the time he leaves, he will be look able.

We stand outside with him. His scent dancing on my nostrils and I hope mine does the same and I do not smell like sanitiser and vaccines. "Umuhle" He compliments me the moment I was about to open my mouth and say something. He will not defeat me. No ways.

"Angikubuzanga [I didn't ask you]"

"I didn't say you asked me either Dr Ntuli but I was just complimenting you and if you don't want to take it then fine"

"What do you want?"

“I said you are beautiful”

“Ngiyazi [I know]” He smiles, what a dangerous smile, very dangerous “Again. What do you want?”

“My money”

“I didn’t ask you to pay for me”

“You looked like you needed help”

“Why because I was wearing banana and my dress was inside out?”

“Your words not mines”

I chuckle sardonically and grabbing my wallet from my pocket and looking for any notes. And yes, I just embarrassed myself because I do not have money. I am only getting paid in three days. Who needs a uniform to the clownery club? Yes, me.

I clear my throat and look up at him and he challenges his eyebrow at me with a smirk. I want to slit his throat right here at this moment. He must be feeling superior. "I am getting paid tomorrow" I murmur lying.

"I can give you my banking details"

"For R50"

"More than that actually including the money I am going to use right now to buy you lunch"

"I have my own lunch"

“Really?” Why is he smiling like that? If my my cheeks disappoint me and I smile back I am going to throw myself against these walls. I swallow the smile that wants to crawl out of my mouth.

“Really”

He shoves his hands in his pocket and comes back with a phone that has four plate stove and half eaten apple. And he says he doesn't have money, nice one. “Can I have your number so I can send my banking details?” Without paying attention I sing the ten digit numbers and then he shoves his phone back to his pocket. And steps closer to my space looking down at me as I bravely look back at him taking in a stunning sight at him then he smiles again before he walks pass me, mxm.

He is not getting a cent from me!

I had a brown paper bag that was delivered to me as I was at the canteen and it had a note with banking details and calculations of how much I owe him. I took time to look at the clean hand writing on a white paper shaking my head. I have been trying to figure out who is this person from their initials but I cannot seem to tackle who he might be.

How did he know where I work?

The girls asked me to move in with them at their apartment since the other two dating are pretty much not always around, Kwanda specifically because her man wants to make sure that she and the baby are okay. He is treating her like a fragile adolescent and that is beautiful but when it comes to commitment, I am not coming. I have tasted all kinds of penises from different shades and sizes. I have never been naive. I think one of the reasons is because as I grew up, I used to hang out with a lot

of older people than me that I ended up missing going through the stage of being a child and a teenager but I have always seen myself as a “woman” and I ended up losing my virginity at fifteen and it was just a one night stand.

I have never been in a serious relationship before probably because I saw ooZanele down the street romanticizing abusive relationships. They made it look like a norm to have a blue eye and broken lip. I have never never experienced a heartbreak. And I didn't grow up on an environment where I witnessed love blossoming right in front of my eyes.

I won't stand here and lie, saying I have been hurt by men and they changed me, no, miss me with that motivational speaking Ted talk.

Walking through the door there's an aroma hanging thick in the room and Khethelo and Kwanda are in the kitchen while Onalenna is with them talking.

“You are back!” Kwanda says sashaying herself around the kitchen. The topic about our father is the one we have not brought up. I would love to talk about it but she doesn’t seem ready to touch it.

I take a deep breath and taking off my shoes. “And then what happened?” Kwanda asks closing her pots and leaning on the kitchen counter.

“Its Mubiza” I drag my feet and throwing myself on the couch groaning.

“The one who is ugly in a good way?” Onalenna.

I pick my head up and looking at her, “I said in a perfect way, why are you changing my words?”

“You said good” Kwanda comments laughing.

“Fine I saw him in different light today”

“Today?” Khethelo

“Unless you are deaf then I am going to repeat myself but if not forget it” I throw myself back on the couch.

“What did he want?” Kwanda asks and all three of them come and join me in the living room with their eyes focused on nothing but me and legs crossed.

“His money that he used paying for my bottles of water. Imagine? Yazi umubiza” Onalenna is the first one to erupt with laughter. Before the entire room is filled with roar laughter.

“But did you pay him?” Onalenna chokes.

“With what money when my wallet was empty” I should try stand up comedy. Look at them with tears glistening in their eyes from laughter.

“Did he see that?” Kwanda.

“Mariya” I look at her and take a deep breath “I took out my wallet so confidently and I only had coins. He took my number and he said he will send his banking details so I can pay him after getting paid”

“He is sleek” Onalenna

“What?” I frown

“You are so slow Yolokazi. He was indirectly asking for your number and you gave him just like that. Give umubiza his crown” Kwanda.

“You don’t get to call him like that” I say.

“Who is this guy?” Khethelo

LOVE ON DEMAND

5.

“Everyone is somehow connected to someone”

KHETHELO

Have you ever met someone who somehow made you feel like you’re competing for something and they subconsciously plant this feeling inside you of not being good enough.

You are beautiful but it’s not enough.

You dress immaculately but it’s not enough.

Everything just feels not good enough.

That some days you drag your feet and stand in front of a mirror after changing countless times because whatever that you are wearing may not be quite good looking. Am I making sense? I guess not. Then you envy them.

You envy having that perfect figure that they have. Long legs and neck —even the collar bones although you have them but you prefer the way theirs are shaped.

“Knock! Knock!” someone knocks on my door as I am busy with paper work. I pick my head up after shouting from the inside that whoever it is can come in. In that moment I get a whiff of her fruity cologne before she appears in black pants and matching blouse.

I watch her as she strides from the door all the way to the chair opposite me. Her smile is dancing on her lips showing her dimples. She has perfect monolid eyes that makes her look like a beautiful cartoon character that every toddler admires and wish to look like. “Miss Bhengu” I say smiling but deep down inside I wish I can stab her a thousand times for looking that perfect.

Oh please don't give me that look, you have come across someone who have planted this sort of feeling inside you. This woman right here who just sat opposite me and crossed her long legs always make me feel as if I am not good enough.

Her compliments sounds very sardonically then she smirks, before she trails a blazing gaze from head to toe making sure you question yourself.

She is like those mean girls in teenage movies.

There is something about her—she loves being a centre of attention that I am quite convinced that her zodiac sign is virgo.

“I hope I am not disturbing you ma’am” she says and clasping her hands on her thighs leaning backwards.

I look closely at her placing my pen on the table and leaning forward. “You did actually” I say with a thick tone.

She clears her throat, “I can come back later if that is okay with you. I just wanted to discuss something with you that you might like” I watch her as she speaks. She has a heavy upper lip.

“I am listening”

She shifts on her chair. Not looking as confident as she always does. Is it my tone maybe? Or my face? But I have been reading somewhere that I need to be in control. I feel like I haven't been in that much control ever since I have taken this position that somehow people took advantage of that.

Too soft? Yes.

And that is something I have been working on. It seems to be working since I have been gaining respect that I believe I deserve. Most people don't think I deserve this position because I am too young—mostly the adults. Who have been teaching here for years, when I was still in my teenage years.

One thing I cannot control is the feelings I have towards the man who hasn't called me or even texted since that night he felt the locking of my legs

around his waist and the clenching of my hands around his back. My screams closer to his ears. My nails digging deeper to his skin. And the wetness of my vagina as he was thrusting deeper, harder and faster.

I am stupid right? For thinking after he has dig my cave pink like crystals then his eyes will be opened. Maybe he'd see some sort of light and heal from whatever that hurt him in that very moment and let me in.

Shame.

“I was thinking that maybe we can have a school choir. I heard some kids singing today during break. And I thought we can do something about that” she says, her smile is back again.

“Oh” that’s all I can say at the moment. “We have

Miss Ngubane working with that”

“That is great. I guess I can communicate with her and maybe work hand in and hand with her? If that is okay with you of course” she says.

These days I am feeling very distracted. And out of place. My mind keeps drifting into so many different directions all at once. My emotions. Everything and then the unbearable headaches. “If you don’t mind can we have this conversation some other time? I think this is a great idea really but...”

“Are you okay sweetheart?”

“I am fine” I say immediately. And she shakes her head in agreement before she smiles.

“You are reminding me of that time I was pregnant”

she says, her tone sounding a bit sadden.

“You have a child?”

She tugs her head in “Me? No. Foetus Deletus in this house sweetheart” What does that mean? “I mean I aborted the baby” she laughs slightly.

Oh that was supposed to be funny? I guess yes, ha ha.

“Oh. I am not pregnant though” I say almost immediately. I cannot be. “Why did you abort the child? If you don’t mind me asking”

“Well. I was dating this guy for years. He was ambitious yena shame but he was not what I needed at that time. He loved me of course. And he did everything for me although he couldn’t afford

around that time but he tried” she shrugs her shoulders, that sounds like a great man to me. “He was just not what I wanted. I met this guy. He was rich. He did everything for me. He loved me and we got married” she shows me the diamond ring on her finger. “When he engaged it was the day I found out I was pregnant so I had to abort and leave the other guy” Oh, I am not the one to judge really. I have no words to say to her or whats over. I am not against abortion either. “Let me leave you” she says and get up from the chair with a smile and walking out then she pauses as she stands by the door. “Do you think I’m a bad person?”

“Huh?”

“Do you think I’m a bad person for killing my child?”

I don’t know really.

“If you feel you were not ready to have a child then there’s nothing wrong with that. It is your choice”

“He begged me not to kill his child. He asked me to keep it and after giving birth he was going to raise the baby alone. I promise him not to go ahead with the abortion. I did it without telling him. Then I moved to another province with my fiancé. I told him everything the day before my wedding. I wanted to start my life on a clean slate” she tells me.

Clean slate? Wow.

Our conversation is interrupted by my cellphone vibrating and Onalenna’s name flashes on my screen.

Tumelo —that is her name—she winks and walk out. I am still trying to process what she has told me. Alot to take on trust me. As much as I am not a

very judgemental person on but – let me answer my phone. “I am knocking off in two minutes, couldn’t you wait” I say the moment I answer with a chuckle.

“No” she says “Can you please drive to Mongezi’s house. Kwanda is going to need us”

“What happened? Is the baby okay?” I ask concerned.

“The baby is fine. Uhm...her man called me and asked that we come over. I really do not know as yet what happened but I am on my way there”

“And Kayise is he okay?” My heart drums loudly against my chest. So loud and painfully.

Arg, why do I even care? He can go die.

“Khethelo. I do not know what happened baby”

“But he is fine?”

“Yes. I am still packing for Namisa”

“Who is that?”

She takes a deep breath “Bongeziwe’s daughter who just told me minutes ago that she hates me”

“He has a daughter?”

“Who hates me. Look we will talk all about it when we meet. Do not mention anything to Kwanda. We don’t want to freak her out. I love you and bye”

Oh.

[03/02, 06:58] : LOVE ON DEMAND

6.

KHETHELO

On the road I was driving as if I have a tender for grovel and even ignoring the man whom is always standing in the middle of the road, so tall and confidently with three eyes that has different colours: red, green and yellow, he is such an irk especially when you are in a hurry he just blinks, and blinks.

Upon my arrival the men left, leaving us behind with thousand of questions invading our minds and causing heaviness in our hearts .

It been overly hours since they left. I keep looking at

the watch in my wrist with my heart beating abnormally fast. I am having a hard time breathing it feels as if someone knocked the the breath out of my lungs.

I excuse myself disappearing in the kitchen and pouring myself a glass of water, gulping from it. And one glass turns into four more before taking a sit in one of the chairs and clasping my hands on the table taking a deep breath.

Fine, now I feel better but that was very weird because it happened so randomly. It felt almost like a panic attack but it wasn't that. I mean why would I be panicking? Ha ha ha.

I look around the kitchen painted in white and cream including the furniture, it is so serene and brings a sense of calamity and peacefulness like the owner of this house. "Eh wethu are you okay?" Yolokazi walks into the room, she is wearing denim

shorts. You see those the other race is wearing at mall showing the heels of their buttocks? That one.

They look damnably beautiful on her as she is showing her milky thighs—she is what you call a natural beauty. Just like Kwanda, one could think they are sisters when they are just inseparable cousins.

“I am okay” I say and she attentively looks at me clearly not acknowledging the lie I just uttered before she comes and sit in a chair right next to me.

“I know we are not that close for you to tell me your problems but just know I got you mntase. It will be like talking to Kwanda, we are twin sisters afterall” she tells me with a slight chuckle.

Twin what?

Very funny, if I didn't know better I would have

believe that because of the strong resemblance.

We hear voices coming from the living room, sounds masculine and deep so we don't get to continue with our conversation.

They are back!

He is not here though.

Kwanda get off the couch to stand in the middle of the room. "Where is Kayise?" she asks looking at her man who is now standing in front of her, he is looking at her as if she is the only thing that inhales and exhales in this room.

I envy this, all of it.

"He is fine. He went to his place" Mongezi responds.

Thank God!

Why am I thanking him?

Why I've been holding my breath? For heaven's sakes I need to stop doing this to myself.

“Fine then I am going there. I need to see my brother” Kwanda says.

“At this time of the night? No” Mongezi.

“You will drive me, bhuti” Why that sounded cute? What kind of a pet name is that even? But they are beautiful together.

“Chabo maMkhungo. You will see your brother tomorrow. He needs space. You need to rest,

remember what the doctor said?” He smiles at her before looking towards me “Did she eat? Did you guys eat?” He asks me.

He is very, very calm.

“We were still going to eat” I respond.

“Haibo!” He exclaims looking at his woman then me. “I’ll make something for everyone. Want to help me mfazi wami?” Kwanda is covered in a rosy hue before they both disappear in the kitchen.

I am left alone, I don’t know where the others disappeared to.

I keep fighting with my heart and mind.

If you call him then you are going to show him that you are desperate for his attention, is that what you want to do to yourself? —my brain asks wearing a tassel silver dress, looking at me with a disapproval look.

But we are desperate for his attention —my heart responds.

Don't be stupid. If we show him that we are desperate for his attention then he's going to play with her feelings, he has already started —my brains says, scowling.

Fine, I am not calling him.

Oops!

His phone just went straight to voicemail.

Congratulations Khethelo you are officially a clown, my darling—my brain says clapping her hands together.

After what felt like an eternity everyone comes back and we gather in the living room. The atmosphere is luke warm. I cannot help but feel something is being hidden here, something huge.

I hope not.

Last night I couldn't sleep a wink. I was nauseous probably the food that we had. I don't know but I have been feeling sick in the stomach.

Maybe worried since I have been calling countless ly and my calls haven't been answered.

I don't know!

Luckily today I am not working. I can hear voices as I am walking through the corridor it is the early hours of the morning. The sun hasn't risen.

The moment I appear silence starts looming and heads rotate facing towards me.

He is here!

Wearing a shirt that is covered with dry blood and also looking dusty. Our eyes meet. My heart starts dancing tango. My mouth is not producing enough saliva. "You didn't see this and don't tell Kwanda" He says unbuttoning his shirt. "Can we talk outside?" His face is stern. Not his usual self. He is not smiling. The sweetness that always roams around his face is not there.

I swallow my saliva, “I don’t want to talk to you”

“Hawu siyacela” Bongeziwe comments.

Heh!

Kayise shoots him a look and Bongeziwe throws his hands in the air. “I was just helping my brother”
Brother? Okay, this keep getting confusing.

“Khethelo” Kayise

“Hmm” I murmur.

“Please” I turn on my heels and walking back into my room. I can hear his footsteps behind and his scents mixed with something sweaty.

I sit on the edge of the bed waiting for him impatiently crossing and uncrossing my legs. Clasping my hands on my thighs and placing them on the either side of the bed. Flicking and tugging my dreadlocks.

When he walks into the room I am immobile as a statue before he locks the door behind. Standing in the middle of the room.

Not talking, just intently looking into my eyes.

“Stop looking at me like that” I say clenching my jaw.

“Like what?”

“Like that Kayise”

“Sorry”

“What are you sorry for? Ignoring me after we fucked and not sending me any message? Or ignoring my calls last night when I tried to call you”

“For everything”

“Fuck you!”

“Do you want me to?”

What?

“No. Yes. No!” My subconsciousness slaps me in the face “No” I breathe.

“I was arrested. I don’t know what Bongeziwe did

but I was released this morning and Kwanda has no clue”

“Arrested?” He shakes his head in agreement “What for?”

“I don’t want to talk about this right now”

“You owe me an explanation”

“I know that is what I want to talk about”

“Why were you arrested Kayise?” I cross my arms against my chest.

“Nothing serious” He continues taking off his shirt and folding it. Holding it firmly in his hands.

I challenge my eyebrow at him. “Why you wanted to talk to me? Cause clearly you are not ready to tell me anything. I get it you don’t want me and you want me to move on with my life and that is fine Kayise. I am going to do that”

“I don’t want you to”

“What do you want from me?”

“All of you”

Oh, no, no —my brain screams.

Oh, yes, yes —my heart says softly.

“Why now?”

“Because I realised I was holding onto something that never meant anything from the start. I don’t want to lose what we can possibly have”

“Bullshit!” I say “Why now?”

“Hawu Khethelo”

“Why were you arrested?”

“You don’t believe anything I say why should I bother?”

“Tell me”

“Fine. The night we slept together. The following day I happened to bump into my ex. And we fucked. We have been sleeping for the past week

and her husband found out. So he attacked me, we fought and he almost died that's it"

"You've been sleeping with your married ex?"

That hurts!

It hurts!

This actually really hurt!

"So you slept with me. You ignore me and then you went back to your ex?"

"Khethelo..."

"Is something wrong with me Kayise?" My voice comes out shaky. "Tell me. Is she way better than me?" I pester.

“No. Khethelo...” He pauses seeing my eyes gleaming with tears. Oh God! I wish I can hide.
“...There is nothing wrong with you”

“You are lying!”

“Can I hold you?”

I shake my head in disagreement facing down and my tears touching my chin.

[03/02, 07:00] : LOVE ON DEMAND

7.

YOLOKAZI

Ah!

I wake up to a loud yelling and screaming and I

instantly get off the bed, following the sound of the feminine voices—maybe there's a tsunami!

Why would a black person have a beach house anyways? We are the first people to die. Thixo!

It is then when I find Avulele—who is cousins to the Ndamase's brothers—walking over Bongeziwe and tries to punch him in the mouth. The punch is off target and weak, and Bongeziwe wrestles him to the ground, I cannot help but whistle.

Tjovitjo!

That was very sleek and clean, wonderful.

Instead of Mongezi and Kayise separating them they are just standing aside watching the bullock and heifer fighting in the kraal and the other two

women are screaming and shouting. They are just ruining the fun. This reminds me so much of the high school days whenever people were fighting everyone will be silence, no shouting or whatsoever so the teachers won't stop the fighting and we will watch the fight until the end, good ol'days.

Avulele stream off verbal insults and Bongeziwe's anger is erupting as he keeps clenching his jawline and balling his fists and that is when he punches him in the face, getting on top of him, violently he throws the punches not giving the person underneath him a chance.

"Ndamase!" Onalenna shouts, "Bongeziwe Ndamase!" she calls him by his full name and that is when he finally pauses with the punching, Avulele is nothing but a pulp covered in blood.

At least he broke Bongeziwe's lip which means he did throw some punches here and there, shame.

I am standing here barefooted watching the drama unfolds in front of me like I am an executive producer on a series.

Bongeziwe and Onalenna are following each other inside the house, and she looks upset.

“Avulele you can now leave” Mongezi says.

He wipes the blood from his lip and blinking “I just came here to talk to you”

“I don’t want to talk to you”

“It’s about our parents”

Mongezi chuckles sardonically “I don’t care, leave”

Avulele looks at him once before he walks to his car groaning.

“Why did you hold me when I wanted to stop the fight bhuti? First you made me pregnant and then you kept a secret from me and now this, what’s next?” This is so funny, what does the pregnancy has to do with this. I find it very adorable that even though they are arguing but she still calls him bhuti.

“Mfazi wami” Mongezi says softly.

Yoh Jesus!

Yeses!

“Don’t dare come close to me, don’t!” Kwanda raises her hands and walking inside the house and we follow right behind them, I throw myself on the couch while they disappear somewhere.

What a great morning filled with fights and arguments.

They want us to leave, I don't want to leave if we go back to the apartment then what are we going to do there? Just watching them with grumpy faces and mumbling under their breaths about how angry they are and also pacing up and down the room, no.

I am not doing that to myself we are going to stay here until they calm down and have an amazing afternoon with scrumptious food and good music, that's all I need right now.

We in the kitchen preparing lunch with soft music playing in the background and the other three are still mad at me; well my twin sister is fighting with the onions that she is chopping.

“Please don’t chop your finger” I plead to her trying to start a conversation, the silence is uncomfortable.

Have you ever got excited over a ringing phone because of the eerie silence, I even stick my tongue out at them and Onalenna is the one to erupt with laughter before the entire kitchen is filled with different laughter, loud and tiny, we are getting somewhere.

I take my phone and disappearing outside before answering my phone. “Hello” I didn’t even check the number; this was my escape so I got excited.

“Dr Ntuli, sawubona” his voice draws, I almost fall on the green grass as my knees become an overcooked macaroni.

“Sawubona” I greet back after finding my voice, he never called since that day he came to my work

place.

“It been a week already and I haven’t received my money ntokazi”

“Oh, I decided I won’t be paying you since I didn’t ask you to be a good samaritan”

“Muntu wes imame you can get arrested for this” his tone, his tone, his tone is velvety.

“I’ll be waiting for you and the police then”

I can hear a smile in his voice, “how about you pay me by going out on lunch with me, in an hour if you don’t mind and I can fetch you”

“And if I say no?”

“I’ll ask you again tomorrow”

“And if I say no tomorrow”

“Then the following day”

I bite the corner of my lip as if he can see what he is doing something I never expected him to do that to me, and don’t get any ideas, he is not my type remember that.– clears throat– I chuckle softly
“How about I invite you for lunch, only fair since I owe you”

“When?”

“In an hour. If you are not busy of course” I am suddenly nervous.

Weird

“That is perfect, send your location, and I’ll see you in an hour then”

“After this lunch I don’t owe, so leave me alone”

“I cannot promise to leave you alone”

“Why?”

“I’ll see you in an hour” he says with a slight chuckle before hanging up.

I stand here with my phone pressed against my chest and waiting for a smile that keeps crawling out of my mouth to go back from where it is coming from, I keep trying to swallow it but its not going

anywhere.

I return back into the house with my lower lip in between my teeth, “Do you think your man will mind if I invite a guest for lunch?” I ask Kwanda.

“It depends on who you are inviting” she responds, less aggressive.

“Mubiza” I tell her.

“Mubiza as in your mubiza?” Onalenna

“I said no one get to call him like that” I defend “And also he is not mine so can he come?”

“Yebo” Kwanda chimes.

I hope they don't mistakenly call him by that name.

“So what is his name?” Khethelo

Now I am in a mood for cooking and chopping “I don't know” I shrug my shoulders.

“You are inviting someone you don't know?”
Khethelo says, we are just chopping and she is the chef.

“We will all know him together” I respond “what can I do?”

“Just put that steak and veggies in an oven” she says.

After shoving the sheet-pan steak and veggies in an

oven I send the location and pouring myself a glass of wine.

My insides are shaking.

“You seem interested in this guy but you don’t want to say it” Onalenna says taking a sip from her glass and leaning over the kitchen counter, the different spices are hanging thick in the room and Kwanda walks out of the room since she cannot handle the smell.

“He is not my type” I remind them again.

“Is he ugly, ugly or is he ugly?”

“Attractive” I answer

“You like him!” Onalenna screams.

I roll my eyes at her dramatically and taking a long sip from my glass, I will be spending an afternoon with a total stranger who suddenly just became attractive because of his aura that demands authority and attention and his infectious accent.

I walk out of the room joining the men who are watching soccer— strange how men easily bond by watching another bunch of men running and chasing the ball until they sweat, a very weird sport if you ask me that one someone said it’s like a religion to them on the internet.

As I am about to sit down a doorbell rings and my eyes widen. “That is yours” Kwanda says appearing with the young princess.

Why is this one smiling like that?

She goes and sits next to her man and I am guessing they are no longer fighting; I get up from the couch after taking a deep breath striding to the door. I say a prayer underneath my breath before swinging the door open and he appears with a smile on his elegant face and he is wearing a peach linen shirt and matching pants.

Am I the only one who finds jewellery on a man attractive? A pendant around their necks and maybe a ring on their finger, damn.

“You are here” I smile with a botox smile.

That is what I manage to say.

“You thought I wasn’t coming?” he challenges his eyebrow at me.

“It’s very brave of you to visit someone you hardly know what if I kill you?”

“It’s very brave of you to invite someone you hardly even know, what if I kill you?”

“I have my friends and family here”

“Introducing me to the family already?” He smiles.

I look at him mesmerized and flapping my lashes then he hands me flowers and bottle of wine, “Can I get a hug Dr Ntuli?” I step closer and he wraps his hands around my waist, our bodies rubbing against each other and I get a whiff of his scent, burying my nose on his neck.

I step back and allowing him to walk in before he

follows me behind, doesn't seem nervous at all. I'll be shitting eggs if I was in shoes right now.

“Kungawo!” Kayise says the moment he sees him and getting up from the couch, he sounds excited.

That is his name? I think it's beautiful and unique.

They are hugging each other and looking like little boys seeing each other at the park and playing with sand, “Man, you're back! Look at you, what are you doing here?” Excuse me, I am carrying flowers and wine obviously he is here for me.

I wave my hand behind them, “how do you guys know each other?”

“We were friends in primary before he left” Kayise.

Small world,
I hate Durban.

He is not a serial killer, enkosi Qamatha!

Kwanda drags my hand to the kitchen and leaving the men behind, my guests looks comfortable and he already has a bottle of beer in his hand with his eyes focused on the screen, he winked at me before I disappeared.

My stomach, it's hunger, yes.

“Mubiza is not a mubiza!” Kwanda says in the kitchen to the others.

“He is here?” Onalenna

“Yes and he is attractive, very attractive not that ugly”

“So he is ugly?” Khethelo

“Not even” Kwanda

“Let me go give them some starters, I am coming back” Onalenna says with a tiny voice like a chipmunk, she grabs the oval shaped tray with spicy baked fish tacos and disappearing. Khethelo is wiggling her eyebrows at me.

I am the centre of attention.

Onalenna comes back jumping like a kangaroo, “He is not ugly!”

“I also want to see him”

I cannot believe them.

“Take the beers to them” Kwanda suggests.

What did I do to deserve this?

Khethelo grabs the beers from the fridge also disappearing then she comes back “Why did you call that one mubiza? He is a type”

“Whose type?”

“My type since he is not yours”

“I throw punches like Bongeziwe mna” I respond to her

[03/02, 07:01] : LOVE ON DEMAND

8.

YOLOKAZI

I am not usually this quiet but here I am sitting on a couch with my legs crossed in a ladylike manner with a glass of wine in my hand making sure I am avoiding making eye contact with Kwanda—he is annoying, yes es!

Okay we just looked at each other, and she is pointing her head towards Kungawo and licking her lips.

What is that a sign that I should kiss him?

I frown my eyebrows at her but her man catches our eye contact gossiping if that is even a thing and she quickly looks away from me, leaving me making the sign languages alone like a numbskull.

Why me God? Is it because I don't have a boyfriend?

We were forced to sit here and watch the soccer match for fun, and I have been looking for that "fun" since I sat on this couch looking like I am doing a photoshoot for a magazine with a minimalistic aesthetic or retro.

I think I might steal this asymmetric dress that I took from my twin sister—it always sounds better whenever I call her like that than using her name. It tastes sweeter against my tastebuds. Especially since our relationship is growing everyday like a rat hiding somewhere in the house and only coming out whenever there's guests running from corner to corner.

I am glad when the match finally ends, and now we are listening to these men having a discussion about how the other teams could have could done a better job. “Enough about soccer. Can we play music and have lunch. I am starving” Kwanda says switching off the television screen.

Oh yes!

My twin sister is more of an aesthetic person—my twin sister, ha ha—she is more of a creative one and very artsy if I should put it that way. She wants things to look a certain way and the colours should blend. Food. Clothes. Decoration. Everything, basically.

Outside their garden she set up a laid-back but through stylish picnic. Pile on the throw of blankets and pillows with fresh flowers.

The weather is really beautiful.

We all sit outside in a circle at the amazing food is at the centre. Khethelo cooked the wide rice noodles and soy sauce with shrimp scampi, and steak and veggies. “This tastes really good” Kungawo says as he chews complimenting the food.

“Aww thank you, I cooked” I say struggling to use the chopsticks and why are we using them again?

Isn't it embarrassing that a seven year old is using them like she belongs in cartoon series and I am here struggling.

The girls ogles their eyes on me. “Yeah she cooked, she is a great cooker actually” Onalenna says taking a sip from her glass of her wine as she was

choking from the laughter that she is swallowing back. Her man can see this and he has his head bowed looking at nothing but the bowl with his lips pressed together.

Mongezi chuckles, “that’s true she normally cooks for us when we are together” Whenever he wants to lobola we will deduct few thousands for this, what a man.

I am covered in pink glitter like a new wife sitting on the straw mat with my head bowed and respecting my in laws.

Kungawo glances at me with a smile then he winks. When my heart hits a bass I look away from him quickly, ah no.

“How did you and Kayise knew each other in primary?” Bongeziwe asks him.

Shifting the conversation and taking away my shine.

“Oh we were friends. He was the smart one in class and I was not that smart so our math teacher made me sit next to him so I can learn from him and that is how we become close. Eventually my marks became higher than his. But that happened for like a month or two when he was distracted” laughter erupts. And I laugh the loudest. Yes the sound of my voice must echoes in his ears. Not anyone but me.

“And then what happened?”

“My mother found a job in Cape Town when I was going to high school so I relocated. I came back four months ago” He responds.

I am glad because they are not asking him personal

questions like what is he doing for a living—I find those question very offensive especially when you are meeting someone for the first time. It feels as if you want to know what are they doing for a living before you can respect them.

The conversation is flowing filled with a gales of laughter. “Dessert anyone? I made it” I say first praying underneath my breath. That the dessert is made.

But the moment I get the looks, I know there’s is no dessert and I need someone to save me from the drowning since I threw myself in the middle of the ocean.

Or I am reading too much into things, I hope.

We grab the dishes with the girls and making our way to the kitchen. The moment we get there

Onalenna has turned reddish as a tomato from all the laughter she has been holding back then she explodes like bomb finally. Laughing so loud. That her voice becomes husky. And she chokes. “You cooked? Where?” Khethelo asks laughing.

When I was chopping here and helping, shoving pans in the oven what was I doing?

I was actually sacrificing my life because so much could have happen in that split of second. I could have got burnt by an oven and died or chopped my fingers off and died.

But ke not all heroes wear a cap.

“Before we even go there. Where are you going to get the dessert from?” Kwanda

“You guys didn’t make dessert?” I exclaim. They just look at me with their lips pressed into a thin line. “Hhayini nina don’t play like that”

“You said you made dessert where is it?” Kwanda is a wizard.

I look at them blinking with my mouth opened. “Yoh! Yoh! Yoh! No” Khethelo is howling.

Are these my friends?

Thankfully the dessert was made, I don’t even know what is this and I know for sure I will never be able to make it either. But it looks beautiful with decadent colours.

It has a layer of red velvet cake, strawberries and blueberries.

“Hah! Yolokazi you made this skhoskho sami?”
Bongeziwe asks me before he fist bumps me.

I look at him and nodding with so much confident.
Yes, I have been getting a lot of compliments about
“my cooking” skills. And Khethelo actually asked for
some of my recipes.

Irony.

Everyone is returning back inside the house since
the weather is changing and it’s getting dark.
Kungawo holds my hand back, circling his arm
around my waist after I turn to face him.

I dart my eyes between his, have you ever met
someone with a gorgeous bone structure? I bet not.

His face looks sharp in a most beautiful way. “Is something wrong?” I ask him. Words are like my thighs in tight jeans on my throat.

“I have to go” He announces, already?

“Oh. Uhm, thank you for coming” I smile.

“You said after this lunch you want me to leave you alone, do you still want me to? Because even though I don’t want to but I can try”

I clear my throat, “follow your heart”

He smiles, intently gazing at me. I try to pull away but his grip becomes tight. “Tomorrow” He pauses “Can I see you tomorrow?” Yes, even next week, next month and next year.

“I will think about it”

“Okay with me. And thank you for inviting me the food was amazing”

“Thank you so much. Should I walk you out”

“I want to kiss you Dr Ntuli...” Oh thixo! “But not today”

“Hehake so why are you telling me?”

He laughs, “Do you want me to do it now?”

“Maybe”

“I can do it tomorrow if you agree going out with me”

“A date?”

“Lunch”

“Date”

“Date ke muntu wes imame”

“I will tell you tonight” He kisses my forehead. And we both walk inside before he bids his farewell to everyone who waves at him and hug him then I walk him out. Watching him getting in a car waving at him. He drives off and I wave at him until he disappears. I go back into the house.

“Chef!” Bongeziwe laughs.

This is the reason why he is my favourite.

[03/02, 07:01] : LOVE ON DEMAND

9.

KHETHELO

I am curled up in a couch like earphones in a pockets. I don't really know what is wrong but I have heavy throbbing back pains and my uterus feels like I am being scissored. It feels as if I have period pains yet I am not.

Onalenna walks into the room with a bowl of soup and placing it on the table. "I am leaving now to see my parents. You know mama wants me home every Sunday. Are you going to be okay alone?"

We came back last night, after a wonderful day that

started on cold front and ended on a high note filled with a lot of laughter and drunk conversations, we shared a lot of hugs and hand holdings and stolen kisses —Hmm, I bet you are looking at me with your eyebrow creased and your hands pressed against your chest.

We finally got to meet the stranger that has been driving Yolokazi crazy and even threatening to punch us, not forgetting to mention how she confidently lied from her chest about cooking whereas she spent most of her time refilling her glass of wine and sticking her tongue out at everyone since she was being ignored for being a traitor.

And by the way “mubiza” is not anyway close to being ugly —just a man with sharp and bold features, and very attractive with a smoothest voice.

“I am not sick I just have hangover” I lie, I know how

a hangover feels like but this is not one. Maybe I am coming down with flu. Especially since my throat is sore and my nose are blocked. I woke up feeling nauseous though, that falls under the hangover.

Nothing to worry about.

She acknowledges my lie and taking her bag, “I will keep calling you. Bye, I love you” she shouts over her shoulder after rubbing the softness of her lips on mine, closing the door behind and leaving lonely silence looming in the house.

I sit up straight staring at the television screen with a bowl of soup on my thighs and taking one spoon at a time allowing it to burn my throat but the taste against my buds is not so welcoming, something tastes off.

I am swimming in boredom and the thoughts I was

not planning on re-visiting ever, comes crashing.

I am glad when my mother calls me, I already know she wants to know if I went to church and if not we are going to pray together over the phone —I miss home. Her mostly. I want to run in her arms so she can comfort me warmly.

I want my head to lay on her shoulder while she pats my back and encouraging me to let it all out while I soak the fabric that she is wearing.

Oh my mother!

“Khethelo” she says with a high pitched voice the moment I answer. Making me smile. I already know she has the widest smile on her round face, her cheekbones touching her eyes. “How are you my baby?” she asks.

I wish I can tell how I am but even I don't know. A man whom my heart still beats loudly and rapidly at the mention of his name or when a thought of him crosses my mind pretty much doesn't feel the same. Although he has said otherwise as we stood face to face. Emotions I did not expect from him were there in his eyes. I saw them. As he placed his hand on the side of my face begging me not to leave.

“I am okay mama. I just miss you”

“I miss you too, you must come home” she says “I dreamt about you and your sister eating the most beautiful fruits I have ever seen”

“Oh. What does that mean? Is everything okay?”

“Everything is fine my baby but is there anything you want to tell me?”

“No, no besides that I miss...”

“You already said that. But is there something you are scared to tell me maybe? You can tell me anything you know that right?” A knock comes from the door. As I am trying to tackle what my mother is trying to tell me since she is busy beating around the bush.

I press my phone in between my ear and shoulder while fluttering the door open.

I blink with my mouth half opened then I close it.
“Mama, can I call you later?” I ask her.

“No problem my baby and also Khethelo I know how much you love coffee so stop drinking it now, caffeine is not good for you in your condition” What condition? Terms and conditions? What is she talking about?

“Okay mama, thank you” I say anyways “I love you and bye” I hang up my call and gazing at him. With a box. And if it was any other day seeing him standing on my doorstep with a matte white box with a pink ribbon and brown paper bag would’ve excite me —okay it actually does. “Kayise what are you doing here?” I ask him.

“I was told you are not well and as a doctor I decided to come and check up on you”

I look at him, “I don’t want you here” Who am I lying to again?

“Khethelo—”

“Please leave” I pester.

He sighs “Fine. I will respect that but please take these. I bought you something to eat”

“I can make myself something to eat”

“What can I do to make things right?”

“Resolve your unresolved issues and stop stirring me into your business Kayise” Oh, Oh, I think I might just vent here. “Just leave”

“I am sorry but I am not going anywhere” What the—he just let himself in. I stand here holding the door.

He places the box on the table and taking the bowl of cold soup, looking at him while challenging his eyebrow. “You haven’t eaten?”

“And I must answer you because?”

“I care about you”

“Oh cut it already. You just got caught eating the forbidden fruit and now you want to use me as a second option, psh”

He chuckles, “Regardless of having so many options. I will never make you an option. But you are a choice. A better choice now let’s get that one thing straight” He says disappearing in the kitchen with a bowl and the paper bag he came with. I can see his movement from here. Shoving the bowl in a microwave and unpacking the paper bag. I grab the box on the table and opening it, it’s roses and macaroons, this is cute actually.

He bought sea food, how does he know I like sea food? Good move.

“So tell me what’s wrong?” He asks, sitting right next to me and so closely. He takes my feet and places them on his lap massaging them. The contact of our hands and feet feels like a summer scorching sun.

“With?”

“You are sick and you haven’t eaten. What is wrong?”

“The soup was off and I am not sick. I just have a hangover”

“Hangover? You literally drank three glasses of wine yesterday”

“I did not send you to count”

He smiles, “you are really giving me a hard time”

I take a prawn and throw it inside my mouth. “Are you aware of what you did Kayise? Making me feel used and not good enough? Am I supposed to just move past it because God touched you or something? Are you really expecting me to just be okay with everything?”

“Am I not expecting you to be okay with anything. I have no expectations or whatsoever like I said all your emotions are justified”

“Then why are you here Kayise?”

“To prove that I am about you. I was coming here when she showed up at my place that night. I couldn't call during the day because I was in and out of theatre. After I slept with her I felt so guilty. It

felt as if you were going to see right through me which is why I avoided seeing you at any point. I know I have said this but I will never intentionally hurt you”

“But you keep hurting me. I don’t have a problem with you sleeping with your married ex. That is all on you. We are not together. You can even call her now after leaving I do not have a problem but what hurt me is waking up the next morning and find you not there. No text message. No phone call. No note, nothing just an empty side of the bed” I breathe “Didn’t that night mean anything to you?”

“It meant everything”

“Then why did you just leave like that Kayis e?” My voice trembles. My tears are always on standby these days.

He takes the plastic bowl from me and placing it on the table, crawling all the way in between my legs and he holds my thigh tight and hard against him. And bending his wonderful luminous face to me. “Kayise” I say in a strong a voluptuous voice. My arms around his neck. He enfolds me and kisses me subtly, murmuring in a subtle voice.

“Please forgive me” he pleads.

We stare in each other’s eyes. “I forgive you”

“But?”

“Resolve your issues if you really want to be with me”

“I can do that” An unexpected knocks comes from the door. And we both look at each other before he

moves away from me and I get up dragging my feet to the door and opening, I hate unexpected visitors I hope this is not one of them.

I open the door, “Tumelo what are you doing here?” she is wearing a tracksuit and glasses. The moment she takes them off her eyes are reddish and her face looks puffy.

“I need someone to talk so I came here. One of the teachers gave me your address the other day you listened and you didn’t judge me” she breathes.

“Uhm. So I met my ex and we somehow slept together. I don’t know how my husband found out but he did. And this morning I found out that I was pregnant so I went to a doctor and had an abortion because I have no clue who is the father. I regret it” she raps on, tears are dancing in her eyes and cries, in a high, reckless cry.

So much has been said already at my doorstep.

“Come in” I step aside and allowing her to walk in but as we both turn Kayise is already standing tall in the middle of the room.

“Again?” there is a clang of anger in his voice
“Again Tumelo?”

“Kayise...”

She is? He is? What? No.

[03/02, 07:02] : LOVE ON DEMAND

10.

KHETHELO

I really thought I saw anger flashing in his face and

flames flowing through the room but I guess I couldn't read his vague expression right. "Kayise" the woman standing in my living room with her sunglasses clutched on her chest and recklessly crying says —I am not involving myself in any of this. I was not there when they were moaning, groaning and sweating.

He just looks at her shaking his head. No emotions. Okay they are there but I keep reading them incorrectly.

I dart my eyes between the two. "Are you aware that every time we slept together we actually used protection which means there was no way that child you killed could have been mine?" Kayise asks her. A part of me subconsciously sighs in relief.

Tumelo wipes the tears at the corner of her eyes, but another droplets fall from her face. "I was one month pregnant" she mumbles under breath. Like a

man kneeling down at the pulpit and accepting God as Alpha and Omega while the church says amen. A revelation. “I was one month...” she pauses and look up to find the man she has been doing ungodly ghastly things with looking at her with his luminous and wonderful face kept straight. “Fuck!” she is an impeccable actress. A wonderful one at that. Something about her story just doesn’t make sense to me. Are you telling me throughout the whole abortion procedure her mind was not working?

As she slept on that bed her legs spread apart, a thought did not come crashing like a tidal wave in her mind? Nothing.

The sound of her cries are suddenly so annoying that I walk away from where I was standing and take a sit on the couch continuing eating the sea food and watching her touching her knees, bending and crying —yawns.

Then she gets up and looks at Kayise sniffing and sobbing. “What are you doing here?” she asks him.

“That has nothing to do with you Tumelo”

She dramatically gasps, I told you she can act. And at this point I am coming with so many theories in my mind about why she is here and this “pregnancy”

She fixes the small purse in her hand and looks at me attentively before she wears her glasses and cat walk out of the house and shutting the door behind. “So this is her?” I ask Kayise.

He turns around and nodding his head. “How do you know her?”

I scoff, “we work together” Oh man, man, man.

Maybe I am overthinking. “Did she somehow knew about us?”

“I did tell her about you” One puzzle connects.

“Hmmm” I murmur.

He then furrows his eyebrows, “Are you on a pill?”
What is the sudden questioning?

“No” I respond. I cannot believe I am acting like there was no woman hysterically crying and even bending here just minutes ago. How I my supposed to react anyways?

He picks his chin up, “No?” That is what I said, right.

“No” I repeat.

“Oh. And you said the soup was off didn’t you?” I am being interrogated, that exactly how I feel.

I just look at him and then look away. He must not annoy me, not now.

He chuckles under his breath and striding to the kitchen warming the soup that he shoved in a microwave few minutes ago and then he comes back sitting next to me and eating from the bowl. “This soup is fine Khethelo”

“Then something is wrong with your taste buds”

“Mines or yours?”

“Kayise please leave” I finally say. Actually I am angry now that I think more and more about this.

“You want me to leave?”

“Yes”

He places the bowl on the table and taking his car keys. “Okay, I am leaving but I’ll be back later”

“Don’t”

He kisses my forehead, “Later” The moment he attempts to open the door I get up from the sofa. I don’t want him to leave, I was just joking.

“You are really leaving?” He turns back to me.

“You wanted me to leave”

“But that doesn’t mean you should actually leave”

“Khethelo do you want me to stay or leave?”

“Are you going to her?”

“What? No, what makes you think I am going to her?”

I shrug, “you tell me”

“Fine then, I am not leaving”

The door opens and Yolokazi walks in jumping up and down. Trust her to do that. “Have you ever been on a date wena? You cannot relate” He says to Kayise and catching her breath. “Wena? Date? Wine tasting? Extravaganza? Never” she says to me. “Are

you leaving already?” she asks Kayise.

“Yes but I will come back later”

“Great because I was going to kick you out. Khethelo we need wine so we can talk. Ona and Kwanda are on their way”

“Khethelo is not drinking alcohol” Kayise.

“Why not?” Yolokazi “Wait. Are you guys like an actual thing now? As in dating?”

“Let me leave. Khethelo don’t drink please” Kayise says and then leaves laughing slightly. I didn’t want him to go.

“How was your date?” I ask her.

“Hah! He bought you flowers and food. This a relationship. You guys are relationshiping” she won’t answer me I guess.

“I need to tell you something”

“Is it going to make me angry?”

“Maybe. But I will tell you when the others get here”

“If it’s going to make me angry then let me take these off...” she takes off her lashes. I cannot believe her, her make up was minimal but beautiful. Then she takes off her shoes before she takes off her bra. “Now I am good. Let’s wait for the other two”

I really hope the puzzle I have connected in my

head is right.

[03/02, 07:02] : LOVE ON DEMAND

11.

YOLOKAZI

I come out of the building to find him standing outside, and today he is clad in a black suit and white sneakers —I find this look very sleek, formal but also casual at the same time, charming to be honest. The sight of his thighs on well fitted pants makes my mind run a riot.

The moment he sees me sashaying my hips left and right like a model in a run way show an unexpected smile appears on his face, a full smile that shines like a twinkle, twinkle little star. “You look beautiful” he winces, pulling me closer to his

chest and his arm around my waist.

Jeezos!

Something somewhere in my body crawls, I can feel the tiny footsteps running all over my arms and spine as I get to sniff his scent, my breath fanning his skin that looks moisturized and healthy before he pulls away. “Are you okay?” My ability to speak is nowhere to be found.

I am joking, me? Out of words? Speechless? No.

I clear my throat, “I am good” I should have asked him if he is okay right? Oh well next time.

“You look beautiful Dr Ntuli” He says, his ungenerous mouth moves in slow motion. I look down at my black pants and matching top with

puffy and ruffled sleeves —my twin sister styled me and she is very good at that department, that is her calling. Kwanda takes clothes very seriously, no matter what the occasion is but she is always overdressed it could be immaculate outfit but she makes sure that she shows as much skin, people who have small body parts are always the luckiest because you get to wear anything especially when you have a flat chest like her of which she hates by the way.

I have a spoon body shape mostly call it pear shape, a perfect body type for some people that is characterized by large hips that are bigger than the rest of the body. It creates a nice shape that resembles the number eight. But I am not that perfect, I have thunder thighs and pot belly that looks like a figure if you look at me for three seconds but longer than that you will start noticing my love handles and the stretch marks on my arms, stomach and breasts. I love my stretch marks, madly in love with them especially the ones that

looks like thunder lightening surrounding my belly button.

If I could take time and maybe work out for three hours I'd end up looking like those white girls with a reality show and dating black men, to feel like they belong in our culture.

“Thank you Mr K, you do not look bad yourself” He chuckles opening the door to his car.

“Formalities really?”

I shrug my shoulder, “I thought that is what we are doing since you are calling me Dr Ntuli” He smirks, ushering me inside the car before he closes the door.

I watch him as he slides behind the wheel and

fastening his seat belt and suddenly each and every movement he makes is attractive even the way his nose moves as he inhales and exhales. “No need for formalities nkosazana” he says turning the key, and in that moment the car hums followed by loud throbbing music. He instantly turns down the music and he casts an unlicensed look in my direction to read my reaction but instead I erupt into loud laughter.

“Are you deaf?” I laugh, who plays music this loud.

“Ngiyaxolisa” He apologizes with a very charming smirk that I think I dislike because of how it’s making me feel. I swallow my blush and facing forward as he manoeuvres the car on the road, with just silence.

The only sound in this car is the moving wheels and the wind that has managed to escape through open windows.

I extend my hand to turn on the music and he glances at me. Busi Mhlongo's powerful vocals fills the entire car.

I glance towards him, "Where are we going?" I ask him, I've been meaning to ask. I want to take time and stare at him, without blinking. Watching the words leaves his mouth as if I could see and touch them. Oh the way his mouth slowly moves all the way to his cheeks when he is about to smile.

Is this how the devil looked like when he was tempting Jesus to turn the stones into bread?

"At one of my restaurants there's an event happening so you are my date"

I gasp, "I am not dressed for that kind of occasion, Kungawo no!" I protest.

He looks at me with a coy smile, “you are dressed for any occasion Dr Ntuli” he says so softly, so velvety, so exotic, so intoxicating.

I lean back on a leather seat pretending to be sulking and tapping my fingers on my thighs following the rhythm of “Zithin’izizwe”.

Something hits me. “You said you have a restaurant?” I ask him.

“Restaurants”

“Very spicy of you to correct me” I chuckle.

“I have to make sure you don’t have wrong information”

“How many restaurants do you have then?”

“Five. Always been my dream since young age”

“So that is your field?”

“You can say that but I’m a chef and a wine maker so food always been part of my life”

“You are rich!” I bluntly say.

“Wealthy” He smiles.

I erupt with laughter, “you are so cocky” I shake my head.

“I am joking hawu but you can say that. I have enough money to make sure that my children never suffers when I die and my wife”

“You have a wife? And kids?” Did my heart just shatter right in front of me? And my lungs stop functioning, it seems like it.

Kids? I have never imagined myself as a mother, I do not want to have kids.

“She is not my wife yet”

Keep breaking my heart, I like it, continue.

“Oh so you are engaged?”

“Not yet”

“Dating?”

“Chabo Dr Ntuli”

“So what is going on?”

“She just asked me what is going on and I don’t know how to answer that question” I look at him, my mouth wants to pout but I hold it back. I am covered in a rosy hue with my face that has suddenly soften up. I blink at him turning my body and facing towards him and watching him with his one hand in a steering wheel so relaxed and the other one he is using it to change gears, well my heart? It is pumping custard.

“There is nothing going on”

“Your eyes say the opposite”

“You are not my type” I laugh at him.

“Is that how you lie to yourself saying I am not your type?” He laughs loudly, his sonorous laughter fills the entire car. His shoulders are moving up and down. Then he rotates his head to look at me. “What is your type?”

“Tall, dark and strong shoulders”

Wait, I just defined him.

“Strong shoulders, that is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard” We drive through an underground parking. He has his own spot, fancy.

“What is wrong with strong shoulders? You have them” I grab my purse as we both get off the car at the same time and he gives me a disapproval look. “What?”

“You were supposed to wait for me until I open the door for you” He says.

I scowl, “next time” I murmur. He circles his hand around my waist like a branded logo as we take matching footsteps.

“You said I have strong shoulders?”

“Yes”

“And I am tall and dark, so what does that mean? I am your type?”

“Seems like it” He pauses walking and turns to just look at me. Not touching, no kissing, just staring.

Then we continue walking laughing loudly and chuckling until we walk through a glass door to an extravagant restaurant with chandeliers hanging from the ceiling illuminating the building with all shades of brown design, this is impeccable.

His hand has not even once removed itself from my waist, “this way sir” a woman in a black dress says flicking her hair that touches her waist. Then she sahayas her body as we follow right behind leading us to a stalk with different bottles of wines and glasses that have just drops inside. “you start with the tasting first then I will take you where the function is being held” she smiles widely and flirty then she walks away.

Kungawo grabs a glass and hands it to me before he takes his, bringing it closer to his nostrils first.

“So we don’t drink alcohol here but we smell it?” I ask him, copying him and smelling the red liquid in a glass.

He chuckles, “You need to get the aroma first before the taste” he says bringing his glass close to his lips and taking just one sip before putting back the glass on the table. Oh that is what we do? I just took one gulp and that was it. I grab his glass as well and drink from it, we do not waste alcohol.

He glances at him with a grin handing me another glass with different liquid, red in colour but the aroma is different, very strong but I smell peaches here. “They used peaches on wine?”

“Now you see why we smell aroma? Before tasting the texture?” He seems impressed that I smell peaches, anyways this time he takes a sip and then hands me his glass of which I drink from and put it back on the table.

“Why are we drinking drops anyways?”

“Unless if you want to leave this place unable to walk Dr Ntuli I can pour you a full glass” he says, a smile hasn’t been wiped off his face.

“Can you carry me?” I tease.

“I have strong shoulders”

“I see what you are doing” I take another glass and just one sip before putting back the glass. “You don’t like this one?”

“I want to walk with my two feet when we leave so you don’t have to fall” He looks at and unexpectedly he carries me like a sack of oranges in his shoulders, I erupt with laughter as he walks I think

to where the function is being held. “Kungawo put me down!”

“I want to fall first” He responds.

“What will people say?” I punch his back we are approaching outside and I can see the guests outside the garden. The fountain is so beautiful. Finally puts me down and all eyes are cast towards us.

I glance at him and he winks while I fix my top and a lady with long legs walks towards us with a smile on her face —a model type. “That was a grand entrance” she says sardonically.

“Sawubona” Kungawo says.

“It is good to see you” she says, “I thought you

won't come since our daughter told you I will be here" she emphasise.

"And you thought her real father was going to come instead?" He asks with such a charming smile and the lady in front of us tugs her head in clearly surprised he said that. Maybe she wasn't expecting he'd say that.

She flicks her hair, "new skirt?" she looks towards me.

"Pants" I answer, she must not dare me.

"It has nothing to do with you, excuse us" We walk pass her and that is when he starts laughing "New pants really?"

"Who is she?"

“We are not here to talk about her, at least not now. You look really beautiful by the way” He compliments again.

“Thank you”

“Come this way”

Oh man! The day proves to be something I have not expected. I thought I was going to get bored trying to force conversations with people, but instead this man right here made show that I am comfortable. We shared gales of laughter sitting right next to each other and gossiping about people, while I shoved alcohol down his throat. The wine tastes different from the one I am always drinking much richer and bitter but nice. The food exploded like fire works against my taste buds and he is the one behind recipes.

He just parked outside my building this time I let him open the door for me. He has taken off his blazer and looking a bit scruffy since we are both tipsy. “Thank you, I had fun” I confess.

“Had fun forcing me to drink wine?”

“Another reason but I enjoyed your company”

“I am glad you did. Tomorrow are you busy?”

“I have work”

“I can fetch you after. Then we can go to my house and prepare dinner together” he says.

Dinner together? Oh shit I lied about cooking the

other day, hmm.

“Sounds like a great idea but I will be exhausted”

“You don’t have to cook you will just sit there and watch my strong shoulders as I cook for you then I promise after that I will take you home” I would love to stare at him as he moves around the kitchen.

“I can chop onions”

“I know you are only good at that department”

I gasp, “I can actually cook mina”

“I believe you”

“Good. Okay tomorrow then”

“Thank you and have a wonderful night” He steps closer, so, so close and my breathing hitches before his lips touches my forehead.

No kiss again today?

“Tomorrow” I say whispery and walking inside the building as he watches me.

The moment I walk through the door I am jumping up and down like a kangaroo to find Khethelo and Kayise, these two and their hide and seek.

But shortly Kayise leaves, he is not needed anyways because I have tea to spill and then after hours Onalenna and Kwanda are here.

We gather in the living room and they are looking at

me like I sell tripe. “What?” I look at them.

“You woke me up from my sleep Yolokazi do not bullshit me!” Kwanda says.

“Manje why are you fighting?” I ask her with a teasing tone. Onalenna chuckles pouring wine in our glasses. “Khethelo is not drinking”

“Why not?” Onalenna

“Kayise said she must not drink”

“Wait what? Are you guys dating?” Kwanda.

“What no? It is complicated. He was just being crazy like my mother who called me to tell me she dreamt of me eating fruits and I shouldn’t drink

coffee”

“Was it oral sex nawe? Or the condom broke or maybe you slipped on a dick?” I ask her.

Onalenna as always is loudly laughing and taking sips from her glass already.

“Whar are you talking about?” Khethelo.

“Don’t you know when someone dreams about you eating fruits it means you are pregnant?” Kwanda, at least she knows something.

“You guys can’t have sex like normal people without getting pregnant? Don’t you know you must normalize drinking stamita once or twice a week or J ik?”

“Do you drink J ik?” Onalenna laughs.

“It depends” I respond.

“How are we twins?” Kwanda laughs, the room becomes deadly silence.

“This is the second time you are saying this, what is going on?” Khethelo.

“We are twin sisters” Kwanda.

“How?” Onalenna

“My mother was not my mother and her mother is my mother. A long story we will talk about later not now. Anyways Yolokazi how was your date?”

“You guys actually look alike!” Onalenna.

“Can we talk about the pregnant one first. What is wrong with you guys and wanting to be mothers?” I say.

“I am not pregnant” Khethelo

“I am not a mother” Onalenna

“I am not pregnant” Kwanda, what an idiot. We laugh loudly.

“Onalenna you are a step mother, that makes you a mother. And wena Khethelo you are pregnant”

“I’m not”

“I say let’s go buy pregnancy test at the pharmacy across the street and prove it”

Khethelo widen her eyes, “Now?”

“Next year” Kwanda “Of course now”

“Tomorrow morning rather not now. So much we have to talk about and I know I am not pregnant”

“Khethelo do you have good or bad news for us?”
Onalenna

“Bad” Khethelo answers. “Yolokazi took off her lashes and shoes”

“Let’s start with you then Yolokazi will calm us with her date” Onalenna.

“When we get back from fighting right?” I ask them.

“Who are we fighting? Asambe manje” Kwanda.

“Haibo Mariya, you want bhuti to kill us?”

“I will kill you first” I get off the sofa to her and wrapping her around my arms and kissing her all over her face while she loudly laughs and pushing me away. “Ave unesdina” she says I am annoying.

“Cut it now guys, Khethelo what is happening?”

Onalenna

[03/02, 07:03] : LOVE ON DEMAND

12.

YOLOKAZI

The room is silence!

As we are impatiently waiting for Khethelo to open her mouth and utter a word, I am tightly holding my glass filled with white wine, ginger and basil — a great combination anyone should try actually — I keep crossing and uncrossing my legs while she takes a sharp intake of breath. “Khethelo are you going to talk or what?” I ask her after what felt like an eternity of silence looming in the room and our iris, pupils just focused on her.

“Remember that night when we were celebrating my promotion and I got drunk?”

“Then you slept with Kayise? Of course how can we forget when you were practically singing harmonies?” Kwanda just took words from my mouth.

This girl can sing, she sings while having sex!

And thinking about that night alone is so disturbing.

Khethelo chuckles and dramatically rolling her eyes at her, “Anyways the following day Kayise didn’t call me right? That’s totally fine with me because he already explained what happened”

“Do not give us half scoop what happened?” I ask her leaning forward, if we have to hate him then we need a full story and many reasons behind the hatred.

“Let me finish!” she says “That day there was a new teacher who was introduced her name is Tumelo and it turns out that she is Kayise’s ex- girlfriend” I tell them.

“I know her” Kwanda

“This is getting spicy” Onalenna says refilling her glass of wine, this is my drinking mate, she has took over Kwanda’s position since she chose pregnancy over freedom.

“This one time she walked into my office and started venting about her messy previous relationship when she left her man who wasn’t good enough for a rich guy and then she discovered she was pregnant then aborted”

“Wait so she was technically telling you about her relationship with Kayise?” Onalenna asks her and Khethelo shakes her head in agreement.

Juicy.

“That is not just it. Today she showed up here and telling me that she has been sleeping with her ex, which is Kayise and she got pregnant but since she wasn’t too sure who the baby belonged to between her husband and him she decided to abort again. Then she was hysterically and being all melodramatic when she saw Kayise here who then told her that if she was pregnant then the baby wasn’t his because they have been using protection it was impossible because she was one month but they’ve been sleeping for the past week”

“Wait she had another abortion?” Kwanda asks.

“Hmmm, well she told me fetus deletus waya waya”

I erupt with laughter “South Africaaaaa!” I clap once and choking in the liquid I was about to swallow.

“Why do I feel like she knew about you and Kayise the moment she was introduced to you. And basically she has been indirectly telling you about her relationship with Kayise on purpose” Onalenna.

“That is what I was thinking because when she left here she gave me the most diabolical look, it was dangerous that I literally felt shivers down my spine”

“That wasn’t shivers, ubugwala nje lobu [you are being a coward that’s it]” I say to her and placing my empty glass on the table —I’ve had enough alcohol for today and I am four five seconds from being drunk.

“I can hear you talking but you haven’t told us where this woman stays” Kwanda says, I am surprised she is even thinking about fighting because her man

would murder us not her, us.

“Can we not jump the gun already?” Onalenna chuckles “I say let’s wait for her to make a move before we do anything but this shouldn’t stop you from dating Kayise because that is exactly what she wants”

“Kayise is my brother right? And I love him with all my heart but I really don’t think you should be with him if he comes with all of this drama but, hear me out, and this is a big but if you really love and want to be with him then go for it”

“Do not let Kwanda poison you, she has a man that loves her and she is pregnant from oral sex as we speak. Are you going to listen to her telling you that you shouldn’t date Kayise because of one mistake?” I ask her—I cannot believe this one.

“What does my pregnancy has to do with this?”
Kwanda chuckles and making herself comfortable
on a sofa.

“Khethelo do you love Kayise?” I ask her.

“There thing is...” I do not want to hear excuses and
back and forth.

“I do not want to hear your excuses. Because if
you’d ask me if I have feelings for Kungawo I’d say
yes. Do I suddenly find him very—” wait what was
that again? It’s probably the wine I have been
drinking this entire day. I burp “I didn’t mean that” I
say, I know I said I am no longer drinking but one
more glass won’t hurt.

“I knew it! I knew it mina guys like I knew it that very
moment she lied about cooking whereas she cuts
onions that could choke and kill you” Kwanda says

laughing and snorting. I chop perfectly fine onions by the way and do not listen to anything coming from a pregnant woman's mouth.

Ave benamanga laba, they are such liars!

"I am going to ignore anyone who says anything related to what I said while I was drunk anyways Khethelo do you love Kayise and be honest, Jesus is watching" I look at the ceiling, searching somewhere for his big bugged eyes staring at us but he is nowhere in sight.

"I love him" she confess "but..."

"Keep it to yourself we do not want to hear what comes after that" Onalenna.

"Since you actually love him then go for it honey.

We are speaking about feelings here. Remember you cannot choose what you feed your heart when it already wants what it wants. Because it will keep demanding for that one thing. And if things don't work out then we'll find another man for you" I tell her and an unexpected smile escapes her lips.

"Enough about me, how was your date?" The conversation is being redirected to me now.

"We went to one of his restaurants because there was an event being held there and..."

Kwanda immediately pesters, "how many restaurants does he have?" she asks, I expected this question from her specifically.

"Five, but we are not there. Anyways we get there and I think that woman is from his past and she called me a new skirt then I told her I am new pair of

pants and not skirt. Ah! She then punched me, I kicked her hard and jumped on her..." I cannot believe the seriousness on their faces as I am telling them a made up story "I am joking she didn't punch me" I roar with laughter.

"Nxh!" Kwanda clicks her tongue and eating from a packet of chips.

"I actually believed her and that what annoys me" Khethelo says choking in between her laughter and hitting her chest.

"I thought a serious fight erupted. You said he has five restaurants what does he do?" Onalenna.

"He's a chef and winemaker" I tell them boldly.

"A successful black man, we love to see it!" Kwanda

says chewing.

“So you have feelings for him?” Onalenna.

“I just remembered I have an early morning tomorrow, let me go to bed” I get up from the sofa and stumbling backwards —okay we are drunk.

“Sit down Yolokazi!” Kwanda says.

“I have work tomorrow” I laugh at them and running out the room, I feel like a soldier at the military running away from bombs and dodging bullets while their laughter chases me all the way to my room. And the moment I get there I throw myself on the bed, without taking off my clothes or whatsoever.

.

I woke up this morning tugged in bed and wearing my night wear, strange enough and my phone was place under my pillow so I can easily hear my alarm when I wake up.

I am grateful waking up without any throbbing headache or something distasteful on my tastebuds, doesn't that happen to you? When you wake up the following day after consuming alcohol feeling like you swallowed bile.

I am right on time!

I find Onalenna in the kitchen preparing a lunch box for her daughter who is in the living room watching cartoons with her school uniform. "Good morning" I chime and she turns around facing towards me with a grin.

“Good morning love”

“When did your daughter get here?” I look over her, she is so adorable, making my eggs tremble but I am not there and not about to punish myself like that.

A mother? Me? No.

“Last night”

“Who tugged me in and changed my clothes?” I do not like that look on her face, she is widely grinning and shoving the lunch box in a small backpack.

“Kungawo”

Who? Who what? When? How? Where? Njani?

I laugh loudly “Very funny” I say pouring myself a glass of water. I mean last night I went straight to bed after running from them. Yes, I was already drunk but I remember everything.

“Well I am not joking”

I pause and blink. I open my mouth and close it. I take a sip from a glass then a gulp. “Onalenna do not play like that” I warn her.

“You went to bed and you fell asleep for couple of minutes then we walked into your room. With another bottle of wine. We drank and went back to the living room but you were already drunk lapho and you called him and asked him to come and tug you in” No, that is not what happened. One of them tugged me in bed. I know for sure that is what happened.

Yoh thixo!

“Repeat for me what happened?”

“You went to bed...”

“No, no get to that part when you guys walked into my room and then what happened?”

“We drank, it was just you and me because the other two wasn't drinking. And since you wanted music we moved back to the living room. Then Bongeziwe brought Zendaya here, you told Bongeziwe you love Kungawo”

“You didn't tell me that earlier”

“I am telling you now. You said Bongeziwe is your best friend” It’s getting worse.

Mixing alcohol, is never a good idea.

“Okay after Bongeziwe left I went to bed?”

“You called Kungawo”

“And you guys just let me call him?”

“You fought us. You punch like Bongeziwe wena, those are your words” that is something I would say.

“Okay and he came here just to tug me in and left?”

“Literally”

We are disturbed by a knock and my eyes lands on the floor praying under my breath it is not him. How am I even going to face him again?

“Go get it” I say to Onalenna.

“You get it” she laughs.

I take a deep breath and dragging my feet to the door. I sigh in relief seeing my mother on the doorstep wearing a two piece and matching shoes.

On a Monday morning I had to start my day with this drama and her fringe mushroom wig. “Ma” I say.

“Can I come in?”

“I am going to work”

“Manje?” I step aside and allowing her to walk in that moment Onalenna greets and take her daughter leaving the house.

“Ma I have to go to work” I say to her.

“Hello Yolokazi mntanami, how are you? I am good too but very thirsty” I still have to deal with last night’s aftermath, I cannot deal with this right now.

“Can we talk tomorrow?”

“I am not here to stay” she says “do you even remember that you have a mother?”

“Hawu ma”

“No. I am asking because you no longer call or send me a message, what are you punishing me?”

“No”

“Then what is it?”

“Nothing”

“And Yomelela?”

“Who is that?”

“That is your sister’s name. Nokwanda Yomelela and Nokubonga Yolokazi” These names are beautiful actually.

“She is fine”

“Both of you haven’t forgiven me?” she scowls sadly.

“It’s not like that” I take a sit right next to her, I guess I am going to end up calling in sick again or late.

“Then what is it?”

“Nothing mama”

“I told your father about both of you”

“And?”

“He wants to meet both of you tonight”

“Tonight mama I have plans”

“More important than this?”

“Fine, I will come but I don’t think Kwanda is going to show up”

“Where is she?”

“I don’t know but I will call her” I know exactly, she must have woke up in the early hours of the morning and went to her man, they cannot live without each other, literally.

She gets up, “Fine. Tell me what she said and let me know” she then attempts to walk out of the door but pause “Ndiyakuthanda Yolokazi”

“I love you too mama”

Meeting my dad tonight? I am not ready.

Having to call Kungawo about last night? I am not ready.

Going to work? Not ready.

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[03/02, 07:03] : LOVE ON DEMAND

13.

YOLOKAZI.

Everything goes silent around me after spitting the bitter and sour words, I keep blinking as I watch her open and close her mouth while my hands are trembling on the sides of my body. "Kwanda!" I call after her as she walks away from me, her steps are so perfect on those high heel shoes, everything about her has always resembled perfection. My heart is beating so loud against my chest. Words are stuck on my throat, I want to say something, anything that could make amends right here at this moment.

I watch her as she disappears on the street not knowing whether to return back inside the house to a man I want to accept me that I am even willing to change who I am to be the version of myself that would be more acceptable for him. He said

something about moral compass, the werewolf inside me wanted to jump off the couch and sip his blood from his neck but the young girl in me who wants her father just sat there blinking and clutching the sides of the couch and listening to a man who was introduced as my father disrespecting how my mother raised me.

Am I that desperate for acceptance? That I spat poisonous words against my sister who has been there with me from the moment we swam as a sperm rushing and racing together to my mother's egg.

After few minutes my mother walks out of the house struggling in those high heel shoes she is wearing. "Yolokazi, where is your sister? Come inside" she yells all at once. I just stand feeling everything inside me slowly numbing. "Yey wena khanda khulu, come inside hawu!" This woman just said I have a big head, if it was under any other

circumstance I would have laughed cause I know alcohol is already traveling in her system. But instead I ignore her and walking back inside the house to get my car keys.

I find him drinking water with a slice of lemon in his glass and when he sees me he picks his head up, then smiles. "You are different from your sister" he says, I glance at him once not uttering a word and taking my bag and keys.

As I am about to walk out of the door I pause turning back to him. "You know I was looking forward into meeting you today. I went out to buy a new dress, new everything because I wanted you to accept me as your daughter. I couldn't wait to be wrapped around your arms and finally get to call you my father" I say to him, and no, I am not emotional nor have a trembling voice or even tears dancing in my eyes.

"We can still work on that"

I chuckle sardonically "What is there to work on when you walked here and disrespected my mother and how she raised me? When you were not there? What is there to work on?"

"If telling the truth came out as disrespect then we have a long way to go. Like I said I am a pastor and I want my children to carry themselves a certain way"

"You clearly forgotten that you're a a pastor the day you slept with my mother the night before your wedding didn't you? And now you want to sit there and drink water with a slice of lemon and talk about moral compass, msunu wakho very much" I spit disrespectfully and feeling anger choking me at each word smoothly coming out of my mouth.

"Moya oyigcwele!" He exclaims as if he's seeing something demonic and powerful – I am not about to stand here and listen to anything coming out of his mouth. I have to find Kwanda after the damage I have done.

I really messed up, didn't I? Especially when our relationship was just blooming like a flower in spring.

Those words I said to her are unforgivable.

My mother claps her hands and burping as she sees me getting in the car taking one last sip from a small bottle of vodka that she carries wherever she goes.

I have been trying to contact my sister who straight up reject my calls, immediately at first ring. It's clear as crystals that she doesn't want to talk to me, which is pretty much understandable and when I

tried calling her man it keeps ringing until it takes me straight to voicemail.

Sigh!

I am stuck in the middle of the road with my head on the steering wheel, wishing I had tears trailing down my cheeks to express how I feel but there's nothing--I am not a crier, so I am not easily triggered into hysterically crying.

I grab out my phone, taking a deep breath from the depth of my soul, that's a bit of exaggeration, it came from my lungs.

I cannot believe I am doing this!

Inhale slowly,

Exhale quickly.

"Dr Ntuli" he says the moment he answers, his tone sounds so professional. It makes something somewhere in me tremble and shiver like I am stuck in a cold room.

"Yolokazi is actually my name"

He chuckles, "You haven't been taking my calls"

Duh!

He never heard of a word embarrassment? After I apparently called him to tug me in the bed when I was drunk.

"I was busy" I lie after clearing my throat.

"I believe you" he says then pause "I thought you

were coming over today"

"Something came up"

"And you didn't bother telling me about it?" I don't like the sound of his tone, sounds more sternly and commanding. It makes you wanna drape a blanket around your shoulder, wrap a head wrap around your head and take a sit on a reed mat with your head bowed.

"I am sorry" I apologies.

Me, apologies, yes.

"I can only forgive you if you come over so you can tell me what is wrong, you don't sound okay" Ha ha ha, he knows me like that now? That is not good.

"Your location please"

"I am coming to fetch you"

"I am not home"

"Send me your location phela, I am coming" he says then hang up instantly leaving me smiling and biting the corner of my lip.

We are not falling for him, are we? It can't be.

I try calling Kwanda once again after sending the location and impatiently sitting in the car feeling rather unsafe.

She picks up finally!

"Ufunani?" she answers her phone, her tone so dangerous.

Words are nowhere to be found, unlike me. "Are you okay?" I ask her, that's all I manage to ask.

"Yolokazi what do you want?"

"I want us to talk"

"Right now is not the right time to talk"

"Tomorrow?"

"No"

"Following day after that?"

"No"

"Next week"

"No"

"Next month?"

"Chabo"

Yoh!

"When then?"

"How about never?" that all she says before she hangs up her call leaving me staggered. I am still

trying to wrap my head around this conversation when a car parks behind me.

Oh he is here!

[03/02, 07:04] : LOVE ON DEMAND

14.

YOLOKAZI

I sit up straight on the comfortable upholstery seat in a more perfect posture if I could I was going to even cross my legs in a ladylike mannerism like those models in a photo shoot with wet hair. I catch a quick glimpse on a rear-view mirror and wiping off the sadden facial expression that was plastered on my face. Picking and choosing a perfect smile in one of my drawers as I hear a knock coming from the window and here he is, looking left then right

before he knocks once again -- he cannot see me from the inside since my windows are dimmed.

I pull down the window and the smile I thought would be more useable and impressive is nowhere in sight instead I get off the car in just a blink of an eye I am wrapped around his arms, feelings his warmth and skin that feels silk against mine, cologne so intoxicating and his hair tickling me in a very exotic way.

I said I am not a crier didn't I?

Give me a red nose and white paint for my face, I deserve it in fact I've earned it.

His arms are like a blanket around me, my head on his chiselled chest and I am intoxicated by the richness of his scent and the warmth of his body against the cotton fabric he is wearing.

"Why are you here alone? It's unsafe Dr Ntuli" very cute how he is still keeping up with his formalities even when he has a woman crying in his arms.

I cannot seem to find the right words to utter at this moment and the tears that were needed hours ago are only showing themselves now, like waterfalls in a forest. Fresh and clear. The water beads tastes salty at the tip of my tongue. He initially try to get me to look at him and a repressed sob shake my petite form and give away to a good, hard cry.

"Talk to me what happened?"

"Nothing happened" I answer still avoiding to look into those eyes as he rubs my back tenderly and feeling my shaky breaths enter and exit my body.

"But you're crying" he pauses and take a sharp intake of breath as if he is defeated since he has

been trying to get me to look into his eyes. I know exactly what he wants to do. He wants to travel through my pupils and search for something, or any kind of emotion visible there, wander around until he eventually finds it and when he finally does he finds a perfect way to console me. "Will you be able to drive behind me?" He press my head to his chest, stroking my dreadlocks "Or we can drive together and I will have someone fetching your car"

"Why my car should be left behind?" I sniff.

His chest moves up and down with a little bit of vibration as he chuckles, sounds very melodic "we can take yours"

"I will drive behind you"

"Are you sure because I am not comfortable with that option" he finally get to lift my face and kiss the

tears on my cheeks, then chase away the streaming runnels with his thumb. My breath hitches feeling the softness and coldness of his lips against my skin for the first time. My voice is lodged against my throat.

You need to say something or just faint all at once woman, my brain yells dramatically filling her long nails painted in bright red.

"I will be fine" His embrace is so tender, not forced or sexual but an easy, caring hold. His eyes search my face as though he is trying to look past my skin and bone to see what is inside me, staring down my soul while opening his so I can glimpse it. His voice so mellow.

"Fine then" I can tell his body is eager for more. His touch, light and tender, so light against my back that it is sensual awakening as we are standing under the streetlights. My car door opened and his

keep flashing lights from behind. My body is responding to him in a way I could never imagine. It lifts me up on my tiptoes and makes my head tilt to find his mouth, needing the warm nourishment it offers.

He is not my type, not my nyiff nyeff type, my brain grins fixing her retro style glamour waves—they are large and there's not too much of them just like Marilyn Monroe.

I watch him close his eyes slowly as my own lids eclipsed the room around them. His hold tightens as his tongue finds mine, salty tears mingling. One long, gentle, probing kiss, no sound but his breath, my breath, hooting cars passing by. Echoes in my mind, his voice. His body against mine, tall, hard, not moving as if he's afraid he might rip off my clothes right here and now. His gentle caressing unraveling my sanity and all stress with it yet adding new layers to that release tension, peeling

away pressures, concurring building volume between my thighs, swelling me, wetting me, spilling me until I almost cry.

He breaks of the kiss, cradling my face, hands trembling. "I'm sorry" he says letting out his breath hard. I should be apologising right? I can only nod looking down. His gaze is serious, too intense and releasing what I think is what you call butterflies in my stomach.

"No I'm sorry"

"You don't even know why I'm sorry"

"I don't want to hear it"

He smiles, a half smile "Are you sure?"

"Sure"

"Then I'll let you find out why I am apologising but for now we should get going" He manoeuvres me into the car without waiting for my response. I watch him fastening my seat belt as if I don't have two hands, our skin contact feels like a scorching sun. He glances at me just once and winks "we are driving together and I am leaving my car behind" Oh what is it with the change of heart.

"Kungawo..."

"Me no fight with you love" he says sounding like those reggae musician that makes you wonder why you were not born in Jamaica since the accent is just naturally dripping exotic.

I get off the car moving to the passenger seat and watching him sliding behind the wheel. He looks

uncomfortable in my small car with no leather seats.

"You look uncomfortable" I laugh as he manoeuvres the car on the road and we are met by traffic and chaotic hoots.

He glances at me once and changing gears before he leans backwards looking rather comfortable now than few seconds ago "I am very comfortable Dr Ntuli"

"Yolokazi" I correct him.

"Dr Ntuli"

Lord please help me, I cannot fall for him when I confidently said he is not my type countless times and so boldly. In that moment the car in front of us slams its brakes and he downshifts. My forearm

covers my face and both feet stomps invisible brakes.

"Not my fault"

A thin sheen of perspiration covers my body and I bite my lip to avoid commentary and my eyes focused on the outside and taking a deep breath.

"I am starting to think you're a bad driver" I say as the cars finally move smoothly on the road, traffic is disappearing in front of my eyes. I don't know how many times he has clucked his tongue because of the cars in front of us.

"I am not bad at anything" he says confidently taking a quick glance at me with a smirk and I watch as we drive pass what was less opulent and we begin to drive through what is a suburban neighbourhood with almost similar look, same

curving streets and some culs-de-sac —
aesthetically pleasing designs that led to sprawl but
we continue to pass through.

"Oh, please and you want me to believe that?"

"It shouldn't be hard to believe" he laughs and gaze
out the window "we have time I'll show you"

"If that woman from the other day doesn't kill me"

"Which woman?"

"That one who called me a new skirt" Finally I am
addressing this, well I wanted to bring her up the
other day but right now seems like a perfect
moment and time.

He glance at me and sends his gaze back on the road, "why would she kill you?"

"You guys seem to have history"

"We do" he states.

"Oh"

"Like I said we have time, we will talk all about it Dr Ntuli, you're spending the night right?"

"No" I chuckle. Right after finishing uttering my response the rain just starts pouring. Heavy. Thunder and lightning appears somewhere in the sky.

He glances with a smirk, "Seems like a yes to me"

he says smiling widely while I clench the either sides of my dress.

"It will stop later"

"Do not try to fight divine intervention woman"

Suddenly he becomes all lively chatter. He has jokes and conversation, huh. I am feeling rather out of place as if I am going to crawl out of my skin. Maybe it's the scary roars coming from the sky or the rain that keeps making musically sounds against the windows. Spending the night? Doesn't sound right to me after shoving my tongue down his throat. This man is too damnably attractive and sexy to be spending the night with under the same roof!

I do not remember wearing a matching underwear, out of all days I had to spend a night at a man's

house, when there's a high possibility I might be wearing an animal print lace panty and orange bra.

Jesu!

We pull up to the three locking three interlocking levels that shows versatility of colour in a two storey mansion. Featuring large panel glasses and even wider viewing platforms, its open plan form creates a rural oasis that nearly draws a gasp from me. I swear not to gawk but all that goes out when he manoeuvres the car into the drive way which is lit by small halogen foot lamps. The landscaping alone is enough to steal my voice. When he depress the garage door opener, four bays open to fleet.

As I am about to close my mouth he opens the door for me and I get off, my car doesn't belong here along these gleaming different coloured cars.

I follow right behind him inside the house but as we are about to step in, he stands by the door and kindly asks me to take off my shoes. "Do you want something to drink while you help me in the kitchen?" He says with a sense of humour floating in his voice as he kneels in front of my feet helping me take off my shoes by the door step, he said something about vibes.

Yes, you cannot enter this house with your shoes on, you have to take them off then you'll be given brand new slides made of foam and rubber with earth tone colours.

"Help you in the kitchen?"

"You will just sit there and watch me moving around. Your beautiful face is a motivation enough for me to cook a great meal for you beside I know you cannot fry onions to save your life"

"The food you ate the other day, who cooked it Kungawo?" I am sticking to my lies, boldly and confidently.

"I can sit and watch you cook then" Uphambene wethu.

"Am I not a guest?" I tug my head in as I am wearing the brand new comfortable shoes I have been given too. And the moment we walk inside the house I lose my capacity to speak all at once.

The main living area encompasses a living room, dining room, and kitchen. The living room, which is the central meeting and relaxing area in the home, it is dominated by soft leather furniture, including a large sofa and cozy arm chair with sleek, clean lines. Opposite the sofa is a gray stone accent wall that uses the grain of the material to create a chevron

stripe.

These shoes feels very cozy and comfortable, detailed with shark teeth midsoles.

My eyes wander around the fun details throughout this house are notable, from the matching spotlight floor lamps in the living room to the splayed out cowhide area rug in front of the sofa. These accents are few and far between but so carefully chosen and stylish that they really make the home.

"Why you haven't cooked at this time?" I watch him standing in the middle of the room in an earth brown matching outfit. I keep my eyes on his face, willed to do so.

"I cooked but I wanted you see me in the kitchen, blanket?"

"Tomorrow is another day and please"

"So you have given up on that idea about the weather changing later?" He says disappearing in the room.

"Get off your high horse" I shout making sure that my voice chases him wherever he is going and I hear his laughter echoing. I get a chance to wander my eyes around the house, it's beautiful really and very masculine.

He comes back holding a brown blanket, I am starting to think this his colour. He disappears once again and coming back with a glass of wine. "Thank you" I say making myself comfortable on the couch, and tightly holding the glass as if it's a fragile thing that might break. "Your house is beautiful" I say, honestly marvelling at the wonderful interior design. I have to look at something but him.

"This is where I get my head right. In a chaotic world, this is the only place where everything makes sense the moment I enter the door, the pace is slower" there is something wistfulness in his tone when he made that statement and slight melancholy in his voice that makes me look at his sudden "handsome" face.

"It's really beautiful" I say quietly, sipping my wine and returning my gaze around the room, he is now sitting opposite me and I am glad.

"When I was young I used to tell my mother and my siblings when were sitting in the kitchen around the three legged pot as I was helping with the cooking. I told her how I want my house to look like. She'd smile widely and say she cannot wait to see it. She believed I was going to make it, never doubted me not even once. Even when I'd cook food with no seasoning but she knew one day I was going to be

an amazing chef, everyone would respect. My siblings would laugh but my young sister she believed in me as much as my mother did but sadly she didn't get to see me successful. I didn't get to do the things I wanted to do with her when I can finally afford"

"What happened to her?" I ask softly, staring into his eyes.

He sighs, "she went to sleep and never woke up"

"Was she sick?"

"Ube phila njengo sheleni" he tells me that she was very much healthy, "it was her time, she died a peaceful death. Funny enough she had a smile on her face, maybe it was me and my wild imagination but my mother died happy"

"I am sorry"

"Don't pity me Dr Ntuli"

"No really I am sorry. I know you had so much planned with her, I am sorry you didn't get to fulfil some of the promises you made to her but wherever she is, she sees you, she is proud and moreover happy that you never gave up on your dreams" he stares at me for a moment and then look away.

"She would have loved you"

"Aha uyayibaxa ngoku"

We both chuckle.

He continues chuckling and glimpse at me once before leaning back on a couch. "Do you have a man in your life?"

"You're in my business now"

He laughs hard, "You're way into mine already, so. Do you have a man?"

"What man? Do you think I would have kissed you if he existed? You play too much Kungawo"

Do you have a man in your life? Suka.

"Let me go dish up"

"I can help"

"By standing on the other side of the kitchen?
Sounds perfect"

"I am not as lazy as you think I am" I laugh as we perk up the couch and I follow right behind him to the kitchen.

"You will have to prove me wrong"

I am pretty much helpful. He'd walk to the kitchen to fetch everything and I'll set up in the dining room, there is something natural about the way we flow in each other's company that I take my time to familiarize myself with my surroundings.

"I don't know how much you want to eat" I say as he walks into the dining room while I am dishing up. The dining room is tucked right behind the sofa, is the perfect size for a small dinner party. Upholstered dining chairs and a dark wood table,

highlighted by the creative overhead lighting, are simple and stylish. Of course, a formal dining table is not the only option, with a subtly reflective breakfast bar providing another, casual option.

"Just enough" he says smiling and disappearing again this time coming back with a bottle of wine.

We make ourselves comfortable, braised lamb shanks and mash potato staring at us on table. It smells and look edible and scrumptious.

We pray and then start eating.

"You were crying earlier what happened?" He asks in a lower tone, his Adam's apple bobbing in his throat.

"Your food is really good" I say feeling fireworks and

pixie dust against my taste buds.

"That is not going to work"

"I had a fight with my sister and I ended up saying some things I didn't mean to say"

"You were not going to say those things if you didn't mean them"

"I was angry"

"So that gives you a right to say whatever you said?"

"No, I was wrong. I know and that is why I've been trying to reach out to her but she's not having any of it"

"Do you blame her?" He crease his eyebrow and placing his cutlery on the sides, grabbing a glass of wine and bringing it closer to his lips.

"No"

"What did you say?"

"So she was raised by a man who is not her father. We recently discovered that we are twin sisters and who our father is. All along we just knew that we're cousins. Anyways the relationship that she had with her father was not a pretty one. Tonight our mother introduced us to our real father, by the way I never had a father figure" I pause seeing the expression on his face "So when I found out I was meeting my father, I was happy. Because I finally had someone to run to when I'm in trouble. Finally had someone I can call my father but he disrespected my mother and the way she raised us, he disrespected us too as well now that I think of it because he asked if we

paint our faces referring to our make up but I overlooked all of that because I just wanted him to love and accept me"

"What?" He frowns.

"I know. Anyways my sisters couldn't take it anymore, that's just how she is by the way if she doesn't like something she doesn't beat around the bush"

"The one who has dreadlocks like you right?"

"Yes, anyways she took her bag and left. I followed behind and defended our father. Basically I told her that I was going to make the relationship work with him whether she was part of that or not, because that is something she never had and I also dragged her relationship into this"

He winces, "you defended a man you met in ten seconds over your sister?"

"I know"

"What do you know exactly?"

"That I was wrong"

"It's not even about that. The fact you used those cards says a lot about you. It was wrong in so many levels. It's not her fault that the relationship she had with the man she thought was her father never worked out. It's not her fault you never had a father figure as well, it has nothing to do with her and for you to say something like that, hhayi Dr Ntuli"

"I really just wanted him to accept me"

"But that was not the right way to go on about it and to even drag her relationship into it that alone is a low blow. Why would you do that over someone who disrespected your mother?"

I shrug, "I don't know"

He takes a deep breath, "You need to sit down and talk with your sister. Apologise to her, I don't blame her for not wanting to hear you out but let her understand where you were coming from as well. Have a heart to heart and soul to soul conversation with her because no matter what, she's that one person who'll always have your back. And it clearly shows that man is not willing to build a relationship with both of you when he failed at the foundation of it. Maybe things might turn out differently at later stage but you need your sister in your corner Dr Ntuli and secondly I never wanna see you crying again"

I smile at him, "you think you're cute neh?"

He laughs, "a man can never be cute especially a Zulu man, never"

"But thank you" I smile.

"You don't have to nkosazana, just make things right with your sister that's all and everything else will just fall back into place. And by the way you have me in your corner as well Yolokazi but if only you want me there"

[03/02, 07:04] : LOVE ON DEMAND

15.

KHETHELO

My heart feels like it will leap out of my mouth, my veins are tightening including my muscles – they feel like they have been drowned in ice cubes.

I pace up and down in the living room, wiping the sweaty palms against the fabric that I am wearing, I take a sharp intake of breath when Onalenna appears from the kitchen handing me a bottle of water to melt away the anxiety gripping me around my throat. The tiny drums against my chest makes it hard for me to utter a word that all I can do is nod my head, a sign of thanking her and she sits on the couch chewing on her nails, she is nervous as I am as if she was there with me when I spread my legs apart for a man to move rhythmically in between me. "Do you think we should go check?" She asks, if we can go check the three different coloured sticks I have urinated on.

Why am I so scared? Of just two red lines?

I gulp down the liquid, I can feel the the salty water beads on my throat "Let's wait another minute" my mouth is not producing enough saliva as I stand winging my hands.

"It been two hours " she reminds me "and you have to go to work, and so do I" she says flicking her long blonde braids.

Work? I am not going there.

"I am not going to work"

She tugs her head in before she perks up from the couch, "I am going to check" everything inside me shivers.

I watch her as she disappears, I am immobile as a statue and rapidly blinking.

She has a huge grin plastered on her face with her hands behind her back as she walks back.

"Ta-da!" She waves it at me, as if she is carrying a magic stick that would change my life forever, "you're pregnant!" I am deaf, I swear I didn't hear that.

"What?"

"You're pregnant, two lines" she says in a high pitch voice like those women in short dresses announcing you've won a grand prize.

"Two lines?" I ask

She presses her lips together holding back her laughter because of my reaction and handing me

the white and pink stick, I stare at it and the red lines stare back at me with a devilish smirk plastered on their face, yelling they're here to destroy my life. "I cannot be pregnant" that sounds like a right thing to say right now "I mean things with Kayise are complicated. Pregnancy? No"

"Do you want to Tumelo it?" The humour in this, I shake my head with a smile that creeps out of my mouth "that sounded wrong. But you can make whatever decision and I am here for you"

"I know sweetcheeks" I smile at her.

"And congratulations!" It feels as if has been holding back those words, clapping her hands together. Jumping up and down before she throws her hands around me, wrapping me warmly. "Let me go to work before Mihlali hangs me. Have you spoke to Kwanda?"

"No, her phone is off"

"Maybe she is with her brother, we must give her time" she glances at her watch and quickly grabs her bag on the couch, walking out and screaming over her shoulder bidding her farewell with laughter in her voice.

The atmosphere becomes gloomy, staring at the stick in my hand and taking a deep breath.

Pregnant, at this stage of everything?

I am not about to sit here either alone and start over thinking about this. I walk to my bedroom and staring at myself in the mirror and picking my dress up -- my stomach is flat, nothing has changed really so there is a possibility of the result being fault. I mean these things happen majority of the time or

half of the time.

I am not pregnant, I mean psh me? Look at that flat stomach with some taut abs.

I am going to work and I am not going to stress myself about something that is not even there, the was a mistake surely.

Here I am stuck in my office, going through some work after I got here late and I am about to get up from the chair since we have a meeting in two minutes when a knock comes through my door, picking my head up I see her walking through the door looking sophisticated as always, she has a corner smile across her face.

I am glad that Kwanda changed my wardrobe, I feel confident standing here and watching her with a trailing blaze from head to toe. "Miss Bhengu" I

keep a hard and professional face. "How can I help you?"

"By staying away from my man otherwise I am going to make your life a living hell around here"

"Very brave to threaten your boss" I say to her "The person who can make one's life a living hell here is me, you are here Tumelo" I show her my palm "I don't think you want to go down that road"

She straighten herself, "Can we talk woman to woman"

"No, I am at work and I have a meeting to attend. You are lucky I am letting this one go otherwise by the end of today you were going to be unemployed. I don't know what is your agenda nor plan but abort the mission"

"I love him, Khethelo"

"That is not what you told me days ago when you were bloating about aborting his child. And secondly you have a husband, you left him for. Thirdly we are not going to have this discussion again. Not here, not anywhere and not ever" she seems taken aback by the way I am throwing words back at her, I am surprised as well. Where is this confidence coming from? I have always been a turtle that hides in a shell whenever a storm comes her way.

She hangs her head low and fiddling with her nails, "Listen..."

"I don't have time to listen to you Tumelo, I have a meeting to attend and you should be there as well" I turn around, picking up my files and flashing a smile at her "you go first" I point towards the door. She gives me a scorching gaze before turning

around on her heels and walking out. I get a chance to catch a breather and clutching my burning chest.

The meeting went smoothly as the teachers were planning a school trip, I had to keep up with Tumelo's gaze and unnecessary comments that she was making to grab all the attention on her, yawns. I won't allow myself to be intimidated by her in away anymore.

The day is about to end and I am not feeling pregnant, at all so you see what I mean? The was a mistake here.

Getting home I find boxes everywhere and suitcases, Onalenna is pushing everything around with her boyfriend. "What is happening?" I ask.

"This is Kwanda's things" Onalenna responds.

"She asked me to pack all her things at Mongezi's place and pretend as if they are not together" Bongeziwe says, with a disapproval tone.

"And you agreed to that?" I am surprised.

"Of course not, I am going to give her time to see how her plan turns out but if it doesn't work then I'm telling Ngezi the truth" he says but our conversation is interrupted by ringing phone. I fish for it in my back and my mother's name flashes on the screen.

"Mama?" I greet.

"Khethelo, I need you to come home now!" She says with a poisonous tone "there was a woman here begging me to talk to you because you are sleeping with her husband"

What?

"I am not sleeping with anyone's husband"

"Tomorrow, I want you here!"

[03/02, 07:05] : LOVE ON DEMAND

16.

KHETHELO

I woke up to my mother calling me this morning reminding me that she needed me home before the sun even set, she was yelling and hurting my eardrums since I am humiliating her nor did she want to hear what I had to say to her since she made up her mind about the shenanigans she was told about me. I then decided to just switch off my phone all at once, I am not going home to prove to

anyone that I haven't slept with someone's husband and she can swallow whatever she has been fed about me then guzzle down a glass of water after.

“Have you told Kayise?” Onalenna appears from nowhere, already packing her bags as always she is late —this one is never on time, she could literally wake up two hours early yet still find a way to be late.

“Tell him what?” I find a way to move around the kitchen, avoiding making eye contact with her and she pauses doing what she was doing, crossing her hands on her chest while creasing her eyebrows.

“That you are pregnant, you are not planning on hiding this from him, are you?”

“Oh that” My breast have suddenly become full and sore, I woke up this morning with something

pressing into my stomach and feeling an urge to spew everything that I ate in the middle of the night after sneaking into the kitchen while everyone was sleeping.

“Yes that” she answers and Yolokazi walks into the room carrying her sneakers in her hands, no greeting or whatsoever she grabs the sandwich in my plate shoving it inside her mouth before grabbing my lunchbox.

“Congratulations on your pregnancy motase, we will talk when I come back, from work, I am late bye” she waves her hands in the air and running out of the door without closing it behind her, we exchange looks with Onalenna before we both erupt with laughter.

That one never cease to amaze you!

“Is she running away because she doesn’t want us to ask where she was last night or she is genuinely late?” I ask Onalenna and she shrugs nonchalantly.

“I have to go, Mihlali has been extremely nice to me I think she wants to fire me” she says taking her bag and dramatically taking a deep breath “And please tell Kayise, he deserves to know”

“What do I deserve to know?”

Onalenna glances towards the door once to catch him standing there with a bouquet of flowers and brown paper bag, he has a sphinx-like expression across his face and his eyes are furrowed. “I am so sorry” she mumbles under her breath before she turns around greeting him and walking out leaving me drowning in a pool of different emotions all at once.

He walks in and closing the door behind, “What is that I deserve to know?” he asks me once again, standing tall in the room, his presence demanding all the attention in the room.

I gaze up at him through my lashes. He is so beautiful, I could stare at him forever. I’m paralyzed with a strange, unfamiliar need, completely captivated by him. “You cannot just show up here all the time Kayise”

“My sister stays here, so I can show up anytime I want. I am waiting for you to tell me what is that I deserve to know before I make you talk Khethelo” he says without a trace of humour then he places the bouquet of flowers to stride towards me. His proximity is overwhelming, exhilarating. The familiar pull is there, all my synapses goading me toward him.

He grabs me suddenly and yanks me up against

him, one hand at my back holding me to him and the other fisting in my hair. “You’re pregnant are you?” I can barely breathe. His expression is soft and tender. I frown at him, perplexed.

“Apparently” I swallow my mouth suddenly dry.

He gives me a wicked grin, the effect of which travel all the way down there. “Apparently?”

“I don’t feel pregnant”

“You don’t have to feel pregnant, the symptoms are there right?”

“Something like that. Sometimes the thought of you makes me want to strangle you in your sleep but whenever you are around it evaporates and I don’t want you to leave” He just smiled softly and then

his lips rub against mine. Desire explodes like fire work throughout my body and I'm kissing him back, matching his fervor and my hands wrapped around his neck. He groans, a low sexy sound in the back of his throat that reverberates through me and his hands moves up and down my body to the top of my thigh and his fingers digging into my flesh through the fabric that I am wearing before he pulls apart when we both need to catch a breather.

“Do you want to go see a doctor for assurance about your pregnancy?” he smiles a dazzling, unguarded, natural, all-teeth-showing, glorious smile.

“You sound happy about this”

“Can you blame me? I am going to be a father, I came here so I can drive you to work actually”

“I am not going”

“Why not?”

“Your girlfriend threatened me and asked me to stay away from you then she went on and told my mom that I am sleeping with her husband and that is you”

“Tumelo?”

“Hmm” I murmur.

He is looking down at me, his gaze hooded, his eyes darkening and his breathing harder than the usual.

“I will sort that out, don’t worry about it” his gaze so intense it takes my breath away. I wanted to spit like a dragon. But I cannot. “I have to go to work”

“You are leaving?”

“I know you don't me to. I will call you and then later I will come around. You want to spend the night at my house?”

“No”

“I know you do, take care of yourself and tomorrow we're seeing the doctor, no excuses. I love you”

“Must be nice”

He chuckles, “I am leaving” He kisses my forehead with his hand resting on my stomach then he walks out.

Why did he leave?

I spent the entire day sulking and plugged in front of the television screen, I was not planning on switching on my phone either because I know exactly my body was going to hover over me with countless questions about the husband I have been sleeping with — can you believe that she started praying for me over the phone and even crying because I am going against the word of God all because of a bitter and petty woman who wants her bread buttered on both sides.

Later on Yolokazi arrived back from work and she was shouting since everyone has been trying to call me about going to Bongeziwe's house since he planned a small gathering upon our arrival we found Onalenna and Azande together in the kitchen loudly laughing.

I personally wouldn't be able to be in a same room with a man who left me on my wedding to marry

another woman but that was not just it, Mongezi came along with another woman called Lulu but rather than that the atmosphere is warm, beautiful and glorious.

“Lulu what are you drinking? I hope you are not pregnant” Yolokazi says to her and she smiles shyly and leaning on the kitchen counter.

“Wine is fine” Lulu responds.

“Oh you are not pregnant, good” Yolokazi, I know exactly what she is trying to find out. She pours her a glass of wine and handing it to her, “so you and Mongezi?” she asks, and we all eyeball her at once.

Azande is actually really nice.

Lulu takes a sip from her glass, “What no? He is my

boss. Although I find him attractive but he never looked at me like that”

“Then why are you here?” Yelokazi asks again interrogating her.

“We had a late meeting then he invited me here, nothing much” she answer and placing her glass on the table.

“Enough with the interrogation, we are done with the pots so we should go to the living room” Onalenna comes into the rescue.

Kwanda is nowhere in sight or taking our calls for that matter.

We make our way to the living room, the music is throbbing loudly. The guys are having a

conversation about sports, a very weird way to connect trust me. After some time we hear a knock and the unimpressed Bongeziwe about Lulu's presence get up to get the door and he comes back with a huge grin plastered on his face walking side by side with Kwanda who looks mesmerizingly beautiful in a long knitted loosen up dress. Mongezi spills out his drink and gets up from the couch striding towards her.

The room goes silence, watching the two. The chemistry between them is undeniable. It feels like we have shrunk around them, as they share an intense gaze and smiles.

Even though he lost his memory but the love in his eyes is so visible.

We choose to go gather outside around the fireplace, the weather is chilly but sets up the mood. I am curled up in Kayise's arms covered in a blanket

with his chin resting on top of my head. We are sharing a gales of laughter.

“Isn’t weird that even though Mongezi is suffering from memory loss but they still have this undeniable connection with Kwanda which means they were meant to be?” Yelokazi asks burping and holding her glass of wine close to her lips “you two are going to be amazing parents” and just like that, the hidden truth is out.

Everyone has their eyes out, holding their breaths and tightly holding at their bottles and glasses.

I avert my eyes towards Onalenna who is stuck in between laughing and running out of the room. Azande is blinking so rapidly that this feels like that unexpected lightening in the middle of the night.

“Everyone seems so civilized here tonight yabona

but wena Avulele I will never forgive you for leaving Onalenna at the alter for Azande but since she is beautiful and they are getting along, I might consider”

I choke on my own saliva!

Kayise’s is just groaning here like someone just stabbed him.

Silence!

Only the music coming from the inside is looming in between all of us.

“What did you say at first again?” Mongezi frowns, it is very hard to read his expression. But is still calm as ever, holding his beer in his hand, chuckling sardonically.

“What are you talking about?” Azande.

I am scared to either look at Onalenna or even Kwanda at this moment, I am literally shaking on their behalf.

Yolokazi burps, “Yoh thixo!” she says when she realise what she has done, “I am drunk. Where am I? Who am I? What am I doing here?” she blinks rapidly and gulping down her glass all at once.

Kayise still finds humour in this?

“I need a glass of water” she attempts getting up but stumbles backwards and Kungawo takes her hand making her sit after informing her that she will get her water.

“What is she talking about Avulele?” Azande’s lips

trembles.

“I am so...” Yolokazi was about to apologise but instead she burps and runs off surely to throw up. She has been drinking the shots Bongeziwe has been giving her and wine, what did she expect?

It is so tense in here!

Mongezi doesn't bother saying a word instead he gets up from where he is sitting and grabbing his car keys then he pauses rubbing his hand across his mouth. “All of you knew here?”

“Hhayi mina” I defend myself and Onalenna shoots me a look.

Kwanda gets up, “Yolokazi!” she yells out angrily surely to punch her face but Mongezi grabs her by

her hand.

“Why do you want to fight her? For telling the truth something that you failed to do?” Yoh, Yoh, Yoh!

Tears fall over her cheeks like a fretful stream over boulders and her lips trembles as she cries. He starts chewing on his lower lip and his eyes welled up with tears then he looks away, so, so broken like a man in an agonizing pain. Then he turns to dart his eyes between everyone. They are burning with rage that I hold on tightly on Kayise’s hand.

“Mongezi...”

“You had so many chances to tell me the truth Kwanda. I already knew everything cause my mother told me after I found this...” he shoves his hand in his pocket and comes back with a picture of a scan and another vintage picture of Kwanda

smiling and holding her stomach and he throws them at her “...I asked again and again and you lied to me maMkhungo why?”

“Ngezi...” Bongeziwe.

“Thula Bongeziwe, thula nje because you also lied to me!” Mongezi says, how is he so calm? The anger is laced in his voice but body language? Calm and collected.

“I wanted to tell you...” Bongeziwe

“Thula!” his voice is stern and sonorous.

“Nokwanda” He turns to her and she opens and closes her mouth, swallowing her saliva. He clicks his tongue and walks out of the room, then she follows right behind him wiping her tears.

“Avulele, let’s go we need to talk!” Azande says, she doesn’t wait for another word from him as she gets up and walking out.

“But we cannot blame Yolokazi she wasn’t filled up about anything and mina I am glad the truth is out because I couldn’t keep up” Kayise says and sips on his bottle.

Hectic!

[03/02, 07:05] : LOVE ON DEMAND

17.

YOLOKAZI

I cling into the toilet before pulling myself up with a

groan, my stomach rumbles and I have to bend over again and throw up with my eyes becoming watery. I am suddenly feeling hot, as if I am under the scorching sun. My heart is pounding and blood thrums loudly in my eardrums; the alcohol flowing through my system, amplifying the sound. “Are you okay in the there?” His voice is followed by a knock, “Dr Ntuli” he repeatedly knock on the door.

I wipe off my mouth and catching a breather, sitting flatly on the cold marble floor and hitting my forehead with my hand.

“Leave!” I say groaning, attempting to get up but I stumble and fall back on my buttocks causing me to whimper in pain.

“Did you just fall?” I place my fingers against my mouth, suppressing the laughter that wants to crawl out of my mouth.

What have got myself into? But also I didn't know the truth was shoved somewhere in the shelves and no one was supposed to find out about it.

“Okay Yolokazi please open so we can talk” his voice is eerily soft.

“I won't be able to get up” I drag my voice from my throat and I hear him chuckling softly on the other side.

“Crawl all the way to the door knob” His voice is mildy. I sit here listening to the beat of drums from the music throbbing in the living room. The sting of alcohol and my legs that feels like gelatin. I close my eyes to gain my strength, most super heroes do this in movies before veins appears on their skins and they gain some sort of super power.

I hold onto the slippery walls and rapidly blinking while taking one step at the time. It feels as though my feet are drowning in the mud at each step that I take.

How many shots did I take? How many glasses of wine did I drink?

I manage to flutter the door open but in that moment my body crash into his. I yelp teetered backward. My arms windmilled and hands catch me by my waist and drags me upright. My bare feet roll, not finding their footing but this has nothing to do with alcohol and everything to do with the gorgeous man stealing my body's sense of equilibrium — I really called him “umubiza”, this? With that silk skin, so, so dark. I surely almost fell because of the drama that have erupted because of my big mouth.

“Are you okay?” I grip his arms and struggling to regain my balance. I dart my eyes into his face and

instantly feel heat stain my cheeks.

“Yazi umuhle wena Kungawo [Do you know you’re handsome]” he grins. Dimples slices his cheeks and his eyes sparkle. His hands curl even tighter around my waist as if they were meant to be laced there. As if he is rather enjoying my proximity “At some point I said you were not my type and I called you umubiza cause I was in denial. But ke sana you turned my world upside, jonga ngoku even when I try to sleep I think about you. What did you do to me?”

“You are drunk” His voice is thick and throaty and sensual. If I could I would swallow the sound. His hands are hot and possessive against my waist. “Let me take you home”

“Let me finish at least because my sister might kill me and I might not be able to tell you this...” he grins humorously. I stare at his thick lips with a dip

in the upper one that makes me want to bite it and knowing how they taste and feel makes my mind runs a riot “I think I want to give you a chance”

“You think?”

“Hehake uvile ukuba nditheni [You heard what I said]”

“I want you to be sure” he drawls “You think or you know Yolokazi?” my name is like a purr in his lips.

“I know”

“Let me take you home, we will talk about this when you’re sober” Oh well, I am not touching this conversation anymore. When I am sober? Soze.

“Kungawo”

“When you’re sober Dr Ntuli” The rumble of his voice reverberated directly between my legs. He is making me shamelessly horny. Making forget about the trouble I am in.

My hands thread deep in his unruly dreadlocks and he turns his head deepening my kiss that caught him by surprise, he made a keening noise of surprise. He deepens the kiss with a bite and growl, one of his hands grabbing me by the back of my neck to tip me exactly the way he wants, his other hand snaking around my waist and lifting me off the floor to dangle against him. I taste the way kisses are supposed so: vibrant, electric and vivid as candy. Each kiss explosive, my tongue and I bite his upper lip.

But we are interrupted by footsteps as we pull away from each other it’s Kwanda with tears covering her

face and mucus on her nose —she standing immobile as a statue and so broken.

Kungawo clears his throat, “Uhm...let me leave you both” he says, I shoot him a look. He clearly wants me dead.

He walks away and immediately Kwanda takes a step forward, I flutter my eyes close expecting a punch that will throw me back inside the bathroom instead she wraps her hands around me and nuzzling on my neck. “Ah Moonie” I say comforting her, I can hardly stand. In that moment Onalenna and Khethelo appears dragging the both of us in the bathroom and locking the door behind.

“Yolokazi what was that about?” Onalenna is the angry one instead.

“Attack me when I’m sober!” I say entering the

bathtub and making myself comfortable there.

“Do you have any idea what you have done?”
Onalenna again.

“Just let it go, Ona” Kwanda.

I am not the only one surprised here!

Silence!

She takes a deep breath, “I was the wrong one here and I shouldn’t have dragged everyone into this. And she had no any idea that we were hiding this” Is this Nokwanda Yomelela Mkhungo? It must be the alcohol in my system because the one I know would be turning this bathroom upside down trying to kill me. “I was selfish as always and making this about me when it was not about me”

She comes and sit with me in the bathtub and takes a deep breath, wiping off her tears.

“What did Mongezi say?” Khethelo

“He asked me to walk away because he didn’t want to say or do something he might regret. I tried to be stubborn and he just clambered into his car and left. Bongeziwe asked me to let him be because being pushy will make the matter worse. He warned me but I didn’t listen”

“You were doing what you thought was best for him honey and there is nothing wrong with that”

Onalenna

“By lying to him Onalenna? Do not console me with lies now. I messed up and that is that” Kwanda.

“You really messed up wethu! You were supposed to tell Mongezi the truth from the start, from the beginning, from ekuqaleni” I say.

“When you said from the start that was enough Yolokazi” Khethelo chuckles.

“What’s next?” Onalenna.

“Oh wena Azande is going to kill you and wena Kwanda Mongezi is going to kill you. Two funerals, in one day” I tease them and our laughter erupt, echoing the bathroom.

“I will give him time and then see what happens next” Kwanda.

“And you Ona?” Khethelo.

“Me what? I am not the one who left a woman at the alter. I never lied to anyone either” she shrugs nonchalantly.

“I need to throw up guys!” I warn

[03/02, 07:06] : LOVE ON DEMAND

18.

KAYISE

What’s the worst?

Having to pull down your mother’s lifeless body hanging from the tree and watching her not breathing, not talking, not blinking and no longer living or finding out the man who taught you about manhood was not your real father but your father is the one who was introduced as your mother’s boss

[ubasi] —the boss whom was so generous that he sent you to one of the best schools in the country and you felt like you never belonged there, the one who was kind enough to make sure your mother comes home with bags full of expensive branded clothes to get the feeling of belonging. No, no, no that is not just it. The little doll that came home with your mother wrapped in a white blanket, eyes closed and smelling so pure. The one that was introduced to you as your younger sister and naturally became close to your heart is actually your cousin, sounds fucked up doesn't it?

I know!

But there's more, the one you thought was your soul mate and pictured walking down the aisle with a smile on her face and approaching towards you actually snatched away a special gift from you, becoming a father and left you glueing your hearts together and learning how to breathe again right

after she walked into your room waving a diamond ring on your face and announcing they are getting married the following day, aww not to you, no but to someone else who is a better man than your are.

So tell me what's the worst?

Getting a call while you are in a therapy session from someone who has taught you how to love again, made you taste it, feel it, walk it and talk it telling you she can longer be with you because of your unresolved issues?

Your past meddling with your present?

Yes—Khethelo just made it clear to me that she wants nothing to do with me while a woman from my past is still in the picture, the one who walked away from me is now on her knees and her eyes clouded with tears begging for another chance. I am

not selling chances. And she is most definitely not getting any from me but she has another thing coming since she is throwing threats at Khethelo and even feeding her mother with nothing but deceit and lies.

Lose a gem over a stone? Never.

We came here to heal spiritually and mentally that is Mongezi's journey that could possibly help him regain his memory and at first I thought it was just a woman taking chances about helping him and just wanting money because if she is helping him then why are we needed here? Being told about her husband who reads minds and energies, they said she can see the future, communicate with death people more like a medium and also she can heal, it all sounded like a low budget movie to me until we got here at first I was mesmerized by how captivating she is, so stunning and I swear her skin looks shimmering like diamonds, so radiant and her

smile snatches you and take you to the world you've never been before, your nirvana and then I met her sovereign side to her. And that's when I knew that this is not a movie, no one is going to scream "cut" or "action" here.

She introduced herself as Hinata Naomi Lisakhanya Khuzwayo Palm, I wish I could see her identification card because I am sure those names take enough space.

Anyways she taught me something when she stood in the middle of the room in a pink dress that matched her make up, she had tears in her eyes but she kept a heart warming smile on her face as she uttered wisdom words touching forgiveness. I am not a forgiving person and I always believed that when one do me wrong, they should suffer the consequences one way or the other. It could be at that moment on in the future but one thing for sure is, they'll suffer ten times worse than what they did

to me. It made me sleep nice at night and mostly it put me at ease because seeing their pain brought me such joy—I am me, revenge is my thing, watch them bleed, I like it—but my perspectives about this has changed and mostly my views about family and how much it really means more especially when she mentioned that after she lost her mother she knew she still had mothers’ who loved her just like her mother did in her circle of family because of how united they are.

“Some people are not worthy of your forgiveness but forgive them, do it for yourself. But forgiving that doesn’t mean you have to share the same table as them or does it means you’re okay with what they did to you but also forgive yourself for allowing them to treat you that way” maybe those were not her exact words when she said that but I felt those words knocking on my heart. They kept echoing in my head that it felt as if slowly but surely it was closing up around my chest and I couldn’t breathe.

It has been hard for me to forgive “my father” for how he treated my mother because I got to witness everything unfolding right in front of me, it has been had to forgive my hypocritical father who was sleeping with his maid behind his wife’s back and I was the result for their ungodly hour but when his wife did the same to him and slept with his brother he threatened to kill people and going as far as taking his own life at that moment. I am not angry of how he died, I am angry at the double standards. I am angry at my mother who chose an easy way out by grabbing a robe and finding a perfect long tree to take her life on, leaving us behind with unanswered questions. I was angry at that woman who took away the euphoria that was filled inside me after finding out I was going to be a father. Oh! She took my heart and chewed it then spat it across the street but that anger is no longer living nor breathing inside me.

And now I want to break the chains around my heart and also forgive myself for how everything

turned out in my life. It was not my fault. None of it was my fault. I did nothing wrong. I was just a sperm living his best life in a sack but turned into human in a wrong way. Sure we can paint Mihlali as a antagonist all we want, well she is one but every woman has a breaking point.

What if this man has been sleeping with different women and she had to be okay with it? I am not her apologist for whatever deeds that she did but I am against all of it, I am not taking sides but every human here as their breaking points—I surely sound like an activist.

“Are you okay?” Bongeziwe comes and sit with me outside, he is also stuck in his turmoil of emotions which is understandable. The person growing up knowing his brother has been stuck in a room for more than two hours now since Hinata said he was healing him. I decided to go outside before I got a call being dumped because I couldn't watch

Kwanda like that. The way her tears involuntarily just fell. How she bites her lips. How she is so restless. How she wishes she was in that room doing anything, something to make sure her man comes back to her.

I look up at him, “All good” I say with a grin hiding my true emotions.

“You’re not” attentively he looks at me and I hang my head low “I relate” he winces and rubbing his hands against his pants “Forgiving is hard” I don’t know if he’s talking to me now or himself but his voice sounded soft like summer night breeze “but today it seemed easy”

I am not the only one who felt that!

“You felt that too?”

“I wanted to kill Avulele in fact I have been planning on doing it without Onalenna knowing it was me but today, he is not worth it man”

“Whoa bafo!” I pause “you were going to kill him?” I crease my eyebrow.

“Dead, gone, du du”

“What changed?”

“Hinata, when she spoke about the importance of family. Of course we have differences but bafo mina why should I hold on to what happened when Onalenna has forgiven her and even moved on with her life and ngapha I am being bitter? I am destroying myself not him and secondly if they got married I wouldn't have met Onalenna”

“That’s true, you should be thankful” I chuckle and so he does and glancing at me.

“And so do you. If you were still with that other girl you weren’t going to meet Khethelo”

I scoff “Khethelo dumped me” I tell him and he tugs his head in.

“Why?”

“Tumelo went to Khethelo’s mother and told her that her daughter is sleeping with her husband and I am the husband”

“Oh...” he murmurs “when was the wedding?” Is he asking serious or he is being an idiot?

“We are not married slima!”

He laughs “why were you dumped?”

“To sort out my issues”

“What are you going to do?”

“Sort them”

“Let me handle Tumelo and you can deal with your woman, we’re brothers”

“What are you going to do?”

“We are family, remember we should unite? This is the first step” he pats my shoulder “now let’s go, Kwanda needs us” he pulls me up so we can return

back to the house.

“Bongeziwe what are you going to do?” I ask him again, wondering.

He chuckles, “hawu do not worry”

Upon returning back inside the house the tense atmosphere makes me feel like I have been shoved in a coffin and I am suffocating inside and in that moment Hinata walks into the room and I hear gasps, everyone was indeed suffocating under the pool of emotions. “Is it done?” Mihlali gets up from the couch and fiddling with her fingers.

“Not yet but I want Bongeziwe and Kayise, their father wants to talk to them” where over the phone? But he is dead. Is he not dead?

“My husband?” Mihlali “And what about me?”

“He specifically wants to speak to his sons, come with me”

“Mongezi is not his son”

Ah this woman!

You defend her and try to stand by her then she does something else.

“But he raised him” Hinata smiles warmly “Boys, lets go” my buttocks are glued on the couch and I cannot perk up.

He wants to talk now? As in right now or maybe hours later.

I breathe out and follow right behind her.

[03/02, 07:07] : LOVE ON DEMAND

19

KAYISE

We walk into the room and I have expected something else rather than this. Have you seen how diviners rooms are portrayed in movies and soaps with herbs and bones everywhere but this is different or is it because she is not a diviner nor a herbalist but a clairvoyant mostly say a medium.

When she seems me dawdling around with my eyes she keeps her unflappable nature while on the other hand Mongezi is phlegmatic laying down on a white cloth with his eyes fluttered closed. “Are you scared?” she asks me in a serene tone and I have no choice but rather shaking my head yes, I am scared this place looks like how heaven would’ve

looked like painted in white with bright shining scented candles and what almost looks like a waterfall behind us, how did they even do that?

“So don’t be scared when you hear your father’s voice through me. They take over me” Don’t be scared? Ha, ha, ha I am already petrified and choking in my own words that wants to escape my mouth but is in horror-stricken to be uttered.

Why is Bongeziwe piqued?

“I’ll need you to get me one of those candles and place it here then get me water from there with this bowl” It’s a minimalist white bowl and I am the first one to perk up to fetch the candle—that wasn’t the plan but I envisage on running out of the room as though I was chased by demons without looking back behind me.

“Mongezi is not part of this?” Bongiwe glances at him with his shirt unbuttoned and showing his chest and I can see tiny pieces of art around his shoulders.

“Don’t worry about him” Hinata responds making herself comfortable with her feet beneath her and she starts writing on the notepad in her hands but her eyes are unfocused “Your father he was Qophelo Thembela?” I don’t really know.

“Yebo” Bongiwe agrees.

“And you are his first born before Kayise?” Again we both agree and nodding our heads while she continues writing whatever that she is writing in her notebook. “The accident wasn’t supposed to be catastrophic. He didn’t mean to hurt Mongezi nor did he want to die because he wanted to be there when the truth comes out so he can answer all questions” I guess the conversation starts here. My

palms are now sweaty.

“What was his intentions? He knew very well what he wasn’t doing?”

“I acted out of anger. I was impulsive finding my wife in bed with my brother and discovering that the son I was raising for years was not mine” I heard a masculine voice, I heard it. Damn this is crazy.

“Your father is saying he didn’t mean to hurt anyone but he acted out of anger to scare your mother and your uncle. He would never hurt Mongezi in anyway” Oh Hinata is back.

“That’s funny because we are here!” Bongeziwe says, he can speak for himself that is one thing for sure.

“Mongezi has nothing to do with this. I wanted your mother and your uncle to suffer and feel my wrath

regardless of what happened in the past I forgave them but poisoning my son into losing memory after what happened. Aha! I wasn't just gonna sit and watch them. I wanted them to see what would actually happen if he lost his memory seriously. You are not here by mistake I brought you here" Our father speak, you can hear the rage lace in his voice and Hinata has her eyes fluttered closed before she opens them quickly. "You heard that? Your brother is suffering because of his parents sin and your father also needs you to forgive him for causing pain in your hearts while you watched your brother suffer but mostly from Kayise"

"Why me?"

"You know why you..." Hinata responds "Don't you hate him for being hypocritical about this entire situation and not being fully into your life?"

"Not true"

“Are you calling me a liar?” her eyebrow creases boring a scorching gaze into me. Have your heart ever drummed so loud that your ears also composes a saxophone to create a sound of what you are feeling?

“No” I swallow my saliva

“You hate him?”

“Yes”

“Then tell him why, he is listening” I clench my jawline repeatedly and blinking whatever the liquid substance at the corner of my eyes threatening to spill.

No, a man doesn't cry no matter how the pain feels whether mentally, spiritually or even physically.

“I deserved more than just gifts. I deserved to grow up around my brothers and be there with them. I deserved more and mostly I deserved a father. For him to just jump and threatening to kill people whereas he did the same thing that to me is hypocritical” I finally speak out burping my true emotions.

“I wanted to be the father you wanted but your mother didn’t want me to be part of your life. We had a relationship. I loved her maybe even more than my wife but after you were conceived she pushed me far away at one point I thought you were not mines until you were five, she made me believe you belonged to her husband” he comes out again and responds for himself.

“But that doesn’t make anything right”

Hinata has a runny nose and she cleans them with a tissue paper “I am sorry this symbolizes your father’s tears. He is sorry and its very rare for ancestors to admit to their mistakes. He just wants you to acknowledge him as your father and forgive him for everything even the death of your first child”

“But that has nothing to do with him”

“It has everything to do with him” Hinata responds
“Even you Bongeziwe. You need to help your brother in this and find your sister and bring her home whether dead or alive so they could be a cleansing already because she has bare his brother’s fruits and that’s an incest. Your ancestors are not happy and if you don’t do this cleansing then your unborn child won’t survive but your sister will be the one who will snatch your heir from you”
My sister? They might’ve made a mistake because I don’t remember sleeping with Moonceres.

“We don’t have a sister” Both Bongeziwe and I say in unison.

“Did you lose a child?” she asks me.

“Yes” I respond.

“That woman who was carrying your child is your sister”

I erupt with laughter and upheaval looking into her eyes but I don’t last for a minute, there is so much power there. “That is impossible. That cannot be true” I protest. I would have known. I would have seen it. I would have felt it.

This—impossible.

Ha, ha, ha nice try actually. It sounded realistic for a moment but I mean—no.

“We are not playing games here Kayise so I am going to need you to take this seriously and prepare yourself for the worst”

“The worst? What is the worst? I am going to lose my child again? My girlfriend”

“No, but when it happens you will be prepared”

Tumelo is my sister?

“Where do we go from here?”

“I did say it’s going to be long three days”

[03/02, 07:07] : LOVE ON DEMAND

YOLOKAZI

The ghostly silence in this house while an aroma of dumpling and sugar beans hangs thick in the entire apartment is an indication of how I actually need to get a life. The smell reminds me of those Sunday mornings when my mother used to wake up early and prepare supper before we could go to church—oh what a time!

Speaking of my mother it been two weeks since she went for rehabilitation and she's pretty much doing wonderful better than I have expected and now her smile is more radiant and her skin is glowing. It's crystal clear like water at the lake now that how much of a mesmerizing Empress she is. Everyday when I visit her she tells me about her plans and how she is going to take over her life—it fills me with so much joy seeing her like that more like a dream because I've dreamt of seeing her in tune with that version of herself. Our relationship is

slowly growing like a flower approaching spring including my twin sister. That one has been gone and suddenly become a spiritual person. Just days ago she was telling me about awakening of chakras. I don't even know what is that but to me it sounds like sorcery. Like those people who gather in a circle burning candles and humming a mantra before they sip on a glass of blood. But also she makes it sound so interesting. I think that journey she has been taking reminded her of who she is, her roots and ancestors. She sounds different unlike that person who'd call me in the middle of the night drunk and burping and crying until they eventually fall asleep on that call—never mind I'm the one who does that not her.

I am not that much of a great cooker when it comes to those fancy straws and leaves we eat when we have gatherings. I am not cooking for a five star hotel but to make sure that my stomach doesn't growl.

And since everyone is not around these days all I do is go to work and stare at people's mouth and teeth then come back home and cook then throw myself in bed from exhaustion or sometimes tipsy from just a mere glass of wine. Life hasn't been spicy since I've been running away from that man who makes me feel something so, so, so strange. He engulfs with foreign feelings and his aura consumes me. Isn't scary mtaka bawo? There is something so commanding about him. I cannot look at him in the eye for too long, it feels wrong. Even uttering a word seems like a labored thing that I only answer what he has asked and for me to confess those strangely feelings when I was drunk was just abashing and I have been running away from him since, since.

Stupid!

Why would you tell someone that you practically thought they were ugly at some point? And then tell

them what you feel for them. What are you expecting to happen when you're in your sober state of mind?

I thought he will just show up at my work place demanding answers as to why I am avoiding him but nothing, I am sure he also realized he cannot be chasing around "uhlanya"—a mad person that doesn't really know what she wants.

Hmm!

I am making my way to the kitchen when a knock interrupts me and I drag my feet to the door wrenching it open. Oh! Oh! You can never really talk about the devil because he comes knocking at your doorstep.

He stares down at me while I look at him, what a giant. He has his shirt in his hands and the tank top

looks like his second skin with blood stains splashed on it. And he rather looks scruffy.

“Kungawo?” my eyes widen sizing him up and down
“What are you doing here? Did you you kill someone? Are the police chasing you? You cannot hide here” I rap on not catching my breath and he steps closer to me. I should’ve known dear God, he’s a serial killer. Otherwise how do you explain those blood stains. He’s going to kill me.

“What are those blood stains Kungawo?” He’s taking even more step closer until he closes the door behind then he cradles my face in his hands deeply staring into my eyes. I gulp for air that has been knock out of my lungs staring at those dark, dark eyes that matches his skin tone.

“You’ve been avoiding me Dr Ntuli” Finally he utters a word so smoothly and all the worry and questions that were over hanging disappears instead my vagina that hasn’t been penetrated in months hums

and begs to be at least touch. “Ngenzeni?” he asks what he has done. Nothing. Nothing but your touch is clearly doing indescribable things to my veins.

“Lutho” I try hanging my head low. He places his finger under my chin so I can graze up at him. I cannot look at him. Oh today he is intimidating than he usually is he makes every fiber and vein ululate with erotic feeling.

“Lutho Yolokazi?” he frowns “Are you’re saying it’s nothing?”

“What’s this blood?” Just in case he kills me. Maybe he kills women that avoid him after weeks of undeniable connection.

“Kade ngihlaba imbuzi [I was slaughtering a goat]” he tells me and I imagine him carrying a sharp knife and holding the goat by its horns and slaughtering it

that imagination makes my mind runs a riot.

“There’s something at my house”

“You’re not getting married tomorrow are you?”

I cannot read his face, it stays impassive “Chabo” he utters. He didn’t take that as a joke didn’t he? “I had to see you Yolokazi”

“I am sorry” my brain glares at me while my heart asks what I am apologizing for but my body what a traitorous thing that feels a need to submit to this man. “I cooked” I want to slap my own mouth.

His lips curl into a smile “you want me to stay?” My mother used to say your way to a man’s heart is through a plate of food. He’s frustrated? Make him food. He’s mad? Make him food. He’s what what? Make him food. Even when he doesn’t eat it but he’ll know you made it with love.

I just respond back with a smile and he steps back after placing a kiss on my forehead and taking a sit on that couch. And now that he has said it he actually smells like traditional beer and goat.

Wawu Yolokazi! You were already accusing him of murder.

I make my way to the kitchen. This feels right watching him sitting at the living room with his head bowed and rubbing his hands together while I sashay around the kitchen and preparing food for him.

I take a cloth placing it over my shoulders and a bowl with luke warm water placing it on the tray alongside his food making my way to him and I don't know what demonic or satanic thing that possesses me but I kneel in front of him and he

looks down at me with his eyes popping out of his head but a smile I haven't expected crawls out of his mouth and he dips his hands inside the bowl washing them then I hand him a cloth.

I am still on my knees waiting for him to at least take one spoon in his mouth so I can see his face as he chews. "Are you not eating?" he asks me and I shake my head no. I watch him eat while on my knees and he feeds me here and there in silence until he's done eating and I get up taking the tray with empty plate back to the kitchen and returning to him.

Yolokazi is this you? You? You?

"Ngiyabonga sthandwa sami" Oh is that me? Did we made it official by just four dumplings on a plate and sugar beans? "But I have to go"

I'm sad, so, so sad and in agonizing pain.

"I'd say come with me but I know you wouldn't because my house is full of my relatives. My brothers and their wives and my parents" Oh no, no I'll pass "But tomorrow morning before the ceremony can even start I'll be here"

"Here?"

"To see you"

"Okay"

"Fine I'll come in the middle of the night"

"No, you don't have to"

“I want to Dr Ntuli”

“Fine with me”

“The food was nice” he compliments “I’d like to leave with some” Approved by a chef? Yes, yes, yes.

“You will eat when you come back” I tell him and he stands on his feet again stepping closer and every time when he does this it’s like I’ve took a drug and it’s slowly making me dizzy as it travels through my system. Again he kisses me on my forehead and looks into my eyes exotically before he walks out of the door and that’s the only time I get to breathe. I am about to catch a breather when he walks back.

“Ngiyakuthanda” he says that he loves me.

[03/02, 07:08] : LOVE ON DEMAND

YOLOKAZI

What time is middle of the night? Because I don't know how many times I've stand by the door impatiently to hear his knock from the other side and his voice gently calling out my name and pleading for me to open. Even the lipstick I wen—yes, I went to bed after I dabbled a lip gloss and sprayed perfume on each sides of my neck. I wanted to put on my lashes as well then I remembered I was not wearing them when he came here eating my dumpling like it was his last plate on earth while he glanced towards me surely he couldn't believe I cooked that, he have this idea that I'd burn the whole city if I cooked.

I grab my phone and checking the time, the clock just blinked five am in the morning and I shimmy towards the window to see the sun hanging over the

horizon, the city lights are slowly but surely dying out, taxis are already hooting and I can hear the sound of screeching cars as well then there's a white old woman with her husband carrying water bottles in their hands and running. And here I am still waiting for a man who said he loves me with a enchanting smile plastered on his face. I was left static and flapping my lashes at him before he left.

My eyes are succumbing to sleep. I haven't even winked waiting for that man and I even worn my favorite two piece pink silky night wear. Next time I see him I am going to rearrange those perfect teeth, I hate him for making me kneel in front of him and making me wait the whole night, I knew he was one of satan's disciples and I hope that goat he was slaughtering when he tries to eat it he chokes.

Nxarg!

I am deep in my sleep and dreaming about the

grandmother from my neighbor chasing me with a broomstick until I land on the floor when I hear a knock. Whoever it is clearly doesn't know the meaning of peace, I was up the whole night waiting for an ugly man to be at my doorstep. I am using this as consolation, he is not anyway near that insulting word. The knocking has become rhythmically and I am convinced that I am being poked in the eye on purpose. "I am coming!" I drag my voice and looking at the watch that just blinked twelve pm. It's not the morning but full bright afternoon and I am dreaming about witch craft, thank you Kungawo.

He is looking at me, he's wearing his favorite two piece and showing his bowed firm legs and white sneakers. I attempt closing the door at his face but he blocks the door with his feet and intently looking at me. I regret making that decision and stepping aside so he can walk in. "No matter how much you are angry at me don't ever do that again. We use words. We communicate not shutting doors at each

other's faces" his says with so much authority and commanding tone. Even my very own intestines are scared. Has your intestines ever been scared?

"I am sleeping and I don't want to talk you" I say to him and folding my hands against my chest pushing my breasts up and his eyes focuses on them than my face. Mxm. I hang my arms on the either side and looking outside the window and not him.

"I have a valid explanation"

"Surely you were with that woman who once called me a new skirt and I don't want to hear anything coming from your mouth Kungawo. Nothing" I want to point the door with my index finger so he leaves but my heart glares at me and daring me.

"The whole night you thought I was with another

woman right after I left here?” Oh please don’t give me that look making my clitoris shiver and my nipples perk with need. “Dr Ntuli” he calls for me and I ignore him stepping on my feet and flaring my nostrils “Yolokazi look at me” one quick glance and that’s it, it was enough to see his marble face and how it lighten up when I rotated my head to look at him. “I got caught up last night with all these preparations. I had to fetch people and run around the house like a headless chicken” Oh poor thing I can imagine him running around with his head placed on the coffee table.

“You could’ve called me Kungawo!”

He takes a sharp intake of breath “I know baby and I’m sorry” baby? yes that me, my name is baby. I am baby. “My head has been all over the place lately” he explains. And I want to wrap my arms around him, and tightly hold on to him.

“It’s fine”

“But you are mad at me”

“I forgive you”

He breathes out and then pulls me closer to him wrapping his arms around my waist and it’s only now when his cologne fills my nostrils I remember that I surely smell like armpits and my morning breath is going to kill him now that we are so close. “Everyone is leaving tonight, can I come over? I decided to come here when my mother sent me to buy more ice” he chuckles. “Or can you come with me, you’ll sit in the car and you don’t have to meet anyone. I’ll bring you anything you want in a car” Doesn’t sound like a good idea but I want to spend time with him. I want be near him even if it’s three minutes in a car with him being called after every second. “I am going to leave you with car keys and whenever I take too long to come back you can

drive back, I'll understand”

I had to video call my dear sister so she can help me with what I can wear, I cannot dress myself to save my life and her services always work wonders, she said she'll be waiting for a bank notification. If it was me I would have worn an animal print under wear, dress and shoes. I cannot be bothered about what to wear. I spent almost an hour digging into my wardrobe and showing Yomelela every single clothing so she can match them up. The poor man has been shouting for me and complaining that his family is waiting for ice.

And now here I am in a silver satin mid dress and sandals that I'll be stuck with for hours in a car. “You look beautiful” his lips curl into a smile when I appear. He gazes down at me as if he's trying to see into my soul and then he urgently kisses my eyes, my nose and chastely my lips leaving the lips in between my legs ululating and also needing to be

touched and kissed and caressed. “We should go” he says and we walk out with me locking the door behind and our scents colliding perfectly.

My eyes are out of their own volition seeing so many cars in and out of his yard, not the Toyota and Yaris you see at your neighbors house when they are slaughtering a chicken or one goat, no. I’ve never ever dreamt of seeing these cars rather than on television. Princess Magogo is singing loudly as the music throbs from the beautiful modern white tent. “Is this a wedding?” I ask him looking around and he shakes his head chuckling. Now I can smell a cow boiling in a three legs pot surely with a dumpling and that juicy soup.

“I am coming back okay” he says pulling out the key from the ignition, handing it to me and getting off the car and already I am left in agonizing pain and missing his presence. We have been laughing from our belly buttons. I think he finds me funny because

I make him laugh quite a lot in fact. He was telling me about his brothers, I have forgotten their names but he spoke highly about the older one.

I can see almost everything from here and I am glad no one can even catch a glimpse because of these tinted windows. My phone has become such a bore already texting back and forth. I thought he was going to leave the ice inside and come back, now I am here alone in this car. I should have just stayed back and waited for him to come back tonight after everyone left, I highly doubt all these people are leaving tonight.

I can see someone walking towards the car and wearing a tailor made umbhanco that is made of pants and off shoulder top but her braids are flowing like waterfalls over her shoulders and walking barefooted with white painted nails, she looks young yet beautiful.

She knocks on my window and she has a tray in her hand—oh no, no, no—he said I wouldn't meet anyone so what is his sister doing here? I am saying sister because she is a spit image of him. “Aunt!” she shouts from the outside with a sweet voice and I have no choice but opening the door reflecting the same smile on her face. Her big bugged lazy eyes are just perfect on her oval face and she makes Marilyn Monroe turn red with jealous because she makes red lipstick more attractive. I wish I can ask for skin routine because of how flawless her ebony skin looks. “uTata said I should bring you this” she flashes a ravishing smile. Who is that? Who is utata? The could only be one person who knows that I am in this car. “He said he's coming in few minutes” she informs me handing me a plate with samosas and sausage rolls, you name it. It looks appealing and very delicious.

“Thank you” I smile

“I am Cataleya, his daughter” she tells me. I can feel something kicking at my solar plexus. I have a heart burn on my ears if that is even a thing. “Can I sit with you for few minutes, I’ve been running around” she chuckles slightly and then get in a car before I can say anything and closing the door behind wincing. I on the other hand want to drive and leave this place immediately. “You’re more beautiful than utata described you” she tells me.

“Thank you” Very surprising that I have no words to utter at this moment in time.

“Well he recently just found out about me and this ceremony was for him to introduce me to his ancestors. My older sister who’s apparently not his real daughter hates my guts” she says and wincing, she’s surely venting. He has a whole daughter and she’s a teenager? A human that speaks and run, not with fur or anything but a person. Not when I was laughing at Onalenna being a step mother,

Nokwanda being a mother and Khethelo now I must be part of the mommy club? For what? For who? No, thank you.

“Why she hates you?” At least I am creating a conversation and eating from this plate to get rid of this bitterness on my taste buds.

She glances at me once and shrugs her shoulder nonchalantly “I don’t even know and she’s just three months older than me, imagine” she dramatically rolls her eyes.

Kungawo!!

Three months apart!!

Not one three years not two years not one year
three months!!

I am running, running, running like Beyoncé when

she was running from herself.

I chew slowly “she doesn’t hate you, she’s still getting used to you being part of her life as well remember and also she feels you are going to take her place”

“I don’t want to take her place” she breathes out “I want us to be sisters, blood or not, utata treats her like his own”

“Give her time eventually she will come around” I tell her and she glances at me once again and smile. “How old are you?” I ask her.

“I am eighteen years old but utata treats me like I am eight” How old is her father? “I should go, it was nice meeting you” she waves her hand and getting off the car. She keeps turning back watching towards me and waving her hand, she cannot see

me but I can.

I am left alone and now I wish she didn't leave, I somehow enjoyed listening to her venting while she's indirectly spilling all the beans to me. I can no longer eat these starters here, they are scrumptious but they taste like sandpaper at the moment with all the information that has been shoved down my throat. I can already see Onalenna laughing and running around the living room after making the announcement or Kwanda making mockery out of me, but no, I cannot be with him.

Drama, drama, drama!—and baby mama drama is the worst drama already that woman that called me a new skirt is going to give me a hard time even though they're an old item and she lied about the paternity of her daughter. I don't know the full story as yet but from the scoops I've been hearing, I can see a clearer picture.

I decide to switch seats and shove the key to the ignition starting the car. This house is buzzing. I reverse backwards towards the gate and this electronic thing doesn't want to open as I press all the buttons that I have with me and still I am stuck. Finally after pressing and pressing it opens and I am out of here. I am about to turn around the corner where tires screeches and a sport car like the one I am driving halts in front of mine and doors dramatically flying opens. I hold onto the steering wheel frozen and my eyes popping out of my head seeing him with another duplicate of him leaning on a bonnet narrowing his eyebrows.

He forcefully tries opening my door but it's locked then he bangs on the window "Yolokazi!" I am not the doctor today huh? "Yolokazi you better open this door or Jesus will go straight to hell begging satan to come back to heaven!" He doesn't know me very well this one instead of coming out I press the accelerator and reversing backwards and he steps aside. The duplicate of him is clearly

surprised taking out his hands from his pocket watching how everything unfolds. I hoot at both of them after reversing and using the other direction leaving them standing with their jaws jagging.

I cannot wait to see Jesus begging Satan!

[03/02, 07:09] : LOVE ON DEMAND

21

YOLAKAZI

I think I might've made a mistake running away not that I regret it, no—let's get that one straight or maybe I do. The thought of having to face him, eye to eye makes stress chews my brain.

I think running to another province pretty much sounds like a great idea but then again he'll track

his car or maybe moving to another country? Hmm that's a bit extreme and exaggerated.

Okay why am I acting like I am scared of him because one I am not and secondly, I am not bothered, not at all—I mean why would I be?

The more and more the thought and scenarios of what is going to happen scatter in my mind the more the denim in my throat strangles me, needing gin to smoothen it up, did you get that? I bet you didn't.

I drive through the gate and hooting at our security guard that comes out from his small wooden house with a smile that touches his big bugged eyes, as always he's mistaking me with Kwanda, she's friends with everyone around here that one.

“Kwando!” he smiles and I halt the car and pulling down the window and as always he chuckles and rubbing his hands together apologizing “I thought

you are Kwando, niyafana [you guys look alike]" he says and flapping his lashes with his cap now clutched against his chest "ningabo sisi vele? [are you sisters?]" At this point I don't even want to create this conversation because my mind and soul are not here it's just my physical body holding onto this steering wheel.

What if he shows up while I am still flashing all my teeth to a security guard?

"Yebo" I respond.

"From now on I won't be mistaking you two" he says grinning and then he went on and tells me how much my dear sister helped me in a time of need and that he truly adores her, this is great to hear but not now, not today. After our conversation I hoot and continue driving in parking and my feet propels me to the apartment where I find people putting on a new door and Bongeziwe is standing outside on

his phone shouting and yelling at someone, what happened here?

When he sees me he mumbles and then takes his phone shoving it in his pocket “Yolokazi” he greets me, I can tell that the smile was forced to creep out of his mouth—he’s not in a cold freezer and turned into chicken feet like me but he’s like a raging bull seeing red.

“Is Onalenna here, what happened?” I ask him and standing with him since I cannot make my way inside the house.

“No, no she’s not here but I am here for you”

“Here for me?” I tug my head in.

What I have done? I don’t remember having any

argument or a fight with his girlfriend and secondly I fear that he might punch me—oh this man can punch, he has the most powerful fists that sends you flying in the air.

Our conversation is interrupted when I hear his voice greeting from behind and it's this moment I feel a hard press on urethra needing to urinate, my breathe being snatched from my lungs and my voice being stolen from my vocal cords.

I think I am shaking—no, I am.

I grip the sides of my dress and the denim has been sewed on my throat once again.

“Kungawo, unjani?” Bongeziwe says greeting him and he appears to my face as they shake hands. He glances at me once in a most hellish way that makes my stomach stutter irrationally—I am in

trouble, trouble and trouble.

“Ngiyaphila [I’m good] I haven’t seen you in a while” he says showing those ivory teeth and from there on their voices fades and all I am paying attention on is the movement of his lips and how his lips were artfully sculptured. I think he’s fully aware how he this summer two piece with a shirt and short looks good on him showing his bowed and firm legs and also his taut arms. “Yolokazi can we talk?” he says as they both catch their breathes from laughing with Bongeziwe—I didn’t hear what they were laughing about.

I can’t breathe, I can’t talk, I can’t move.

Talk?—he wants to talk? Fine because I am well prepared for this damn conversation.

We manage to walk inside the house and striding,

following each other to my room and closing the door behind while he shoves his hands in his pockets, this feels like deja vu when he was here in the morning and dwarfing everything. “Here are you keys” I manage to utter first in a tense atmosphere.

“You decided to run away and you wanted me to chase you around like a toddler why is that Yolokazi?” Oh suddenly my name is no longer baby? I am baby, not this. “I am talking to you baby” as if he has read my mind, all my senses to speak and breathe comes back to life.

“You lied to me Kungawo” I seethe “And there’s absolutely nothing I want to say to you because you lied to me” his face changes, it’s palpable, he has no right to have that expression on his face. I am the one who was lied to here not him and all I did was just running away. “You’re lair!”

“Okay enough Dr Ntuli” eh I went from being called

to my name to pet name to professional on in just a blink of an eye “What I won't stand is you calling me a liar because I never lied to you about anything” his stern tone echoes, all the argument and how I prepared myself to point my chubby fingers at him, it all has been formatted in my brain and all I can do is fiddle with my finger. “How was I supposed to tell you? The moment we first meet you wanted me to introduce myself as “sawubona I am Kungawo Thembela and I am a divorcee with two daughters and one son” is that what you wanted? Because you haven't been talking to me since that day you were drunk and told me you loved me then called me umubiza. If you're not calling me drunk and wanting me to tug you in bed, you don't call me at all, so what did you want me to do?” he has three children in total? Oh no, no this feels like being punished for laughing at the mommy club.

“You're divorced?” my voice is raspy.

“Yes”

“What happened?”

“We were both unfaithful to each other because what we had was not enough. Arranged marriage that everyone expected to blossom but it never did”
drama, drama, drama.

“Did you love her? Do you still love her?”

“I wouldn’t be here and leaving my family behind to pacify you Yolokazi” he’s not calming down, not now, not ever.

I clear my throat, “everything caught me off guard. One minute I am in a car and the next I am having a conversation with your daughter, a teenager at that”

“And that scared you off?” he narrows his eyebrows and I shake my head nodding. “I didn’t mean for that to happen and ngiyaxolis a Dr Ntuli” oh he’s apologizing. We just stare in each other’s eyes, a whole mind fucking eye contact that makes my very own vagina throbs up and down.

I want to sex him!

Lord knows how much I want to sex him!

Arg who is that chose to knock on my door right now when the most sensuality atmosphere was wheezing in the air, I wrench the door open and Onalenna is standing here “Bongeziwe wants to speak to Kungawo” she says and winks at me, she surely thinks I was screaming already.

Kungawo walks out of the room after pressing his lips on my forehead—these kisses always makes me feel like I belong to him, him only.

I am following behind to the kitchen with Onalenna who is preparing something for her daughter to eat, she makes this being a mother thing looks like a breeze. “What’s going on?” I ask seeing the seriousness on those men faces.

“Some people came here and pointed a gun at Kwanda looking for Kayise”

“Water gun?”

“A gun, real gun Yolokazi and they got physical with her. Mongezi is breathing fire”

“What?” This sounds like a movie, “is Kwanda okay?”

“I haven’t spoke to her. I am seeing her tomorrow at

the family meeting happening at Bongeziwe's home”

“But where is Kayise?”

“No one has heard from him since they came back from that healing journey and we somehow thinking he went to look for Khethelo, I don't know” she shrugs “it's messy”

“How messy?”

Onalenna glances up at me and then the men “Guns messy”

What?

“Guns messy?” I am slow, slow

“Kungawo is taking you because we cannot be in this house alone until Kayise is located. But for now you are not safe, I am not safe and everyone is not safe”

What?

[03/02, 07:10] : LOVE ON DEMAND

22

KHETHELO

One morning I woke up to a threat that I was going get harmed and my unborn child, they're things that can be ignored but having a ripped doll with a heart that was dripping blood delivered in a box in my office was just a nail in a coffin—I knew that this wasn't just something to scare me off so I could

stay away from Kayise. I've seen that woman, the way she devilry look at me that she meant every single word written in that letter.

I could find another job but I cannot get another chance to life, breathe, see sunrise nor raise my child and I had to pack my stuff and go far, far away before Kayise could even return from where he was, I know he was going to hypnotize me like he always does and I would've done stayed then the worst could've happed. I didn't explain myself to anyone and just left drowning in turmoil of emotions and my mother sent me to go stay with my aunt [umamkhulu] in Cape Town and she's also a teacher, I never knew anything about my relatives but we had to act since this psychopath knew where my family stays.

I'd be spitting nothing but lies coated with sugar if I say don't miss what has become home and both my best friends and Yolokazi who also has become

apart of my life.

I miss waking up to Kwanda who has already come up with an outfit for me for a day and Onalenna making food for everyone while Yolokazi makes sure we all start our day with great laughter.

And then him—I want to be so angry at him so much because of him my life turned into a night mare. I always pin point everything at him. If I didn't sleep with him nor fell in love with him, I wouldn't be here eating pomegranate and brushing my stomach that is now slowly growing with a thin dark line. I wouldn't be here looking at the sea shores and tears meeting at my chin. That's all I ever do these days: cry, eat, sleep, cry, eat, eat again, sleep and cry, did I mention eating? I surely did.

Sometimes I want to open up my stomach and snatch out this baby, put it in a bottle and let it grow there, pregnancy is not as glorious as they make it

look in those expensive baby magazines I bought days ago nor like those television programs.

Arg I don't know how many times I find my fingers circling my bean by just thinking about him, I could want to kill him and drink his blood but also aroused and moaning his name all in one second, just nonsense, nonsense!

“Can't you hear a knock!” my aunt says dragging her feet towards the door “you need to stop crying Khethelo enough already, stress is not good for that baby. Just yesterday you were at the hospital” she lectures once again before she takes a deep breath and wrenching the door open. “Hello can I help you?” I hear her saying. I cannot hear the voice that responds. We always get these knocks. No one does online shopping as this woman here, she says it's addictive, from shoes to hair. “Yes. No. She's here” then she erupts with laughter suddenly she has turned scarlet from blushing as she glances at

me and stepping aside allowing whoever it is to walk in, surely one of her guests. I've seen all kinds of rich men in this house, mostly are men asking her out. They come here everyday to woo her with gifts and flowers. I don't blame them though, she is that one woman who dances to her own drum. I wouldn't say she's mind blowing beautiful but she knows her style and walks around with confident—this woman right here wears high heel shoes indoors just to be behind her stove cooking.

I get up leaving the room as always so she can have her privacy before her guest walks in “Khethelo” his voice travels through my ear drums to my heart and my breath has been hitched. I pause. I am immobile as a statue. Not knowing whether to turn and run to his arms or continue to just walk away, so I don't have to look into those eyes, he'd slay me and I'll return back with him surely happily married after listening to his sweet nothings. “Khethelo” he calls me again. My body reacts to him before my mind and heart could, turning around. And there he is

although he is still pretty good looking but he looks like all the weight of this world has been placed on his shoulders like Jesus with a cross. The hair on his head is growing in waves—how men do that? I don't know. He has eye bags under his eyes, standing there gazing at me like some sort of relief as washed over him. I want to run into his arms. I want to tell him I miss him. I want to punch him. I want to hold him. I want him to touch my stomach and tell his child to give me a break from heart burns and back pains. I want to kill him. I want to unlove him, but I can't do that. I am just like a tree planted here and not moving.

My aunt looks at him, her name is Londiwe, then she looks me and smile “is this him? The father of your child? No wonder you're crying everyday” she shouldn't have said that. Now this man furrows his eyebrows and looks straight into my eyes and I am not well prepared for the questions that will be thrown at me. “Let me get you both something to drink” she says “it's so tense” then walks toward me

“he’s fine, fine as hell” she whispers but loud enough for him to hear. If it was any given day he would’ve laughed I know but now—he’s impatiently waiting to throw me in an interrogating room.

“Kayise—Kayise what are you doing here?”

“You’re even stuttering which shows what you did was wrong Khethelo” he flares his nostrils, hands on his pockets, intently looking at me then his eyes travel to my stomach, the regret of wearing a sport bra and leggings washes over me. But the sun is leaving one sweating and smelling like armpits today.

“What are you doing here?”

“Looking for mother of my children” Is he saying he’s still going to make me pregnant? I have one children—I mean baby in my stomach not children.

“We broke up”

“You broke up with who?”

“You”

“Who asked who out?”

“You did”

“Then what makes you think you can break up with me when you never asked me out?” What the hell? What does that mean?

I cannot answer that question!

“So after “breaking up” with me as you say, you decide to runaway with my child? Did you make yourself pregnant?”

“No, I didn’t”

“You didn’t ask yourself out, you didn’t make yourself pregnant and you just ran away nje Khethelo”

“I had to protect myself”

“What I am here for? To watch people do as they please into your life and not protect you? Is that what you’re saying? That I cannot protect you?”
How come he has so many questions that I cannot answer with great confident. I mean—what the hell is this?

“No, that’s not what I meant”

“Tell me what you meant, I am listening”

“You couldn’t sort out your life”

“Don’t give me that, you were there when I made it straight to Tumelo that I wanted to be with you, you out of people know everything”

“But she wants you”

“Do I want her?”

Come one man Khethelo, have a come back say something, be mad!

“No, you don’t want her from what you’ve said”

“What was the reason for you to pack your stuff and go?”

“She has been threatening me”

“And you didn’t see a need to tell me because I cannot protect you right?” he came here gun blazing.

“Those are not my words” I snap “And I am not going to have you asking me questions”

“What are you yelling for Khethelo?”

Arg!

I am leaving this room!

“When you’re ready to talk, I’ll be outside in my car

and waiting for you cause clearly you want to runaway again” he says when I attempt walking away.

“Kayise don’t talk to me like that”

“I am sorry” oh no, no, not the response I expected from him. He should also be spitting fire and yelling. Why is he not yelling but his tone so warm and polite.

“One I hate you...”

“You do?” he smirks, mxm, son of a thing—I cannot call his mother by names, she was amazing and I loved her so much.

“Two you need to leave”

“She’s my sister” he says sadden “I found out that I once in love with my sister and even slept with her”

“Who?”

“Tumelo!”

That all it takes for me to faint!

[03/02, 07:11] : LOVE ON DEMAND

23

KAYISE

I have a woman who just fainted on me. I don’t know what to do at this moment. I don’t want to splash water on her face it might go through her nose or maybe give her a kiss I’ve seen that in

movies—I am doctor yet I don't know what to do at this moment, funny isn't it?

I pick her up from the ground and placing her on the couch carefully before calling out for her aunt who runs in high heel shoes and heavily breathing “what happened?” she asks me.

“Please get me a bowl with luke warm water” I don't need to make explanations not now when I am gazing at a beautiful unconscious woman. In no time she's back with a bowl and towel then she sits on the couch opposite agitated as I take care of this woman in front of me who then slowly opens her eyes with her eyelids moving side by side. I didn't know I have been holding my very own breath until she eye balls me underneath me then frowns.

“And then?” that's the first thing she utters before she holds her head and grunting. Her aunt who was on the couch gets up and striding towards us to

kiss her all over the face and looking at the ceiling mumbling something underneath her breath and leaves the room after—that was, okay. “Why are you still here Kayise?”

“Because I love you”

Whoa!

I actually mean those words, I am not selling her dreams in a plastic bag or whats oever but I love her, as in love her.

“I love you” I repeat again. The same emotion I felt when I was uttering these words at first dances on top of my head again. Never saw myself uttering them but here we are. “And I know I should’ve done things differently than how things started between us and I am sorry” I apologize and she scrutinize me.

“How is she your sister?” oh she remembers, sigh.
“You thought I hit my head and forgotten everything didn’t you?” well that wouldn’t be a bad idea.

I take a long and sharp breath “No” she flaps her eyelashes as if she has explored my mind and saw my thoughts “same father” I finally tell her
“apparently my dad was wild back then” I chuckle.

“How wild?” one thing about women. I am going to tell her how wild was my father and then she’ll start comparing me to him. Then it will be my fault that my father was wild back then. It doesn’t end there, she’ll now think I am wild as him and you know what happens next? You guessed right, an argument would erupt and she’ll find reasons to be mad at me, now that. . . that’s women for you.

“That doesn’t matter”

“Does she know?”

“No, not yet”

“You slept with your sister?”

“I didn’t know Khethelo” I defend, she makes it seem like I am some pervert who sneaked into my sister’s room in the middle of the night while our parents were sleeping and had sex with her.

“I don’t know what to say”

“You don’t have to say anything” I dart my eyes between hers but she drops them and looking at her growing stomach. “How you’ve been?”

“All over the place” she shrugs nonchalantly “I was

scared mostly. I needed you”

“You left me” I remind her.

“I had reasons. . .” she defends “valid reasons Kayise. I was being threaten by your sister” oh sure she’ll rub salt into my wounds.

“I am sorry” an apology seems more like it. Before I’ll get reminded about sleeping with my sister again. Then there’s silence. I place my hand on her stomach and picking up the fabric she’s wearing to kiss where my hand was. And looking up at her thinking she might fight me instead she smiles, a warm and serene smile. “Do you forgive me?” I ask her.

“Hmmm” she murmurs “I’m glad you’re here”

“My grandfather wants you to come home, we have a ceremony and we want you there” her eyes almost pop out of her head “your friends will be there too” I hope this will be less scary for her but before she could say anything my phone starts to ring and she gives me a go ahead look to answer it before taking it out of my pocket.

“Hello” I answer immediately.

“Did you find her?” Bongeziwe doesn’t greet or beats around the bush but he gets straight to the point.

“Yes” I answer.

“Are you coming home?”

“Yes” Khethelo gives me a threatening look as if

maybe I am giving these one word response to this person because I am cheating on her or something. Again—that's women for you, always looking for reasons to fight. "We might come back tomorrow" I tell Bongeziwe and she tugs in her head. "I still have to talk to Khethelo" the frown that was on her face disappears.

"Bambatha is here" that's our brother. We have many siblings surely, across the world. I don't know what kind of life our fathers were living but they had no sense of respect for women or whatsoever.

"But how?"

"I managed to talk to his wife who helped me get through him. And he eventually agreed being part of the ceremony" he pauses "Kwanda was attacked"

"What do you mean?"

“Tumelo’s husband” I glance at Khethelo and ignoring her intense glare before perking off the couch and excusing myself and walking outside.

“When did this happen?”

“We’ve sorted it out”

“Is she okay?” I sigh “Kwanda, is she okay?”

“When you come back and talk to her she will be”

“Okay I’ll be there for the ceremony”

“Take care of yourself and our wife” I laugh before he hangs up the call. And I return back inside the house. I stand in the middle of the room with my

hands in my pocket and looking at her as she walks in the room with a tray of food in her hands and places it on the table.

•

In the early hours of the morning the ceremony took place and we were at the roundvel where everything took place with a burning candles that rather shone brightly holding a goat with its horns—imbuzi makes everything right. My wrists are now don in a hairy watch and the whole yard is buzzing with jubilation. They said everything will now fall back into place. And my surname has changed. I haven't got a chance to actually have a conversation with Kwanda as yet, maybe saying I've been running away from facing her would sound better rather than saying I am avoiding her. This is all a lot to take in.

“Kayis e!” my grandmother calls for me standing

distance away while I am busy helping with slaughtering a cow “hurry up!” she yells for me and her hands against her hips. The whole yard smells like blood and nice aroma and traditional beer. There’s singing from men sitting around in circle. “Go and talk to Khethelo she’s crying” she tells me and then smile with a wink. I am the only one who seems to understand her around here, she’s like a newborn baby that’s cries and you have absolutely no idea what’s wrong. After she pat my shoulder I walk pass her as she calls for one of her grandsons again.

Oh there she is—behind the roundvel or should I say hut that was designated for me and silently crying and sitting on a wooden bench. I stride towards her after praying that I don’t get killed, not today at least. “Baby” she looks up at me and then ahead wiping her tears. I sit beside her and placing her head on my shoulder. “What’s wrong?”

“I’m hungry” It takes so much from me not to erupt like a volcano and laugh until I turn into a tiny insect.

“What do you want to eat?”

“Avocado and white bread” I have no choice but making my way to the main house and making her something to eat. I also have to ignore Bongeziwe who’s leaning on the cabinets and laughing at me. Mxm. When I am done I return back to her and handing a plate of what she wanted and juice and she thank me wiping her tears like a toddler and eating. Yes this is why she came hiding in the backyard and now everything is back to normal. I watch her eat until she’s eventually done then smile and kiss me. I saved the day, I am a hero.

Now she’s back to walking up and down serving people and helping in the kitchen—she looks gorgeous today. There’s no woman in this world as beautiful as her. I am talking natural beauty. No oil

on her lips and crayons on her eyelids. I can longer keep my eyes off her from the distance until I am interrupted by a call from someone I hired to look for Tumelo. It been weeks of looking for her already.

My heart threatens to come out of my mouth as I call for Bongeziwe and Mongezi who then call Bambatha, he's the elder between the four of us, the rightful heir. And Avulele joins us a moment later and we stand distance away from everyone. "What happened?" Mongezi asked calm as ever and holding a knife in his hand oozing blood.

"I was looking for. . ."

"J ust get straight to the point don't narrate the whole story" Bambatha.

"Tumelo is no more" I announce. I don't get any reaction from either of them. J ust impassive

expression. I wait for one of them to utter a word yet nothing.

“I don’t know what to say” Avulele finally speaks out and shrugs.

“I guess we should call for family meeting” Mongezi “but how are you feeling?” he asks me.

I am meant to feel something?

“I don’t know”

“Me too” Bongeziwe

The meeting is called, we had to call our grandfather and tell him first. Now everyone is gathered in the living room. Just silence until he

starts to speak in his calm tone. And makes an announcement about the death of our sister. Women are weird—they connect to someone without knowing them. You should see them, all gloomy and sombre. Even that one who was threatened to be killed, yes, that one who was crying for white bread and avocado. The more and more I am falling in love with her it's the more I learn you'll never understand women, ever.

Then you have Mhlahli, sigh, that's all.

“Mkhulu can I talk to my brothers privately?” Bongeziwe asks during the meeting. I have told everyone how Tumelo died, she was killed by her husband. The one who attacked Kwanda, I still don't know how to feel about the death but I know how I feel about the man behind it.

“Please don't allow them mkhulu” Onalenna speaks out first and Bongeziwe's eyes widen before every

women in this room agrees with her. I cannot believe that one who was crying for white bread and avocado is also agreeing to this.

What the fuck is wrong with these women?

“What if I am dying and my brothers wants to talk to me?” I ask them and Khethelo gives me a look.

“You’re not dying” she responds.

I made you bread!

“What if I have cancer?”

She dramatically rolls her eyes and the room is filled with laughter “you’re not dying and you don’t have cancer and you’re not leaving this room and

that's that"

I cannot believe this!

[03/02, 07:11] : LOVE ON DEMAND

24

YOLOKAZI

It been two days under the same roof with this man basically it been let me calculate, wait—forty eight hours of breathing the same air and sharing the same atmosphere but we haven't done anything even high school kids sleep on the first time they meet somewhere at the party but not this man. He hasn't touched me not even dug with his fingers in between my legs. I surely sound like a horny dog.

Is it respect?

I am starting to think that maybe we are really confusing as Kayise always complains, no one complains about my gender like that one. Apparently we are hard to understand.

Hmm, as women we sometimes want to stay in a relationship for at least three months without having sex to see if it's real which by the way I find ridiculous. What's difference is it going to make after three months? Will your vagina have a strawberry flavor or cranberry then?

Whether it's three seconds or minutes the moment I realized I am sexually attracted to you, I am ready to outstretched like an eagle and call you with a wrong name just to bruise your ego while moaning.

Like any other morning, hmm, these mornings have been different though. Because I have to be the first

one to wake up and wash my face and teeth so I could pretend like “I woke up like this”. Ha, ha, ha have you seen people on social media with make up and pajamas with that caption?

Anyways we have so much sexual attraction and tension but we are sleeping in separate room. What if it's small? For God's grace he has three children. But I cannot really say that because my mother said my father has a sausage roll yet I have twin sister.

I pad to the kitchen and usually I find him there busying himself and making those healthy drinks that looks disgusting but you find the drinkers enjoying them. Who on their right minds drink spinach? I cannot stand that thing when it cooked even that one that went to a private school with cream and everything, no. It reminds me of poverty. We all have those meals that threatens your tears and spinach is the one for me and tin fish.

I freeze when I am invited by loud laughter in the kitchen and as I appear I find him with duplicates of him all sweaty and wearing their gym gears while the other one shouts “baba” and shaking his head repeatedly surely at what his father said.

Okay so they work out? All of them.

Hmm. . . okay. . . hmm.

“Oh baby hey” he smiles when he sees me showing all his teeth and my vagina starts to riot with a board in her hands yelling she wants to be touched, I think she needs deliverance not touching.

He meets me half way and grabs me by my waist before his lips gently and succulently touches mines. Have you met a good kisser? That know how to use their tongue at the right time? You surely don't because you're dating Thabo who drinks beer on weekdays and uses Augafresh and knows

nothing about Sensodyne and he calls every toothpaste Colgate—your men.

When he pulls away from me I can hardly breathe because air has been deprived from my lungs and I keep gulping for it. “Good morning you look beautiful” he compliments and his hand under my buttocks almost by my humming vagina. I cannot help but think he’s doing this on purpose because he has a smirk on his face. I am being tortured. He has been doing this. I look at him and flapping my lashes feeling drums right there, just hmm there. “You’ve met Cataleya. This is Wanele my first born” he introduced me to a young man with well toned body and charming smile on his face and a bottle of greenery juice.

“You drive better than my father” he says and laughs. Oh yes. It’s that one whom had his eyes landing on the floor as I drove off that day running away. I thought he was a brother. They grow up so

fast.

I chuckle “I’ll take that as a compliment” I am really a step mother.

Me.

Yolokazi.

As in I.

I am a step mother.

“You should” he smiles and places his bottle on the counter and leans on it “great to finally meet you” he extends his hand for a handshake but instead I pull him in for a hug. I don’t know why. These days something very demonic just possesses me and I do things I myself don’t understand.

“Great seeing you again” my forward step daughter chimes and throwing her arms around me.

I am a step mother, me.

After she pulled apart she looks at me with a smile. I cannot hide how ghastly green I’ve turned because of her abs but at least I have a figure it just needs some time. You shouldn’t stare for too long because you’ll see things you’re not meant to see but one quick glance, you’ll see no man this one actually has a four pack.

I look towards Kungawo and he seems happy about something. I don’t know what but euphoria is moving around his face. “I am making everyone cereal, baby are you okay with that?” Kungawo asks me excitedly. Yes, now I am being called more by my favorite pet name than that professional one. “Or maybe we should all go out and have some lunch?”

“That sounds perfect maybe at your restaurant”
Cataleya says and I look towards her again. How
can I get those abs in three hours again? And those
firm legs and thighs.

I had no choice but agreeing to this. And everyone
is clapping their hands together before we scatter in
the room to prepare for going out. I am ebullient, I
don't know for what reason but I am elated than
agitated that during that lunch one of the baby
mamas might walk on us and causes drama or the
kids might talk about them or I might bring them up
in a conversation because I am so messy.

That was sarcasm when I said I am raptured by the
way, I am nowhere near that.

As always I had to call my lovely twin sister so she
can help me with an outfit and video calling

because she's a wonderful stylist and I got something to wear, not overly dressing but dressed to kill of course.

We walk through the tables at the restaurant, his hand is glued on my waist and I love it there. It belongs there. The staff is now pacing up and down surely because they're seeing their boss and we are taken at the rooftop where there's a table being set. It's beautiful honestly surrounded by pot plants and you can see the perfect view of the busy city and it's serene.

We gather around the table together with smiles and chuckles. Teenagers these days surely know how to dress like they're in a cover page of some expensive magazine with wonderful aesthetics.

Anyways the afternoon proves to be something a lot of different than I expected. I wasn't awkward either but we had a great conversation and I learnt

that these kids are actually smart. I thought we were going to talk about hip hop music videos and fashion and whatever but they touched an important topic with what's happening in our country which is gender based violence and it saddened me hearing Catalya saying she's living her life in fear. And that's something relatable for every woman really. It didn't come as a surprise that they're raised well.

There was a lot of picture taking too and gales of laughter and maybe this step mother thing is not that bad when we all have the same amount of respect for each other? And it also depends with how the kids were raised and if their mothers poison them with something good or bad.

We are going home and it's turning dark already and on our way back Kungawo gets a call and he picks it up. The conversation starts perfectly seeing his face then it changes. "No that's not the case. What?"

I don't have time for this. Yes. Okay. What do you want me to say? Hmm. Hmm. Mxm. Yey anginandaba [I don't care]" then he pauses and changes gears. This man is really driving and talking on his phone. "Whatever you decide, sho" he sounds mad. You know when you're so mad and you want the conversation to just end. "Weh" I don't know why those two at the backseat laughing underneath their breaths and when I look towards them they keep their faces straight to hold back their laughter. "They're my children and she's my girlfriend so what must happen? No that's none of your business. Like I said that's none of your business" he pauses again then he says "Weh!" these kids starts to laugh all over again. I am also laughing too because of how he says it. When he glances at me I swallow my laughter and look ahead. "Haibo do whatever you want" he says and pause. The three of us in this car are waiting for it. "Weh!" there it goes!

I can longer hold it back so are my step

children—this plural, sigh. Anyways we are laughing with sonorous voices filling in the car and Kungawo looks at us shaking his head with a smile before he drops the call.

“Weh” Wanele laughs “Was that Nomahlubi’s mother?” he then asks. I guess that’s his ex wife. I am going to have a big problem with this one.

“Yes, apparently Noma saw our pictures on instagram and now crying that we didn’t invite her, one she has been giving me attitude since Leya came into our lives so what must I do?” he sounds pissed.

“You must call her over. If she does come then talk to her with all your children there and make her understand you don’t love her less no matter what’s the case but you are his father. But also her mother shouldn’t use her daughter to fight you” I find myself saying. I am possessed. I need prayers. In

my right mind I would've said something totally different from this. Maybe that he should forget about her because she's not his daughter anyways. I would've said something mean and hurtful though maybe more bitter.

He looks at me and if he wasn't driving it would've been longer. The moment we get home the kids thank me for the great time as if I paid for the bill. Or maybe I am the one who took them to the restaurant but I take all credits and take the invitation to the morning jog to consideration as well. Tomorrow I have work that's a great escape because I am not killing myself by running.

“Dr Ntuli can we talk in my bedroom please?” he asks me after the kids disappeared somewhere around the house, they're spending few days here.

Wait he wants to talk in his bedroom?

“We can talk here”

Wawu Yolokazi you are stupid!

“I’d prefer this conversation in my room”

[03/02, 07:11] : LOVE ON DEMAND

25

YOLOKAZI

He runs the tips of fingers down my cheek and his proximity, his delicious smell. We’re supposed to be talking but my heart is pounding and my blood humming. Oh Jesus, I can hardly inhale or exhale. After he said we had to talk in his room he left me standing then disappeared. As I made my way there

I remembered that I am not shaved—embrassing.

I quickly went to the guest room I am using and so I can at least cut my pubic hair short since you can even braid cornrows with them but guess what? He just walked in before I can even take off my jeans and struggle with shaving.

“We should talk.” I whisper.

The pink container of no hair has just fell because of my trembling hands

“Later”

“There’s so much I want to say”

I am not shaved, that’s what I want to tell him.

“Me too” he plants a soft kiss under my earlobe

while his fingers tighten in my hair. Pulling my head back, he exposes my throat to his lips. His teeth skim my chin, and he kisses my throat. "I want you" he breathes. I moan and reach up and grasp his arms. "You're not shaved?" He continues to kiss me and I can feel his smirk against my skin.

The truth or not the truth?

"Yes" I whisper, embarrassed.

"I still want you, do you?"

"No" I flush.

Of course I want you.

I'm topless standing in front of him. Not taking his eyes off mine, he reaches around and undoes the top button on my jeans and the zipper. "I want you

here” Leaning down, he kisses my neck. I move my head to one side and give him easier access.

Hooking his thumbs into my jeans, he slowly slides them down my legs, sinking down behind me as he pulls them and my panties to the floor. Grasping the edge of the sink, I step out of my jeans and I am now naked, staring at myself, and he’s kneeling behind me. He kisses and then softly bites my behind, making me gasp.

I am having sex in a bathroom and not shaved with a man who makes me go down on my knees when I serve him? Tell what’s more wilder than this? Hmm.

Wait—I am also a step mother.

Oh no, no, no.

This man is making me experience new things, foreign things I’ve never imagined in my life ever.

He stands and stares at me once more in the mirror. I try hard to stay still, ignoring my natural inclination to cover myself. He splays his hand across my belly, the span of his hand almost reaching from hip to hip. “You are so beautiful” he murmurs. I feel beautiful. I am feeling beautiful with my hairy vagina staring right back at him. My pubic hair looks relaxed.

He gently strokes my nipples with his thumbs over and over.

I moan between parted lips and arch my back so my breasts fill his palms. He squeezes my nipples between his thumbs, pulling gently so that they elongate further.

His hands moves down the sides of my body, past my waist to my hips, and across to my pubic hair and I gulp and gulp and gulp for air.

He slides his leg in between mine, pushing my feet further apart, widening my stance, and runs his hands over my sex, one hand at a time in turn, setting up a rhythm. It is so erotic. He trails kisses and soft bites along my shoulder. I groan. Suddenly he lets go.

He pulls his shirt over his head and quickly takes off his jeans and wraps his arms around me again and takes my hands once more, continuing the sensual caress across my sex, over my clitoris. His chest hair scrapes against me, his erection presses against me.

This was worth the wait!

He bites the nape of my neck, and I close my eyes, enjoying the myriad of sensations; my neck, my groin and just the feel of him behind me He stops

abruptly and spins me around, circling my wrists with one hand, imprisoning my hands behind me, and pulling at my ponytail with the other. I am flush against him, and he kisses me wildly, ravaging my mouth with his. Holding, me in place. His breathing is ragged, matching mine.

And then he's inside me. Skin against skin, brave, moving slowly at first easily, testing me, pushing me. I grip on to the sink, panting, forcing myself back on him, feeling him inside me. With sweet agony, his hands clasp my hips. He sets a punishing rhythm – in, out, and he reaches around and finds my clitoris, massaging me. I can feel myself quicken.

“That’s right, baby. Do you like that” he rasps as he grinds into me, angling his hips, and it’s enough to send me flying, flying high.

It was a worth a wait!

Bathroom or bedroom or garage—worth it.

I come, loudly, gripping for dear life onto the sink as I spiral down through my orgasm, everything spinning and clenching at once. He follows, clasping me tightly, his front on my back as he climaxes and calls my name like it's a litany or a prayer.

“Fuck!” His breathing is ragged in my ear, in perfect synergy with mine. “You feel so good” he whispers.

Will it always be like this?

So overwhelming, so all-consuming, so bewildering and beguiling. I wanted to talk, but now I'm spent and dazed from his lovemaking and wondering if I will ever get enough of him?

We sink slowly to the floor, and he wraps his arms around me, imprisoning me. I am curled on his lap,

my head against his chest, as we both calm. Very subtly, I inhale his sweet, intoxicating scent and then he picks me up, my eyes are fluttered closed as I am still catching my breath.

When I wake up I am in luxury bedroom which is alive with the heavily marbled pattern of an illuminated headboard feature wall. Two designer bedside table lamps adds to the lighting scheme, this bedroom is breathtakingly beautiful.

I really fell asleep after getting some at the bathroom and woke up in bed? For a loud mouth like me I am such a disappointment. I pick my head up to look around and there's a watch both sticks pointing at twelve am.

What?

I look around the room and I can see he was right

beside me but now he's gone. I am don in his crispy white shirt emanated with his scent and I quickly get off the bed attempting to sneak out of the room. "Where are you going baby?" I hear his voice in a dark room before a lamp flickers on to see him on a bedroom couch, shirtless and leaning backwards.

What on chicken feet is this?

Why is he sitting in the dark?

Now I am standing here conscious with his shirt and my creamy thighs on display, the once he had made tremble in a bathroom as I held a sink. "What are you doing in a dark?" I ask him spooked.

"Thinking"

In the dark?

“You’re thinking?”

“Yes. And where were you going?”

“Back to my room”

I said my room? I am getting to comfortable now if you ask me.

That response impressed him, you should see smiling like an idiot still leaned back on that couch and wearing his sexy predatory look. “I wasn’t done with you”

“Done?”

“That was a start to what I am yet still going to do you Dr Ntuli”

“I am pleased to you hear that. . .” I pause and smile at him “Mr Thembela” I say playfully and he gets up from where he’s sitting and padding towards me. Oh no, the more he gets closer his eyes becomes more intense until he halts right in front of me but not too close, I wish he was. We share an inferno eye contact and I am drowning in his maleness and sovereignty. “Kungawo” I breathe out and squirming. He’s not saying anything but I can see all my sexual desire and horniness mirroring on his face as he just stands and gazed at me. I reach out to touch his face and he groans silently and his jaw tightened. “What were you thinking about?”

“You” his chest heavens “the thought of you in the dark lightens up the whole room” Oh he’s a poet huh? My clitoris is now humming and jumping up and down rioting once again. “I don’t want to make love to you Yolokazi” he darts his eyes between mines “And I am but saying this in a bad way. Don’t get me wrong but I want to hear you scream louder than

you did earlier. I want to see you running out of breath while I pound you hard and fast and I've been feeling this way from the moment I set my eyes on you”

“You want to fuck?” I breathe.

“No” he runs the tips of fingers down my cheek “I want to rip you apart” he pauses, his eyes keeps darkening “I'm falling for you”

“That's why you—you want to do that?”

“You mean that's why I want to rip you apart?” this makes me sound like I am pair of jean. But it turns me on. The juices in between my legs are overflowing.

“Yes” I say breathlessly.

“No”

“No?” I crease my eyebrow.

“No” he repeats “It’s for my pleasure and yours. It has nothing to do with the fact that I am falling for you Yolokazi”

“Okay” I don’t know what to say “Do you want to do it now?”

“No”

Ah, so he just want to make me horny and have me dragging my vagina on the floor for nothing? For nothing?

Men wants us dead.

“I need you to trust me first before I can do that. I wasn’t planning on having sex with you anytime soon but today. . .” he breathes “I couldn’t hold myself seeing you in those jeans” His face is still cupped in my hands and his breathing is ragged “I need you to take my word when I say I love you”

“I do”

“You don’t”

Oh so you can read minds now?

He steps closer and his hand succulently moves in between my legs and I look at him and hold onto the bladders of his shoulders and involuntary opening them wider as he plays with my pubic hair and a

complacent smirk appears on his face—attractive face. “You’re so responsive Dr Ntuli” he cups my sex this time and I bury myself on his neck and bite him there, a groan erupts from him. “Let me in baby” his thumb is pressing against my clitoris. Not moving, just pressing me like I’m a red button. I swallow and gasp. I glance at him and nuzzle on his neck. I sharply inhale and exhale. My hips rotate and my back arches. He’s pressing. “Look at me” I do but not too long. He waits for me to look at him again and I whip my head at him. “Let me in” I am grinding against him.

“Hmmm” I murmur.

Words, I can no longer use them.

“Is that a yes?”

“Hmmm”

“You’re going to let me love you the way you deserve?”

“Yes” Unexpectedly he thrusts a finger inside me and his thumb is yet still pressing, this is torture. “Fuck!” I cry out and feeling my own tears prickling at the corner of my eyes as he pulls out his finger slowly then smirks mischievously. “Kungawo”

“Baby”

“Why you’re torturing?”

“So you can feel how frustrated you make me feel sometimes sthandwa sami”

“But—Again he thrusts another finger inside me and I gasp feeling my entire body quivering like a leaf

and I stand on my tippy toes struggling to catch enough oxygen. “Kungawo” I call out for him.

“Sthandwa sami”

“Please stop”

“Stop what?”

“This—torturing me”

“We are just getting started baby”

[03/02, 07:13] : LOVE ON DEMAND

26

YOLOKAZI

UNEDITED

I was tortured, tortured and tortured!

From the way he placed me on the bed with my legs over his shoulders while bite my thighs leaving smudges - I was vibrating like empty vessels and when I was so close to exploding all my juices to nirvana he'd stop pounding me with his magical tongue and then look up at me, laying there grabbing sheets, catching my breath and unable to scream. And yes, with all the hairs and everything he still ate me like I was the last supper. After feeling my body coming back from the euphoric traveling and starting to breathe normally again he'd trail his tongue on the wetness of my slick, his thumb still pressing my button before he'd enter me in and out, slow at first then he'd go faster and faster and harder. My scream would follow his pace, they were soft at first before they filled the entire

room echoing while I maneuver my sexually humming kitten and my hand pulling him with his dreadlocks. Again when he felt my body jerking he'd pause. And when he comes back the pleasure would be two times worse. "Kungawo please" I begged and tears start to prick at the corners of my eyes from frustration "I am going —I wouldn't finish my sentence because he'd start kissing my inner thighs succulently and moving all the way up with his warm tongue to my belly button. My back was arching towards him and he held on to my thighs like handles and digging his fingers there, that made my mind run a riot as he moves all the way up to the aisle of my breast with him in between me and his groin touching my mound. Moving his hips with a rhythm and I could just feel his mushroom head touching my tip as my nipples were in his mouth and he'd violently bite on them but that, that bite made me scream from my dear life and fluttering my eyes open to meet him looking down at me, looking as beautiful as I realize that "no man, this one is actually beautiful" and he had lust wandering in his eyes and a smile that made my

very own bean scream to be touched “Kungawo” I called out for him, he didn’t want me to speak the moment words rolled out of my mouth he’d do something to distract me and remember how sexually frustrate for him to let me come. He kissed the nape of ear before inserting his tongue there. It was not disgusting like how your boyfriend Thabo does it just inserting his tongue and saliva in your ear—arg stop dating men who cannot sex niyezwa.

I begged, pleaded, cried but he was not having it after what felt like hours of containing my juices he let me waterfall, his chin was dripping when he looked up at me and licking and smirking as though he just won an award. “I love you” he looked down at me as I catch my breath with non existence saliva inside my mouth and dried tears at the corners of my ears. I was paralyzed and speeches and. . .dead. And then again this morning I woke up to him already in between my legs and his tongue starting to move doing his sorcery movements.

Today I am enjoying doing my job like the first time I entered this room as an intern. I am waving and greeting at people. If I could I would've stood in the middle of the hospital and danced to Jerusalem.

I walked into my office and found bouquets of flowers there waiting for me and home cooked food—he made lunch for me and there was a note “just like how you’ll eat this remember that’s how I am going to eat you tonight” everything started to hum a sexual mantra then chant and I started devouring that food like it was my last meal in this world. But I need to shave, I heard there’s this place that wax you and then decorate your vagina with diamonds and also give you a massage. Yes mandoda, your women get vagina massages because all you do is just roughly pound them for your own pleasure so they go look out for it somewhere else, ooThabo kodwa.

I thought when I return from work I’ll have to lay on

the bed and start to scream but my sister just sent me a message saying that she wants us coming to her house. They're now back from doing the ceremony of surname changing —I was also called by my uncle about that, apparently I am using a wrong surname so I have to be a Mkhungo. The whole surname changing business is the least of my worries right now because I am deflated balloon as we are getting ready watching him moving around the room, we share the bedroom now. Anyways it makes total sense why Onalenna and Kwanda are practically staying with their men.

The joy of watching him just moving around the room and stealing glances at me with an indescribable smirk on his face and also our scents colliding in the air, creating a great combination brings me joy.

After an hour we are already leaving the house and my teenage kids —Hmm, I am really a step mother.

They throw compliments about how I look and ask when are we coming back. “That has nothing to do with you and I want to find my house still in place” their father say to them.

“Weh” Wanele says and eating from a bowl of fruits. This one is a vegan, you should see his face when he’s looking at you eating meat it’s like you’re sinning. It’s like you just slaughtered the animal and eating it raw with blood at the corners of your mouth. It’s the look that makes you question yourself about eating meat.

On our way he has his hand resting on my knee and glancing at me. “You look beautiful baby” he says with a smile on his face and I am drowning in crimson.

“Thank you Mr Thembela”

“It’s going to be interesting night having to take off all of that” he smiles and the look ahead focusing on the road as if he didn’t just said that “I’ll have to start with taking off your underwear in this car on our way back home then finger fuck you, how is that Dr Ntuli?” he looks at me and creases his eyebrow.

“Dr Mkhungo” I am changing my surname now so he needs to get that one right. But I am also trying to press my legs together with my breath accelerating. “You’d be surprise because you might be the one having to take your pants off in this car on our way home and having your manhood inside my mouth, wouldn’t that be interesting Mr Thembela?” I crease my eyebrow and a groan escapes his mouth before a response and smile while he shakes his head “Interesting night indeed” I wink at him and then look outside the window.

“It would be interesting hearing you saying my name like a soulful musician” he pauses “Dr

Mkhungo” he emphasize with a lascivious grin.

“Like I said interesting night Mr Thembela, interesting night” I smile and we both chuckle under our breathes with sexual tension dancing in the air until we drive through the gate and the sea breeze dances on our nostrils while getting off the car and he brands his hand on my waist. It takes the physical contact for me to lose all my senses and look up at him as he smiles.

Kwanda appears behind the door in white as usual and looking beautiful with a smile on her face “I missed you!” that’s the first thing she says bringing me into her arms and kissing my face then she pulls away “Kungawo, hello. I missed you too” she takes a step back and allowing us to walk in and I have been smiling from the moment she brought me into her arms warmly embracing her.

We make our way to the terrace leaving the men

together already laughing. I glance at him and he winks then turn away while we disappear with Kwanda. We find the other three already and Khethelo is eating avocado unprovoked. I am so happy she's back. I cannot contain my jubilation. "I have news!" I announce and pouring myself a glass of wine and they all eyeball me including Azande who's drinking juice with her straw.

"What's is it?" Onalenna

I look at them and then breathe out "I am a mother" they look at me and gape. No reaction or whats oever.

"You're pregnant?" Khethelo

"No, I am a step mother to three teenagers" Yes I knew Onalenna will be the first one to erupt with laughter and throw her head back with her

shoulders moving up and down, she has the cutest laughter then she pauses catching a breather as the others are still laughing at me only Azande doesn't understand what's happening.

“You?” Onalenna snorts “A whole step mother to three teenagers that's a lie”

“I wish I was lying” I don't know if it's the seriousness of my voice or the fact that I am a step mother that causes the laughter to become even more sonorous and causing me to laugh at myself —this is unbelievable.

“Are you serious?” Kwanda.

“Dead” I respond to her.

“Wait Kungawo has three children?”

“Two and the other one is a step daughter, well he thought she was his”

“This is very hectic” Kwanda “But like are you guys getting along?”

“Unexpectedly yes. If they were going to trouble me I would’ve fed them ratax mna I am not cannabis” I tell them taking a sip from my wine “I actually love them”

“Oh no, she’s in love” Khethelo smiles at me. What’s that supposed to mean because I am possessed, instead of them praying for me they’re saying this. Can’t they see I need some saving? “What he has done to you?”

“He gave me a best orgasm” I shrug.

“You are gone, gone and not coming back”

When we hear a knock Kwanda gets up to get it and comes back with a guest. Ah this should be God’s best creation, I am telling you and I am turning ghastly green. What kind of beauty is this? And she has a the most beautiful gappy smile, she’s a magnanimous angel standing there wearing grey nylon pants that holds her and matching crop top, her cornrows touching her knees and standing tall. The patch around her eye is uniquely beautiful just like the rest on her hands. Wawu. Wawu. Wawu. Have you ever meet someone who seems thin but thick?

What a lucky bitch for being God’s favorite!

“Okay guys this is Lulama Gum and she’s my sister in law and mnakwethu that’s my twin sister

Yolokazi” Kwanda points at me and she smiles and waving her hand with a wedding ring before she comes and pull me in with a hug tantalizing me with her scent then she pulls away.

“It’s nice to meet you” she has the most sweetest tone. Okay maybe I am fawning but this woman is a walking goddess.

“Nice to meet you too Lulama”

We gather together and chatting up the storm and she blends so perfectly but I sense a bit of jealousy from Azande. I don’t know but she keeps making remarks and there’s nothing I hate as woman on woman hate. The men comes outside to join us and I am introduced to another Mcelu brother, Bambatha and I am dragging my jaw on the floor, he’s the most exotic creature. How come two walking perfections are together? I am sure the sex is bomb too, hah!

But there's something about him man!

You see with the Mcelu brothers when someone walks into the room and say Mongezi killed someone I'd stand with my head denying and protecting him because he doesn't seem to be capable of murder and then with Bongeziwe you'd say "Oh no that's unlike him maybe he was just punching that person and by mistake they died" Do I make sense? You can just easily defend them and come up with excuses to justify their actions as well as Kayise and Avulele you can easily defend them.

And then Bambatha, first thing first you'd be scared to speak out about him murdering someone, sitting in the dark room with a light on top of your head and a detective strangling you with questions. No matter how much you'd want to speak as a witness but you can't because at the back of your mind

you're thinking if I actually speak out that means I am also going to die so you choose saying "no I didn't see anything"

Am I making sense? Yes he'd drop dead gorgeous and has sovereignty oozing but there's something about him man—scary.

We are outside now, drinking and laughing and he's standing from the distance watching me intently and I walk up to him and lacing my hands on his chest leaning closer to capture his lips and then looking into his eyes "you need to stop looking at me like that we're around people"

"Like what?" he smiles.

"Like you want to devour me"

“Well I want to”

“Want to what?”

“Devour you baby”

“Then why are we still here?”

“It’s an interesting night Dr Mkhungo, interesting night”

“Indeed Mr Thembela” I chuckle “I want to go home”

“Are you sure?”

“I shaved” I am drunk hah!

He laughs silently and leaning for a quick kiss “I pretty much love the forest it smells like mangoes”

“It’s decorated with diamonds”

I need to stop drinking alcohol!

“You decorated her?” his gaze darkens full of lust.

“Interesting night Mr Thembela”

We are going home!

The moment he pauses on a traffic light I lean over and look up at him before unbuckling his pants and I pilots his manhood inside my mouth, the pleasure immediately canvased on his face like an erotic piece of Picasso. “Yolokazi” he groans and hit the

steering and the car start hooting.

Now let's see how he survives this —if we die, we die we will explain to God what happened.

[03/02, 07:13] : LOVE ON DEMAND

27

YOLOKAZI

UNEDITED

I am sexually raptured because of the sex I had in a car since we can no longer make it home—my diamonds shone in a car and he turned on the lights looking at me with what has become my favorite smirk before shaking his head. Although he wanted it us home and on the bed but I couldn't make it that far since my thighs were trembling from just his

fingertips making love to them, digging and gripping.

Do you guys know sexual attraction? Hah, the moment he touches me I swear breath is knocked out of my lungs, my speech becomes paralyzed and all my senses. I flutter my eyes and feel his hands worshipping me in a way no one has ever done before and so, so, so gratefully.

I don't know what kind of necromancy is this but it's powerful.

Upon getting home we find the kids in the living room and their eyes fixated on the television screen but I realized that there's someone else here. Oh no, how are they saying she's not his daughter when she looks exactly like Kungawo and rest of his children? It doesn't make sense at all even the ebony skin and she has wide lips, her make up is the reason why I am always watching tutorials on the internet with thick shoulder length braids.

“Nomahlubi” this man right next to me who smells like sex and sweat with a mixture of cologne says and surprised. “When did you get here?” he asks, you should see the delight dancing on his face upon seeing her.

Wait how is she not his daughter when they even have the same facial expressions and smiles? No man something is wrong.

“I got here hours ago tata” she smiles back at him and then quickly glancing towards me then avert her eyes towards her father. That look was indescribable, alright maybe I am expecting her not to like me so we can fight and have her father in the middle choosing who should stay and not stay. But I am not bitter. “Leya called me over” she continues saying and that smile hasn’t left her face.

“Oh that’s great, are you also staying for a month?”

They're staying for a month? Haibo

Wait this is not my house and I am just a girlfriend so I might as well just shut up.

A month? Oh well tomorrow I am leaving.

“If that's what you want tata” she responds respectfully a total opposite of what they've painted in my mind. And Kungawo takes my hand holding it tightly for her daughter to see it and maneuvering me into sitting on the couch and I breathe long and sharp.

The other two whom I get along with so perfectly are looking at me with that gossiping look—we are actually having a conversation about what is happening here with our eyes, these two thinks I am their friend now huh? But that's great right because they're not making this step mom business hard for

me otherwise I'll be sent to jail for murder.

“I'd love that but we have to talk Nomahlubi” he says with a commanding tone that one that made me kneel when I serve him food. It's that very same one that possesses me. “I've had a conversation already with your brother and sister and they understand that there's changes that took place in my life and I am happy” he says to her and she hangs her head low fiddling with her fingers.

“You mean you've replaced my mother?”

Haibo this little beautiful devil do I look like my name is replacement? Hehake.

“I didn't replace your mother but I have moved on with my life and found something better and I am not going to talk to you about the relationship your mother and I had” she whips her head up nervously and look towards her siblings who are hellishly

looking at her, my voodoo has worked on those two, they're under my spell I am telling you.

“Don't you want tata to be happy Noma?” that's Wanele and his Barry White voice showing his wonderfully sculptured arms. A family that works out together, look good together but I am not joining the club, sorry shame.

“I do” she breathes “But with my mother”
Oh shame too bad that's not happening!
She must be drinking five litre gin.

I am too quiet, too quiet.

“Imagine if I also wanted him to be happy with my mother as well Leya then what would've happened? Everyone deserves a perfect family as much as you think you do but we cannot force utata to be in an

unhappy relationship because that's what we want. Whether he's with my mother, yours, hers, him it doesn't matter really at the end of the day he doesn't love us any less. Whatever images you have of aunt Yolo format them and get to know her she's an amazing human and I am glad utata finds happiness in her otherwise you're going to be miserable for the rest of your life and that anger you've planted deep inside you will destroy you alone" Wanele says and I am left here dragging my jawline on the floor. At his age? That was beautiful.

Nomahlubi has tears pricking at the corners of her eyes then she walks out of the room and Cateleya looks at us with a scowl and then shrug her shoulders—sigh.

"Did you guys eat?" I ask them. The alcohol in my system is wearing off and I am now tipsy and perturbed with all that happened in this living room within an hour. They both shake their heads in

agreement and I give them a weary smile.

“Switch off everything and go to bed” Kungawo says and walks out of the room. I don’t know if he’s angry or sad or hurt or broken or he’s all at once but he’s not okay.

“We are still watching series ma” Wanele says with a begging tone and I almost faint being called a mother. Ah, ah, ah. That made everything even real.

If it I wasn’t possessed I would’ve screamed you’re not my child but it’s under different circumstances.

“Watch one more episode and go to sleep and if you watch more than one then you’ll deal with me before your father” they chuckle and nod their heads. I perk up the couch and follow behind their father whom I find folding his clothes and walking around the room naked with his eyes narrowed then

disappears in a bathroom where I hear water running and I peel off my clothes and follow until I am in the bathroom. The unique bathroom sink is a black glass pedestal design, paired with a freestanding tap. A tall vanity mirror towers to the ceiling. A black toilet balances out the black basin.

Grey marble brings texture to the shower enclosure, which is fitted with a square rainfall showerhead and ambient lighting for a relaxing shower experience

“Kungawo” I wrap my hands around his waist under the cascade of water, this is not a movie so the water is choking me and I place my head on his shoulder then he turns around cupping my face on his hands.

“What are you doing here?”

“Taking a shower”

“I am okay” he quickly says.

“You’re not” I say in a whispery voice and unexpectedly he turns me around and clasp my hand on a marble walls and breathes down my neck.

“Part your legs” he order, and put his legs between mines, and holding my hips with his free hand and push my right leg to the side.

He reach up and gently stroke my back and breathes as he bend down and kiss me along my spine, gentle feather-light kisses. At the same time, his hands move round to my front, palming my breasts, and as he do this he trap my nipples between his fingers and tug them gently.

I stifle my moan as my whole body responds, coming alive once more for him. He gently bite and

suck me at my waist, tugging my nipples, and my hands tighten on the marble trying to grab the slippery wall but I am trapped in his.

His hands smooth and shape each of my buttocks, then my fingers glide down, and he slip two fingers inside me and grabbing my hips positioning myself, and he stand behind me and grasps my hips, and then quickly lift my backward so I'm bending forward.

He reach over me and grab my dreadlocks near the end and wind it round his wrist to my nape holding my head in place. Very slowly he ease into me, pulling my hair at the same time. He fill me up to the brim. He ease out of me slowly, and his other hand grabs my hip, holding tight, and then he slam into me, jolting me forward.

“Can you take that?” he asks through clenched teeth.

“Hmm” I push back against him as he continue his merciless assault on me over and over again, his fingers digging into my hip. When he feels I’m getting weaker with the new buildup of yet another orgasm. He continue to move roughly against me, inside me, his breathing harsh, moaning, groaning. My breathing is getting harsher, and my moan peaks with the inevitability of another shattering peak, reaching own, and I still, slamming really deep. “Come on, baby give it to me” he groan which his encouragement sends me over the edge as I reach for mines.

He takes me in his arms and wrap me with a towel and gently placing me on the bed and getting on top of me, my hair is trap inside a towel and I am still trying to catch my breath. Sex in this house is fire. Anywhere. Anytime. Whenever. “You’re okay?” he trails his fingers on my cheek.

“She’s yours” I mumble and he frowns “Nomahlubi she’s yours” I tell him.

“What do you mean?”

“I’m saying she’s your daughter, your real daughter”

I see his face changing “and how do you know that?”

“I could see that. Now imagine finding out your husband impregnated another woman when you were only two months, don’t you think I’d do anything to hurt him?” it seems as if what I am saying to him is slowly sinking in “After she told you that Nomahlubi is not yours did you do DNA?” he is rigid now.

“No”

“All I’m saying is your ex wife has all the answers but I believe that Nomahlubi is yours or I might be wrong” He gets off the bed “Where are you going?”

“I have to go and see her, we need to talk”

“At this time of the night and leave me alone here? Are you smoking glue Kungawo?” he gaze at me and then erupt with laughter with his shoulders moving up and down while his manhood is still hard.

“My mom used to ask me that when she’s about to beat me up”

“I guess she could see you smoke glue. You are not leaving me alone with our kids. . .” wait, I just said our kids? I am the one smoking glue here. “At night, that’s not happening. You will talk to her tomorrow”

“I love you”

“Yoh tshin’ thiza Kungawo come to bed” he is laughing so sonorously and so carefree with all the muscles around his face.

“Only you’d said that because you’re scared to say you love me back, I am not rushing you Dr Mkhungo”

“Me scared? You’d see a snake in an ocean”

“Not when a snake was found in an ocean Dr Mkhungo”

“Your humor Mr Thembela is the reason why it’s easy to believe you smoke glue”

“I’m still hard you know”

“I am sleeping!”

This one wants marriage sex now, eh? If you haven’t paid a cent you supposed to get one round, men sometimes yeses.

He is laughing so loud!

[03/02, 07:13] : LOVE ON DEMAND

28

YOLOKAZI

Remember when I said following day I was going home with my fist against my chest? He he he the

confidence I had murmuring those words under my breath.

It been a week already being here—every morning we wake up prepare for work and he makes me lunch, drive me there and gives me his card which I think belongs to me now because he hasn't took it ever since but instead there's money always coming in followed by a message saying "you will see what you can do with it but I want it finished". And also I am not one of those women who fights when their men give them money because they don't want to feel like they're in a relationship for money, never, ever, ever. I will take the money and use it the way he wanted me to because that makes him happy.

On the other hand I've been spending time with the children whenever Kungawo is fetching me from work they're always there besides the other one who thinks I'm an antagonist in her fairy tale story.

When I enter the room she exits and when I exit she enters. I am not going to force her to like me honestly because I tried in my normal senses if her father didn't practice black magic on me I honestly wouldn't have bothered but feed her ratax and move on with life but I want what's best for her. A part of me still feels that she's Kungawo's daughter because she looks so much like her younger sister, in fact they're their father's duplicates. The man who was supposed to go the following day and seek the truth has been caught up with work so he keeps rescheduling meeting with his ex wife but also I feel like he's running away because he doesn't want to register it in his mind that Nomahlubi is his since he feels he might be disappointed, he loves her honestly more than the other two if I could say myself. Maybe because of how things unfolded but he loves her and I wish she could see that.

The more I spend time with these kids I've started speaking "is'America" for instant I didn't know when

you're saying "you're capping" that means someone is lying and "no cap" doesn't mean someone is not wearing a cap or no caps allowed but it simply means "you're not lying" but my favorite word has to be "fam" I don't know if it's an abbreviation of family or what but Wanele use it quite a lot on his friends—we get along so perfectly with him. Maybe it because I am naturally a funny person and I make him laugh so he always wants to be around me and Cataleya well she sees me as her therapist that one, whenever she has problems she comes to me and she's a hugger, she always throws her hands around me giving me gigantic hugs. But also I feel it's because she has found a mother in me because her real mother passed away, months ago.

I just woke up sitting on the bed and gathering some strength and these days work has been taking a toll on me maybe because I am now sexually active but waking up every morning has become such a drag and by the grace of God today I am off.

“Baby” he walks into the room don in a suit and I always find him comely when he looks formal maybe because he’s a short and shirt—two piece like and sneakers type of person. And then jeans and shirts. “We only have an hour so get ready we are going to church”

To chuuuuuuuuurccccchhhh? What no ways, I know my father is a pastor and he has no interest in me and my twin sister but I am not a church goer. The last time I was at church I was a Sunday School teacher and then they demoted me, mxm they had no explanation or whats oever and till this day I don’t want to attend church and now this man wants to stand in the middle of the room with his hands inside his pockets and looking so beautiful and tell me that we are going to church.

Church? Church! Church?!

“I can’t go to church baba” I don’t call him baba like how your mother does but I call him in a sweetest tone and in a sing song tone, almost like a moan. I normally do that when I want something and he loves it.

A smile etch on his face then he walks around the room to grab his watch “Why Dr Mkhungo” he puts on his watch and his gaze his fixated on me.

“I’m sick”

“Oh they will pray for you baby”

Eh!

I clear my throat and get off the bed naked with my breast saggy but my nipples perking up at him walking towards him in slow steps hoping to

seduce him but instead he smirks and his hands return to his pocket watching me striding towards him until I halt in front of him, looking up at him and breathing heavily. “I’d love to give you pleasure. I have so many ways on how to do it in my mind but not now baby” his hands are in his pockets maybe restraining them from touching me “and I know you’re doing this because you don’t want to go to church”

“Touch me”

“No”

“Please”

“No Yolokazi” he smirks

“I’m going to touch myself”

“And I’m going to watch you with my dick hard but I know you won’t give yourself the amount of pleasure I could give you so now please get ready we’re going to church I don’t want to change my mind” he says in a whispery voice and intently looking down at me while I stand here like a sculpture in Italy and darting my eyes at him “you’re so beautiful” he says breathlessly. I know he’s having a hard time resisting me.

But church? Ah God can forgive me.

“Then show me”

“There’s nothing in this world I enjoy as showing you how beautiful you are from your toes to the follicle of your hair, worshipping you and making love to you with my fingertips but not now baby” I swallow my saliva my eyes still on him. But my

hands hanging on the sides and his on his pockets. My waxed vagina humming. My swollen berry chanting. My breast standing up for attention and my tongue keeps my mouth moist and then he takes out one of his hand and trail his fingers on the contours of my lips and I flutter my eyes closed “Don’t close your eyes baby” I open them and look at him with my heart violently throbbing against my chest “we are going to church”

“Okay” I respond under his powerful gaze and it just hit me that he used his sorcery for me into agreeing coming along with him to church and my breath is caught on my throat then he smiles at me realizing that he has won the battle of sensuality and spirituality—okay that doesn’t make sense, I just wanted something that could rhyme.

“When you get ready I’m going to get a hair cut across the street”

“Hair cut?” No, I love his hair.

“I’m shaving”

“Why?”

“I’ve outgrown having hair baby”

“But I love you with hair”

He smiles “I know” he pause “I have to”

“I know you’ll look good”

“Thanks, get ready” then he pause again “I love you”

“You’ll look good with your haircut” I respond and

he laughs loudly shaking his head.

“You’re the most funniest person I’ve ever met, let me get going”

Whew! It’s so hard saying those three words.

I am wearing an animal print dress with long puffy sleeves and a slit. My dreadlocks are braided and I decided to keep it natural and put on only a brown lipstick. It seems it’s only Wanele and I who were dragged here but the gym freak and spoilt brat are rather exuberance to be here as we get off the car and walking to the tall naked bricks with a cross on top building and his hand around my waist.

“Yo fam we were really dragged here” I say to my fellow American and he looks at me erupting with laughter and he looks absolutely charming in a sheer turtle neck with some artistic details and grey

pants and jewelry—he's a fashionista and he dresses like the old vintage days but he makes so stylish, trendy and classy. Wanele is one of those youngsters who thinks they're in America.

Kungawo glances at me and smiles while shaking his head. And oh man, he looks so beautiful with his new hair cut. Not bald but it's a wave fade and he looks godlike. I've been staring at him in a car with disbelief and I think he enjoys seeing me gawking at him because he keeps smirking and winking.

Upon walking in the singing has started. Oh this is unlike the churches I am used to but everyone is sitting in benches and singing softly. No dramatic screaming and praying just vibes as Wanele would say.

Okay I need to stop spending time with Kungawo's son, what's vibes even? He he.

I've yawn and yawned and yawned!

There's no drama here, no one is fighting over a microphone and singing louder than the other but it's all just love and peace. But I am actually enjoying. The serene atmosphere and how you can clearly hear the pastor since he's not screaming and jumping maybe it's because he's young and beautiful and charming.

Okay that was actually a great service and so refreshing we get up shaking hands and flashing our teeth before walking out. "Tata!" I hear Noma screaming from behind as we are walking back to the car parking as we turn back she's walking towards us with her mother don in an emerald boob tube, long sleeve dress and heels looking beautiful with a fringe and red lips. She walks so perfectly in those high heel shoes as she approaches towards us and showing her teeth "I just bumped to umama" you bumped into her or you invited her? This one

thinks she's smart heh?

Kungawo sternly looks at his daughter then the mother who's showing all her teeth before he lace his hand on my waist bringing me closer to him and flashing a smile "Palesa great seeing you" he says greeting her and she holds on to her purse.

"Great seeing you too, you look different"

"I'm sure you're meeting her again but this is my girlfriend Yolokazi" and you called me a new skirt first time we met and Lord should save you today because if you dare say something I am going to kill you.

She extends her hand with nicely done manicure and a smile—well she's not bitchy today but pretty much mature unless if she's up to something "Nice meeting you and about our first encounter I'd love

to apologize” not her being nice when I am trying to fight.

I smile “It’s okay, nice meeting you”

“You look happy Kungawo” she says observing and she’s genuinely smiling while her daughter is standing next to her looking at her parents hoping they could kiss right in front of me.

“I am, do you mind if we talk?”

“Now?” she gape.

“Now” Kungawo sternly responds.

“We’ll be in the car” I announce.

“Don’t go” Kungawo

“This is between the both of you” I smile at her and then walk away followed by the other two while Nomahlubi plants her feet there not moving until her father says something to her then she walks away.

We get in a car and the other two whom are under my spell are not happy seeing their father with the other woman and Wanele has been asking if I am okay countless times and then taking a deep breath. I keep looking outside the window seeing his stern expression as he spits words while Palesa is standing static with tears now streaming down her face, that conversation is heated up.

“What’s going on why is my mom crying?”
Nomahlubi asks and Cataleya diabolically looks at her then ahead “I’m getting off the car”

“We don’t care” Cataleya “What were you trying to achieve? hoping to hurt aunt Yolokazi maybe by bringing your mother here?”

“I didn’t know my mother was coming to church” she defends.

“We all know that’s a lie and the moment you get it through your head that utata is happy with aunt Yolokazi the better but rather than that you can get off this car, no one cares” you see today I am not meddling into their fights they can strangle each other for all I care but I don’t have the energy to be a referee.

“Okay both you that’s enough!” I sternly say. Yeah. The same person who said is not meddling into their business is talking what do you want to say? “Enough!” I repeat then look ahead and then eerie

silence revisits.

“Ah aunt Yolokazi you also have a birth mark just like ours, almost shaped like a map of Africa” Cataleya says changing the atmosphere and I glance at her and smile “do you know what that means?”

“No”

“Dad hasn’t told you?” Wanele

“Tell me what?”

“You have a birth mark?” Nomahlubi asks me then get off the car crying.

What’s going on?

“You’re the chosen one to sit with utata on a throne. Well our grandmother is umXhosa from Cape Town kwaLanga then she met umkhulu who is a king KwaZulu” What in the bible is this? “Right now malume is sitting on the throne because he’s the heir but when he finally retires utata is the one who’ll be taking over. And he was told that the one who’ll sit there with him we’ll have the same birth mark”

“You’re royalty?” I ask them.

“Yes” they answer.

You got to be kidding!

Being a step mother was okay, having to come to church was fine but finding out that Kungawo is from royalty? No fam.

After some time he gets in the car and clicking his tongue, his daughter is left behind surely with her mother. He's gripping into the steering wheel as he drives off as though we are being chased by demons "Both of you need to tell me where did you learn to have such big mouths!" he glances at his children in the back seat who are shaking on their boots "Ningijwayela kabi nina" That means he's surely going to beat them up until, until.

"We thought. . ." Wanele opens his mouth.

"Shut up wena yezwa!" Oh shame he's angry, he's angry. And we are all going to feel his wrath "Nxarga" is he angry because his children told me what he's been hiding from me or the conversation he had with his ex wife. "If it's not Palesa lying to me it's both of you nikhuluma indaba zami (meddling on my business)" he aggressively changes gears. "Nomahlubi is my daughter!" he says

I knew it!

I take out my phone and text both of them “When we get home immediately get off the car and run to your rooms and lock the doors” my message reads before I steal looks at them and they nod their heads.

Upon getting home the rascals get off the car quickly before we can even park properly and already they’re disappearing inside the house. I want to laugh so much but I can’t because I have to keep a straight face. I unfasten my seatbelt and when I am about to get off he holds my hand “Can we talk?” he pleads.

“Why did you hide this from me?”

“I was going to tell you when the time is right”

“When the time is right you will tell me then now please let me go”

“Yolokazi can we talk”

“No” I see the “And if you dare beat up Cataleya and Wanele you’ll have me to deal with Mr Thembela”

“Are you threatening me?” he smiles.

Why is he smiling?

“It seems like it”

“I was going to tell you”

“Are you with me because I have a birth mark and that means you can finally take over the throne not because you love me?”

“Yolokazi . . .”

“Answer my question Kungawo” he just darts into my eyes looking beyond my bones and soul “You know what I am leaving!”

[03/02, 07:14] : LOVE ON DEMAND

29

YOLOKAZI

It’s my sister’s negotiations today!

I swear it feels like those men who are outside shouting our clan names are here for me, I am also

officially a Mkhungo with a hairy wrist band on my hand. The ululating has been drowning every sound in this house since the week started, goat after goat is being slaughtered and it's a meat galore.

That day after asking him that one question and him just staring into my eyes like they're made of rose quartz I decided to get off the car and pack my bags then I left while he sat in the bedroom couch and watched me not saying anything. And I am glad he decided to do that because I was going to insult his mother, his grandmother, his great great mother and even his ancestors because clearly he was taking me for granted.

Nxargha that bloody ugly thing!

Ah, he's been sending countless messages and trying to call me but I've decided to block him all at once. And then his children been calling me on daily basis to ask what's going on and if I was coming

back just days ago Cataleya posted a picture of us on instagram with a heart as a caption. I decided to stalk her there and then, she's one of those people whom you don't know what are they famous for on social media but she gives a great aesthetics—you see those people who shows you what soft life looks like on social media huh? Those who post pictures carrying a skin product in their hands or make up. Those who post pictures of food with a perfect view and wearing a white robe and towel around their heads and sun glasses, pictures in swim wear that leaves you wondering why are you still eating junk food huh? That's my daughter, I mean ex daughter, I am not their step mother anymore, it was short lived huh?

From stalking her feed I got to see her grandmother whom is Kungawo's mother and oh boy what a beautiful old lady, she looks so sweet and warm and in that picture it seems it was that day when I was left behind in a car. They were brightly smiling with her granddaughter and that picture was

followed by a video of the family singing and clapping hands together, they're perfectly blended, a close knit beautiful family.

I didn't sleep that night it started off as an innocent stalking until I found myself in Kungawo's brother account and they're really from royalty. You should see his wife, she looks unreal I am telling you almost doll like. Oh no and that's just his first wife and his second wife is just as beautiful and they seem to get along since they have a joint account, could never be but also pictures do lie don't they?

Kwanda is not catching a breather, agitated draped in a blanket and wearing full on umbhanco pacing up and down. I have been eavesdropping for her and updating her on what's happening. Then my mother on the other head is running around like a headless chicken but exuberance, she came back from rehab some time ago and she's doing just fine. I am happy seeing her being a better version of

herself.

Finally Kwanda is being called to the living room and I am accompanying her we sit on the floor before the Mcelu family chooses their flower then we return back to the bedroom where she screams celebrating—I am dancing along with them. Now we have to serve the in laws. “Wele can we talk aside?” Kwanda says to me after we have been serving, washing dishes and all that domestic business. I grab a table cloth wiping my hands following her behind as she leads me to the bedroom, she has removed the blanket that was draped around her shoulders. I cannot believe she’s now someone’s wife.

After she has closed the door she sits on the bed eating from a packet of sweet and her other hand resting on her now visible stomach under that white dress she’s wearing “what’s going on with you?”

I tug my head in “there’s nothing wrong with me”

“I know you Yolokazi” she’s very observing this one. I pretend to be okay and just frown at her “yes that face, what’s wrong”

“Do you have a birth mark?” I ask her.

“Hmm behind my neck”

“Oh me too” I chuckle “how is it shaped?”

“Uhm I don’t know like a map of some sort”

“Great” that’s all I can say. I have been looking at mines in the mirror for some time. And indeed that’s the shape but there’s nothing special right? It’s just a birth mark and my sister also has it. It got nothing

to do with being a chosen one for so and so otherwise everyone with this kind of birth mark will marry Kungawo.

“I’m listening”

“Okay so. . .”

“So what?”

“Eish this is hard”

“Are you pregnant?”

“What no! I’m on injection”

“Okay that’s great then what’s wrong?”

“Kungawo is from royalty”

“What?”

“King and queen mntase”

“Get out! You’re going to be a queen?” In your dreams that could never be me, ever. You’d see a snake in the sea. They’re pros and cons in royalty. And me? I? could never ever be part of that.

“We broke up”

“What no ways? J ust days ago you two were all over each other he seems to like you. I like him for you”

“I think he doesn’t love me”

“Has he showed you that he doesn’t love you?”

“No, not really but the opposite”

“Then you have no right to doubt him”

I breathe out “yeah sure”

“What caused these doubts?”

“Apparently the woman or let me say his soul mate has this birth mark. I’ve seen it before on his stomach but I never paid attention. They match”

“That’s some supernatural stuff”

“Some wild shit fam” now I am speaking like Wanele. I miss him. I need to call him some day and make his day filled with laughter.

Kwanda laughs loudly “you’re speaking internet language now step mom, must been nice being a mother to teenagers” she mocks and I show her my middle finger “I say talk to him and see what he has to say but if he doesn’t give you the assurance you need then you can walk away. You have every right to baby and I’m going to find you a new boyfriend”

“Hehake Dr Love”

“I want you to be happy”

“And so do I”

“Now go”

“Go where?”

“Go to him and talk to him”

“As in now?”

“Now?”

“Hawu ngeke!”

“Take four shots and go” she winks.

I’ve taken my four shots!

Okay, whew, I need to breathe.

When I park there's so many cars outside, they look expensive and gleaming. Is he having a party maybe? Not that I care I just want to talk to him and leave. I walk inside the house shouting his name, I think I might be tipsy. What's the percentage in the bottle of gin because whuu! I can feel this thing already traveling through my system and I can also hear voices. "Mongameli thina asina baba and you know that, I'm the father here. Since he died I've been your father. I don't understand what do you mean you don't see yourself in a throne after Melusi, who's going to take over ke when I step down?" I hear a baritone voice asking and already I am standing in the middle of the room full of men and the one who's talking is bald headed with a grey strands on his beard. It's the one I was stalking. They all look looking alike. It's freaky. It's creepy. It's weird. They turn their heads towards me as I stand here blinking and my head spinning around.

Why are they calling him Mongameli?

“Baby” Kungawo says the moment he sees me while the other five men are gawking at me “What are you doing here? Are you okay? I love you” he says all at once as if he cannot believe that I am standing here in his living room. “I love you” he repeats once again. “Yolokazi” he calls me once again. I don’t know what to say. Taking four shots, that was the worse advice ever.

“I love you too” I say. For the first time I say it with men looking at me like I am piece of full chicken.

Wawu Yolokazi, wawu!

Stop drinking alcohol sisi!

I see smiles on their faces before they leave the room one by one after greeting me and disappearing around the house. There he is standing there as if he’s taking in what I just said to

him. “From day one I’ve never wanted to sit on a throne” he tells me.

“Then why you couldn’t answer me that day”

“I was looking at the love you’re always trying to hide from me in your eyes”

“You are not a poet Kungawo” I chuckle softly.

“I’m serious” oh he’s actually serious. “That’s why when I left home I decided I am going to use my mother’s surname and my second name to avoid being noticed as someone from royalty. I don’t care about it Yolokazi. The birth mark, I don’t even care about it. All I want is you. From day one. From the time I met you at a corridor at a store I wanted you. Mostly make love to you”

“Oh so you wanted to have sex with me?”

“For weeks, days, minutes, seconds, months and years, forever Yolokazi”

“You’re not making this easier for me Kungawo”

“I’m not trying to baby”

I breathe out “I’m tipsy”

“I can see that” he smiles “come here”

“No”

“I want to hold you”

“What’s your name?”

“Mongameli Mthabela”

“Kungawo Thembela is the man I fell in love with but I can consider you”

He laughs “come here” I step closer to him and he wraps around in his arms and kisses the top of my head then I look up at him “you look beautiful”

“If I become a queen does that mean I’ll have to stop drinking alcohol?”

“No, nothing will have to change. I love you more when you’re drunk. You speak your mind”

“You should’ve told me”

“I know and I’m sorry Dr Mkhungo”

I breathe out “Where are my children?”

“In their rooms not talking to me. I missed you”

“I missed you too”

“Those are my brothers”

“They look like you”

“I’d love to disagree. I’m going to quickly check up on them then get back to you”

“I’m going to check on my fams”

“Wanele really put you on huh?”

“It seems like it”

“We have a lot to talk about”

“Sounds serious”

“It is” he leans closer “our bodies will be doing the talking”

•

I seriously need to stop drinking because the plan was not spending the night here and also not to let him shag me whole night while we both moan and groan about how much we love each other—that

wasn't the plan. Ever. Just like it wasn't the plan accepting being a step mother to those two rascals who jumped off their beds the moment they saw walking into their room and gave me hugs, the other one is back too surely after she heard I've left to plot more plans about getting her parents back together. But last night she actually greeted and hugged me with a smile, strange huh?

This man just announced that his brothers are coming over for lunch and he's expecting to cook, me!

I thought he was the chef in this relationship.

I don't use rosemary and parsley and other spices like him but he said his brothers prefer that so I am making samp and roasted chicken and if anyone has anything to say to me about my cooking then they have another thing coming. Now I have to be a "makoti" and I hate every minute of it because these people always act like you need some sort of

approval from them for their brother to be with you, every family acts like that, it's weird.

Nomahlubi and Cataleya are being helpful around the kitchen and I am only talking with the gym freak the spoilt brat hasn't said a word to me and it's better that way.

I can hear cars outside and closing of doors before sonorous voices fills the entire room as they laugh loudly and chuckle and calling each other "bafo" then Kungawo or should I call him Mongameli now? He comes to the kitchen and leans against the entry way. "It smells good here" he says and I want to roll my eyes at him but decide to smile. "They want to see you" he announces and I take off the apron and following right behind him then he unexpectedly spanks my buttocks and I giggle softly before he pulls me in for a quick kiss. "You look beautiful Dr Mkhungo"

“Thank you Mr. . .” I tease him.

“Mthabela”

“Thank you” I wink at him.

“Are you okay?”

“No, not really”

He frowns and attentively looks at me “what’s going?”

“We’ll talk later when we’re alone. Last night we ended up not talking, talking”

“Is it about. . .”

“No, not that”

“Then what’s it baby?”

“Not now Mongameli”

He smiles “Okay later then”

“Hmmm”

“Mkhungo, Sodi, Langa, Nqumela, Magange siqunga esihle esingahlali nyoni ngoba sizalela amazinyane amasakabuli, Mnjonjo” The moment I walk into the room one of them is praising me with my clan names. I’d love to say I hate it but this . . .this is tickling me in all the right places. They’re gathered together in a living room with green bottles of beer.

Again this is freaky!

I take a sit right next to their brother as they give me approval looks.

I am introduced to:

Menzi (first born and king)

Melusi (the one who was praising me with my clan names)

Mongameli (the one I am sleeping with)

Mnotho (Well he just has a smile on his face and not talking much)

Muzi (the interesting looking one, surely the most

attractive one in this family wearing iziqhaza earrings and pretty much stylish)

Mpumelelo (the last born. I think he's same age as Wanele. But he's also the second attractive one after Muzi and I must say their parents were having the most freakish sex)

“Nice to finally meet you maMkhungo” Menzi says to me with a smile and leaning forward. “My brother told me that you were not aware about where he comes from”

What must I say? Obviously what his brother told him was true or he needs confirmation? This is the part I hate in a relationship meeting family and relatives and having to act like you're not a lunatic.

“Yebo” I smile.

“I’d love to apologize on his behalf and thank you for allowing us to come to your house” Whose house? I don’t have a house.

Anyways the day proves to be amazing I’ve been laughing and serving these people and they enjoyed my food and under cooked chicken too but no one dared to say a word. They would’ve died. But rather than that they’re normal people nothing special about them honestly—okay they’re royalty. We are having a braai now and again I had to make pap. And I saw Mnotho having a conversation with Nomahlubi, he seems very strict and doesn’t take shit. After he spoke to her she was crying her eye balls off and then she ran to me. I hugged her. Yes, that’s what I did. Instead of letting her cry, choke until she dies I decided to warmly embrace her then I gave her a glass of sugar water that’s when I heard an apology coming from her.

This day is about to end when Palesa appears from

nowhere following behind Kungawo and we are called to the living room again by Menzi. And by the grace of God I hope he won't promote that polygamy business that he's been doing because someone is going to either end up in mortuary or hospital, there's no in between. I am not cannabis. They won't dare disrespect me like that.

"I'm sure both of you don't know why you've been called here" can he get straight to the point so I can go crazy now, now. "MaDube I am going to need you to apologize to MaMkhungo"

Palesa hangs her head low and then looks up at me with sincerity "I'm sorry for disrespecting you. We both don't know each other and it was wrong of me to come at you like that. I've already did apologize when I saw the other day and I hope you'll see that I genuinely mean it"

You called me a new skirt!

“No it’s okay but I hope we don’t have to revisit this conversation again” I say with a threatening tone. I don’t care. King or no king she must know I’m going to rearrange her.

“Great. I hope both of you will learn to respect each other. MaMkhungo I want you to respect MaDube because she’s in Mongameli’s life as much as you are. They divorced yes but she’s a mother of his child”

“But that shouldn’t give her the right to disrespect me or even use her daughter to fight her battles that’s one thing I am not going to tolerate. I have nothing against anyone. I never broke her marriage. I was not there, so she shouldn’t treat me like I’m a home wrecker”

“And she apologized” Mnotho.

“And I acknowledge that but I am saying if it happens again I’m not going to fold arms like I did before because clearly it will be showing that she’s disrespecting me since she’s apologizing now” I can hear soft laughter coming from Muzi.

“I’m sure it wouldn’t get that far right MaDube?” Menzi asks her and she nods her head respectfully.

Wonderful.

“What do you think of polygamy maMkhungo?” that’s Menzi again and I look towards his brother who gaze back at me indicating he has nothing to do with what his brother is asking.

“Nothing” I answer.

“Nothing?” he crease his eye brow.

“I don’t think about it so I cannot answer that question” I am gun blazing.

“Would you consider it in future?”

“No”

“Why?”

“I don’t understand what you mean why because my no is a full answer” another laughter from Muzi erupts then he grabs his bottle from the table drinking from it before he winks at me with an impressed smile.

“No has ever stand up to you like this Mthabela I

like her” Mnotho chuckles.

“She’s going to make a great queen” Menzi responds.

“Mongameli made it clear that he’d rather not take over the throne if he’d have to take polygamy because he’s afraid of losing you. Of which we understand. I understand but traditional he has to take a second wife and that’s why we called MaDube and you as well MaMkhungo to hear what you think”

“Things between Kungawo and I never worked. He doesn’t love me. He will never love me as much as he loves Yolokazi, I’ve seen them together so I am not going to be part of this if that’s the reason you called me here. I’m moving on with my life and I’m happy with the direction I’m taking. I can co-parent with both of them when it comes to Nomahlubi but not be the reason they’ll be unhappy in their

marriage” oh she’s not that much of a bitch after all.

“My mother is coming down tomorrow and she asked me to invite you over tomorrow Mamkhungo and you MaDube” we nod our heads “You are excuse” we walk out of the room. Well Palesa wanted to leave all at once but I asked her to stay for some strange reasons.

“I cooked but my chicken is under cooked do you want me to dish up for you?” I ask with laughter in my voice.

“I’ll just put it in a microwave, thank you” she smiles sweetly and after placing a plate of food and glass of wine she thanks me “It smells nice” she says.

“I’m not good at that department”

“We are in this together” she laughs and starts to eat “Hlubi told me that you’re an amazing person and I agree. You’re fierce too they were right you are going to be a great queen” Oh so they discuss me with her daughter.

“She’s an amazing child too”

“And I’m sorry if she has been disrespectful towards you, she has been having a hard time with accepting my divorce with her father”

“It’s all good honey don’t worry about. How is the food?” I chuckle.

“I’ll say it’s eight out of ten you’re not bad as I am. I don’t ever cook I buy take aways”

“Kungawo really has a taste in women” I laugh at

her “we would’ve been the most worse sister wives”
what the fuck am I saying? This is a bad joke.

“Right? But he would’ve cooked for us” she found it
funny okay, she continues swallowing “I hope we
can have a relationship like this. I honestly have
nothing against you Yolokazi”

“Do you love him?”

“Should be honest or lie because you might kill me
ma’am?” she smiles.

“Be honest, it’s a safe space”

“I never loved him. It was more about status for me
than anything else but I learnt to love him eventually.
I care for him maybe I do love him but it’s too late”

“Hmmm” I murmur “Why did you lie about Nomahlubi?”

“It was to hurt him. Finding out when I was only two months there was another woman I was shattered. We had sex because eventually it was bound to happen since we stayed in a same house but we were unfaithful and dishonest to each other like I said subconsciously I might’ve loved him and realized when it was all over”

“He loved you” I don’t know why I am telling her this but here I am “I can see in his eyes that he did”

“But he wasn’t in love with me Yolokazi”

Deep!

I take a sip from a glass of wine “have you met

someone?”

“Oh no woman you are trying to make me spill some beans!” she laughs.

“It’s a safe space” I wink.

“No, not yet but I’m on the market” she winks back at me “I hope one day we can be friends”

“I don’t mind at all as long as we have mutual respect that’s totally fine with me”

“I should get going honey, see you tomorrow when you finally meet your mother in law”

“Okay let me walk you out” she first bids farewell to the men in the living room before we walk out, share

a hug then she gets in her car and waving as she drives off when I turn around there he is standing behind me and watching me.

“You scared me!” I say.

“I love you”

“What’s going on?”

“Nothing” he shakes his head “you just surprised me today”

“I’m full of surprises baba”

“You’re not aware how hard you make me when you call me like that”

“I cannot keep up with your high sex drive” I take a deep breather “s he’s not that much of a bad person” I say to him.

“I know that”

“Your brother said you need to take a second wife for you to be on a throne”

“I’m not obliged to Yolokazi and I don’t like the direction of this conversation”

“There’s no direction I’m just saying eventually they’ll force you into it”

“I’m not taking over anytime soon. Melusi needs to sit there before me and that’s many years far before I can even think about being a king. I don’t care about it”

“You cannot runaway from who you are Mongameli”

“If I take polygamy that means I’m going to lose you. I don’t want to lose you but beside that you are a lot to take on alone, imagine having two or more women in my life I cannot do that. Can we not have this conversation”

“I’m scared” I confess. I am honestly. And is surely the first time I am showing my vulnerability to anyone, a man mostly. “I already created our perfect world in my head and this is a worse scenario Kungawo”

His big hands engulf my face forcing me to look up at him with my glossy eyes and I attempt hanging my head low but his grip is tight against my face “whatever picture you’ve painted in your head I’m in love with it and it’s going to stay that way, you have

nothing to be scared about. Forget about all these titles. I am still the same man you fell in love with muntuza”

I take a deep sigh “Okay”

“Now stop crying, I love you”

[03/02, 07:14] : LOVE ON DEMAND

30

YOLOKAZI

We drive into a modern Islamic - style exterior that makes a room lighter while shedding mosaic lighter patterns on the carpet inside, it’s beautiful and gigantic and I always say I don’t understand people who builds such big houses when there’s only three or four people staying there—I mean what’s the

point honestly?

But I guess we all have our preferences right?

Getting off the car a model like woman comes out of the house and she has a long curled weave with blonde tints it looks like her real hair, the edges are perfectly laid and she's tall with warm beige emollient wearing an asymmetric boob tube polka dot dress and head scarf. As she gets to us she gives me a gigantic hug before she pulls away with a smile then hugs Kungawo next to me who sweeps her off her feet—what's this?—anyways this is the second wife that I was stalking on social media and she looks even unreal in person.

“MaMkhungo nice to meet you honey, I'm also a Langa” she says and her voice sounds like she has blocked nose but because words roll out smoothly out of her mouth it sounds serenading, she drawls when she speaks. “Ah I missed you” she pokes

Kungawo who chuckles and laced his hand on my waist with a rosy tinge covering his face.

“I missed you too but I’m back now. Anyways baby this is Sarah and Sarah this is my wife Yolokazi”
When did he send cows at my house for him to call me his wife? Not even chickens or goats? Hehake.

“Nice meeting you, you’re so beautiful, come with me and leave this one” she extends her hand with a diamond ring, this is a rock I’m telling you. “Are you okay, you seem nervous?” she chuckles softly as we make our way inside the house and I lose my speaking capacity looking around the interior with calming tones meeting wood texture in a modern living and in the decor throughout this modern luxe home. A sectional sofa arrangement and ambient lighting glows around the ceiling line and a floor lamp sheds brighter light over one end of the modern sofa design, creating some sort of like dedicated reading spot. Then there’s a modern

fireplaces blazes in the dining area of the home, flickering from a glass bed on top of modern unit. The dining room pendant lights spread out at different heights across the contemporary table and chairs set.

“I’m okay” I smile at her.

“Oh don’t worry nothing beat wine in a mug” she winks at me “the other sister wives are in the kitchen already cooking, let’s go” my hand is still intertwining with hers as we enter the modern kitchen that stands directly opposite the dining area with its own casual dining spot set up along a marble topped peninsula. Four black kitchen bar stools line up solidly beneath the chunky countertop. Darkened glass is used as an accent in many areas of home design, used to attractively encase structural columns or to form smoked glass doors and partitions.

“Look who I have with me” Sarah says to the other women in the kitchen who all turn around facing towards us with fake and real smiles and they just look has classy as she is.

I wave my hand at them with a smile while my other hand is still intertwining with Sarah’s whom is not willing to let me go anytime soon. “Okay so that’s Unathi and she’s my sister wife” she says to me pointing towards the woman with a bob cut weave but also a silky head scarf on her head.

You see that one who was talking about polygamy last night? That attractive piece of thing who gets fine like wine huh? Yes he has beautiful wives and they’re young.

“And then that’s Amanda and she’s Melusi’s wife first” she’s very simple and you can tell she doesn’t really care about glitz and glamour but just wears tailored made dresses with traditional elements into

it “And well that’s Zakithi and she’s the second wife” her head is wrapped artfully and she’s beautiful with her ebony skin and big earrings hanging from her ear lobes, well she recently just got married. “And then right there we have Elimtha who’s Mnotho’s wife she was our last born before you came” oh she has this pure and innocent aura about her but she’s vivacious and charming “Okay this is Yolokazi, MaMkhungo and I’ll hope we’ll be kind to each other” Sarah finishes off the introduction.

“Hmmm” Amanda says and then continues with her chopping. Oh that was—never mind I’m not here to cause drama nor throw spoons and forks at anyone.

Within a second I’m already hands on with chopping and drinking from a mug and honestly speaking I hate all of this. Having to cook for people rather than my man. I prefer burning and frying myself knowing that I am cooking for Kungawo not

his family I have to impress alongside some grumpy wife who has a problem with everyone in this room, Amanda is a spitting dragon I'm telling you, she has been throwing remarks at everyone in this room even the two queens she doesn't care. And she's drinking her wine like a fish chopping everything aggressively and banging pots and whatever that is bang-able.

And the other two wives whom are like sisters keep stealing glances at each other and hiding behind their glasses after communicating with their eyes—I'm wondering what kind of sex is Menzi giving them for them to get along so well.

“What do you do Yolokazi?” Zakithi asks me making herself comfortable on a stool and drinking from her glass of juice.

“I'm a dentist” I respond back to her, the aroma of the food we're cooking is now hanging thick in the

room and it don't smell like curry powder and knorrox but rose mary and all these other spices and herbs.

“Oh that's great now I'm going to have my own dentist” Sarah responds and winks, she has beautiful aligned teeth.

“Hmmm” that's Amanda again then she turns away and continues with whatever that she was doing even though no one is longer trying to accommodate her into a conversation she's still making these remarks and one more “hmmm” from her I'm going to tell her she's the not so good looking one in this room so she must shut up, okay I'm not going to say that.

Ghostly silence visits us when Kungawo walks in with his mother who has a sweet smile and listening to what he's saying but their conversation die out as they enter the room. “Ma!” Sarah smiles

and already she has her arms around her, so, so tight. Alright so this one is a hugger of this family, very affectionate I've noticed.

“MaLanga I cannot breathe sana!” the grandmother says and chuckling before they pull away from each other then she kisses both her cheeks, she goes from one wife to another greeting them and cupping their faces in her hands kissing their cheeks until she gets to me “MaMkhungo, awusemhle” she compliments me then glances towards her son who has a smile on his face, an indescribable smile but it's touching his eyes with his hands on his pockets and watching us like two unicorns dancing to amapiano. “Good to finally meet you, I heard so much about you” what did she hear? I hope they didn't tell her about my raw chicken because I'm going to faint right here and now “how are you? Are you okay? Is he giving you troubles?” she whispers in my ear then look into my face, maybe to search for troubles that her son might've caused? Aw shame not yet beside him hiding the fact that he's

from royalty and his children at first, no, nothing. You just gave birth to a hider ma.

“No, not at all ma” I smile.

“If he does don’t hesitate to call me even in the middle of the night and I’ll come and help you hide the body” she winks at me “Sarah pour me wine please” Haibo! Haibo! Haibo! “And Mongameli leave the room you have no business here”

“I want to talk to Dr Mkhungo” not him calling me like this.

“About what? What do you want to say to her?” she smirks then takes a seat after Elimtha has pulled out a chair for her. “Where are my grandkids?”

“They chose to stay behind and their mother is

spoiling them” Kungawo looks at me then smiles. How am I spoiling them? If they want to stay home because they feel they’ll get bored then they must stay home and Mpumelelo is with them—he’s just like Wanele they’re my slimes. That’s another word to my new dictionary and it means friends. I cannot keep up with teenagers shame, I cannot. “And even your last born is there, he doesn’t want to leave now”

“What’s maMkhungo feeding him? Mpumelelo never visits”

“Mpumelelo is at your house?” Amanda gasps, oh she’s the first one to ever get married into this family. And she gets a response she wanted her face falls, for what reason? I don’t know. “I thought Palesa was coming Mongameli where is she?” she asks and everyone eyeballs me like I’m selling cow intestines.

“I asked her not to come”

“Why because ma wanted to see her?” Amanda asks and pauses whatever she was doing.

“Who said I wanted to see her?” Kungawo’s mother frowns and then starts drinking from her wine. I’m going to love this old woman. Your mother in law will never drink wine with you. “If my son doesn’t want her here then who am I to go against his word? She has no business with Mongameli now does she Amanda?” she asks her.

“No but. . .”

“Hold it right there my child. You will respect MaMkhungo because I see you have some problem with her. Have we brought your husband’s exes here?”

“Chabo”

“Exactly now Mongameli leave the room” I don’t want him to leave but he winks at me before he disappears at the corridor and leave silence between us “Did anyone force you into polygamy Unathi?”

“No mama” Unathi responds.

“And you Sarah?”

“No ma” she also responds.

“Zakithi” same response “Amanda” another no comes from her mouth. Well it’s only Elimtha and I whom are greedy and not sharing a man. “Exactly no one forced anyone to be in polygamy here so Amanda stop acting like you were forced and taking

your anger out on wrong people. Palesa and Mongameli are divorced because their marriage didn't work out and therefore they moved on with their lives let's respect that. MaMkhungo is here and not going anywhere" she sounds so sure then she takes another sip from her glass "Hhayi Sarah this one is bitter man give me that sweet one" she complains.

Okay now the atmosphere is not that tense and maThembela wants me right next to her with her hand covering mine while we all share gales of laughter—she loves my humor too and she has turned into a tiny bug from sonorously laughing until we have to go to the living room to serve the men there. One by one the wives place the ceramic bowls on the table and kneeling. I'm uncomfortable with that. Again I'm okay with doing that for my man but not to do it because I want to look like a perfect wife. I gaze towards Kungawo when it's about to be my turn and he deeply stares at me before he gets up from the couch taking a bowl of salad from me

and placing it on a table then takes my hand leading us outside where there's warm breeze and he stands right in front of me staring into my eyes. "What's wrong?" he asks me.

"Nothing"

"I can clearly see something is wrong and you can't tell me it's nothing Nokubonga" Eh since when he calls me by my second name "You know if you didn't want to kneel you shouldn't have done it right?"

"I was going to look disrespectful"

"To who?"

"Your brothers"

“Are you dating them or me?”

“You”

“Then why do you care?”

“Because they’re your brothers”

“And so? You’re my girlfriend and if something is making you comfortable then I’m going to fight and stand for you. I don’t give a fuck whether they think it’s disrespectful or not. They have wives to kneel in front of them not you”

“Stop shouting!”

“I’m not shouting. You’re not here to impress anyone because their opinions don’t matter. It’s you

and I here baby” he leans closer to my face and skirting his fingers on my lips “what did you cook?”

“I made salads”

“Which one?”

“Pesto Salad with Grilled Chicken, I saw it in your recipe book”

He smiles “I’m going to survive on a salad?”

“There’s food”

“But you didn’t cook it. I love food cooked by you”

“You’re chef”

“It’s different. You cook for me with love Dr Mkhungo”

“Mxm” I playfully slap his shoulder “let’s go back inside the house” I say dragging his hand and he walks behind me then pause and I turn to him “What’s wrong?”

“I’m looking at what’s mines” he pulls me back causing collision on his chest and my hands laces there looking up at him “Tonight” he murmurs softly.

“What’s going on tonight?”

He grabs my buttocks softly and plays with them as they bounce up and down in his hands while his fingers are almost touching my kitten then he spanks me quickly looking into my eyes “I want you from here”

“Behind?”

“Hmmm”

“Never. Last night I felt like I was going to throw up and I almost farted. I was so close and if you didn’t come that time I would’ve fart” He was rough, very. Not that I didn’t enjoy it but I heard my ancestors calling me. Gripping at the sheets and my eyes teary and secondly I cannot keep up with his high libido.

He laughs so loud and almost choke “why you didn’t fart?”

“That’s embarrassing”

“To who cause not to me? I’ll be gentle this time I

promise. But you begged me to go harder”

“I was close”

“Okay, one round from the back while you’re still in this dress, deal?”

“No”

“Please”

I look at him and shake my head “what’s the sudden obsession with my ass?”

“I’ve always been obsessed baby. You have the most beautiful ass” Not me blushing because I have a beautiful buttocks. “I am obsessed with everything about you”

“Mxm let’s go”

We return back inside the house and they’re already eating well when he said he was going to only eat the salad I made he was not kidding. Their stomachs are full and I’m helping Elimtha with washing dishes, she’s so down to earth and quite. After we are done with all domestic stuff we are called into the living room where Muzi is holding a guitar and sitting on a chair while everyone is facing towards him.

What’s going on?

We gather around and Kungawo tugs me into his arms as everyone stare towards the same direction.

There’s something about Muzi man!

He's not one of those people you come across and second into it you find him good looking, gorgeous or whatever but he's attractive, not handsome but attractive. There's something so beautiful about how he wears those iziqhaza earrings and a white tank top that holds me like his second skin and high waisted jeans with ankle boots with block heel.

There's just something about the way he smiles so beautifully and how he speaks so calmly, he takes his time with literally everything and careful with his words.

There's silence and his mother has a smile on her face clutching her chest the moment his fingers touches the strings of the guitar and instantly the room is filled with a sombre yet beautiful sound before he opens his mouth and what comes out after that is mind blowing sultry and succulent and soothing.

The raw emotions in his voice, it sounds like neo soul with a touch of maskandi, I don't know how but it sounds so sensual. I am mesmerized until the last note he sings and his mother has tears in her eyes, actually everyone here has tears in their eyes and when he finishes singing fluttering his eyes open his very own eyes are glossy and he walks out of the room without saying a word. I can see Menzi hanging his head low and his shoulders moving up and down.

What's going?

I look at Kungawo and he has the same emotions before he looks away from me.

I perk up the couch and follow right behind and he's in the kitchen and having a glass of water. "That was beautiful" I compliment his singing and all he does is nodding his head and taking a long gulp from a glass of water "Are you okay?"

“I’m fine sis’ Yolokazi” he smiles.

“Ahem, alright” why did I come here anyways “have you thought about pursuing it as a career?”

He smiles, “I’m not passionate about singing. I sing to heal sis’ Yolokazi”

“You can heal the world”

“I understand but it’s not something I want to do for a living. You can sing too. Everyone can sing but with me it’s different”

“Not everyone can sing, I can’t sing”

“You can sing. Your ancestors could sing, they were

singers and you are your ancestor”

What?

“I’m not an ancestor”

He smiles and places his glass on a counter “think about it when you come into this earth as a spirit, you need a body and every body in your family has a certain blood line so it’s like there’s a gate keeper or there’s this people and these adults that’s carry a certain blood line and they’re responsible for it and so it’s like our souls have this agreement with our elders that I’m going to use this body basically you are your ancestors, they give you this body. And it comes with all the gifts they had and pass it to you” he’s an intellectual and I don’t know what he just said but okay.

“I get you” Actually I don’t—that was too deep. “That

song was emotional”

“It was my father’s favorite, the day before he took his last breath he asked me to sing it for him and he moved his fingers until they stopped moving”

Something tugs in my belly.

“I’m sorry” this is heart breaking.

“It’s okay. Tell everyone I’ve left for me please”

“Are you leaving?”

“Yebo sisi Yolokazi” he smiles once again “It was lovely meeting you once again”

“Nice meeting you and again I’m sorry about your

father”

“Thank you” I stride towards him and unexpectedly hugs me and he warmly welcomes me then pulls away “you’re the only person who’ve hugged me in this family”

“What Sarah is a hugger” I chuckle

“I don’t like physical touch, personal reasons but you were not aware so it’s fine” he smiles then walk out using the back door.

I’m left dragging my jaw on the floor!

Returning to the living room I have a jug of water and glasses for everyone and they all seem emotional. Then I return back to where I was sitting next to Kungawo who tugs me once again. “How is

he Yolokazi?” Mnotho asks me.

“He’s not okay” That’s what I saw he didn’t have to say it “And he left, I gave him a hug” this is more like a brag.

“He let you hug him?” they all eyeball me as if maybe he would’ve murdered me for touching him. “How?” that’s Menzi.

“It was unexpected”

“And he didn’t fight you after that?” their mother ask me with disbelief. This seems deeper than I thought. I shake my head no and then she smiles “You know what to do Mongameli”

“I have a suit ready” Melusi

“The cows too in a kraal” Mnotho

And then?

[03/02, 07:15] : LOVE ON DEMAND

31.

YOLOKAZI

UNEDITED

We are driving home and both of us drowning in our own silence and listening the sound of the wind escaping through the window menacing and the moving wheels. He’s holding my hand while he drives with the other and he keeps kissing the back of my hand. I don’t know what’s wrong but I’m going to find out when we get home, he’s hardly talking though or saying anything.

The moment we get home he parks right next to his other cars taking a deep breath and striding to my side opening the door for me and I get off taking his hand. I hold him and squeeze assuring him for whatever that's going through his mind.

We walk through the door and he disappears to the kitchen while I throw myself on the couch then he walks back “Mihlayami! Nomahlubi! Mpumelelo! Minenhle!” he calls all of them by the names they were given by him and they walk down the staircases following each other “what did your mother say about the dishes in the sink?” that should be me, I'm their mother. All four of them including Mpumelelo who's his younger brother. How old I am again to be a mother of four? Oh yes I'm turning twenty four in two months and I'm dating a thirty four year old man, wonderful huh?

They look at me once “she said we must wash the

dishes before going to bed” they responds in unison, my poor things.

“And what’s that I see in the sink, cars?” they shake their heads no all at once and no one tells them to disappear in the kitchen “Dr Mkhungo let’s go to bed” he takes my hand leading us to the bedroom where he makes me sit on the edge of the bed then he kneels in front of me and taking off my shoes slowly and sensually while he massages them while at it and gazing into my eyes with rapid fire that burns through me. “If I ask you to marry me would you” I had my eyes closed and enjoying the massage but now everything in me has become static and I am not blinking just gazing back at him.

“What makes you ask me that?”

“I want to know, I want a yes or no”

“Yes” I speak with my heart and not my brain and my mouth is tingly from the excitement so I tightly grip onto the duvets and feeling his big hands engulfing my size four feet slowly and tenderly before he sucks on my toes and my breathing hitches then he pause and look up at me.

“When you realize that one day this is not what you want will you be honest with me? And tell me that you don’t want me anymore?”

“I’ll always want you Mongameli”

“That’s not an answer”

“That’s my answer and I’m sticking to it” my voice comes out as a whisper then a knock comes from outside and he looks at me not moving, not blinking just staring and taking me all in. “Hmmm” I murmur responding to the door.

“We’ve washed the dishes mama, uxolo” that’s Cataleya and well her father calls her Mihlayami.

“It’s okay baby, goodnight”

“Alright, goodnight” there’s a pause, I can hear that she’s still on the outside and she wants to say something “goodnight” she repeats again then her footsteps fades.

He takes off my other shoe and pretty much does the same thing kissing my feet and sucking my toes then he gets up, he’s all over the place tonight I don’t know why. After a moment he disappears to his closet and come back taking a sit on a bedroom couch and breathes out. “I’m falling for you Nokubonga” he says and bury his face on his hands then he whips his head up leaning forward and balancing his arm on his knee with his elbow “and I

keep thinking of you walking away because this is all too much for you. The kids. My family. Me. Everything. I get scared, I didn't know I wasn't living until I met you"

"I'm not planning on leaving you" suddenly my vowels are limited and my voice is lodged on my throat watching him sitting there all vulnerable and not so godlike. "I love you Kungawo from the time I invited you over and lied and said I cooked I loved you then" I see a smile etch on his face, he looks beautiful with this haircut. He's beautiful and I love him. "Of course it's all too much but whatever that you come with I'm willing to move with it"

"Woza la" I get up from the bed striding towards him to sit on his lap and his hands circles my waist while mines are around his neck as he looks up at me then he removes one of his hand from me and digging into his pockets and coming with a box opening it and a beautiful oval shaped rose gold

ring smiles at me. “Remember that day when you kneeled serving me food?”

“Hmmm”

“I bought this following day because right at that moment I knew I want to be with you forever not because you kneeled but because I saw it was something way out of your comfort zone but you still did it for me but I’ve been keeping this because I was waiting for the right time”

“You want to marry me?” I laugh slightly.

“It seems like it” he breathes out and smile then I take a box from him looking at the ring and then at him before closing it.

“I want to marry you too but I don’t want you to

marry me because you feel I'm some sort of holy spirit that's here to save you or your family or maybe the chosen one for you. I might be that since that's what everyone believe but I don't want to be treated that way. I want us to be happy and be ourselves without having to overly think about anything and anyone and royal titles. I still want you to look at me with that same look you give me when we're around people like you want to fuck me there and then. I still want to get overly excited at the idea of going to get waxed and get decorated with diamonds for you. I don't want that feeling to die out. I want the love burning between the both of us to stay burning until we take our last breathes. But while we're at that I don't want us to rush everything because people around us feels you need to marry me. I know you genuinely want to marry me not because of who said what. And you want to know why I know that? Because of your love that's always searing through me when you look into my eyes. Right now, we are both not ready to get married" I cup his face on my hands "and that's because I feel you haven't healed from your past marriage and

that's why you asked me those questions earlier. I need you to believe and trust me that I will never leave you. I'm not ready to get married well because. . .there are so many layers we need to peel off each other. There's more to us than what we see now Mongameli, so much more and I'm going to keep this ring with me and when I feel I'm ready then you'll see me wearing it" I smile "I am still that girl you fell in love with when you met her with a heavy hangover"

"Please let me make love to you" he says with a breathy tone.

"Before we get there I want you to know that if ever you take polygamy I'm going to get myself a side boyfriend and I'll make sure it hurts until you take your own life because I'm not cannabis mna Kungawo"

"Hawu baby we were doing great and what

happened?” he laughs softly.

“I’m just saying” I smile “I love you”

“And I’m going to wait for you” he whispers
lasciviously

“I know”

“Now can I?” his gaze is drinking me in; desirous
and hungry. He grasp my leg above my knee; gently
and sensually stroke my leg. A sharp intake of
breath is caught on my lips.

“Hmmm”

We both get up and stand face to face, gazing into
each other’s eyes. I’m actually in love with this one

heh? Like he really sweep my feet and I actually want to grow old with him, shame yes es.

He leans down and kiss me. His hand slides down to my back. And he cups my buttocks his hand and push me into his groin, deepening our kiss. Oh damn. My hands are on his head and I miss his hair and clumping it. He lifts me off the ground with my legs around his waist and for a moment we stand here like this and our tongues moving like a perfect orchestra.

“I’m in love with you” I look up and my gaze is locked on the avid wanton gleam in his eyes. I swallow. My left arm wraps around his neck while my right hand caresses his biceps. He walk towards our bed with sure steps and deposit me onto the mattress then loom over me. The weight of his hips press into me then expertly angulate his hips over the junction of my thighs and I can feel how hard his erection has grown and I want him deep inside

me—maybe a hard fuck then making love sounds perfect for now. I tremble beneath him with desire and he tilt my head angling it to perfectly capture my full lips.

The moment our lips touch, fire engulfs my veins, jolting me into awareness, making me desire him even more.

When he lean down to merge our bodies, my fingers are trying to unbutton his shirt in a hurry. When I can't, I squirm under him with impatience. When I finally manages to unbutton one, I can't manage to unbutton the next one. With frustration, I pull his shirt apart making the buttons scatter on the bed and around the room.

“Want it rough?” he whispers and I nod.

I don't know how other couples communicate. But,

we're not like other people. We communicate better through sex. My intense passion and craving for him explodes in leaps and bounds.

When he lean down to kiss me again, my nipples tightening under my dress grazing over his chest sending jolts of electricity.,

His lips are soft and demanding. I whimper when he suck on my lower lip. My body's instant reaction makes him give out a deep guttural groan. He hold his torso up using his forearm and push my dress up feeling my drenched sex.

“How long you've been wet for me baby?” he murmurs into my lips. Ah since you said you want it from the back and I've been imagining it.

And he swallow my little moans that were my response. I arch my head and my back

automatically he lower his eyes to me perfect mounds pushing through my dress. His lips graze over the fabric of my dress, and capture a pucker nipple between his teeth and tug it not so gently, making me groan with pleasure. My hips lift up trying to find his manhood, hungry for friction, trying to melt into him, merge with him. My hands travel to his back; and digging my nails into his back and scrapes down and my hands push their way under his waistband but restricted by his belt. What the hell.

“Please take them off”

He unbuckle his belt, unbutton and unzip his pants. I stick my hand into his boxers freeing his erection. My thumb runs over the crown of his erecting in rhythmic circles and internally he screams. “Hmmm baby! Fuck!” His hand runs from hilt to aching tip, slowly yet greedily, licking my lips. He unwrap my dress opening it up.

His patience has been thrown out gingerly he pulls off my panties and insert his index and middle finger under my panties and his fingers run over the folds of my sex. Then he groans at my wetness. He swiftly turn his hand over and poke his finger into the lace of my panties and rip it into shreds. That's the first Fenty x Savage I ever bought with his money of course "Ah Kungawo that's new!"

"I'm going to buy you a while truck full of them Nokubonga" I want that bloody truck parking outside with a whole collection tomorrow, he must be thinking we're playing games here.

He sit up on his knees and open the flap of my dress. My breasts are pushing through my black lace bra. He leans down and run his nose between the soft peaks of my breasts. He run his index finger beneath the lacy cup of my bra freeing my left breast. Then, leaning down to my mound and

greedily suckle my nipple into the warm wetness of his mouth with deep, aching pulls.

“Kungawo”

He grin between pulls. His hand darts down to my pulsing sex, swollen with desire. With his other hand, he free my right breast. My neglected nipple perks and tightens begging for attention. He licks and nip his way to my other breast. Capturing the areola in his mouth, He lick my nipple leisurely, in deep sensual strokes. I raise my hips to meet his with a lascivious grin, pleased to finally get what I want. He push my legs apart with his knees. Holding his heavy erection in his hand, he runs his hand up and down over his lengths and feeling the throbbing veins. He lean down and run the crown of his penis over the wetness of my sex.

“Now, please! Fast and hard!”

“Whatever you want baby” feeding his erection into the depths of my sex. Once he hilt deep I wrap my legs around his torso trying to push him in even deeper. He expertly angulate his hips trying to rub and locate that secret sweet spot inside me. He grabs me by the buttocks, and lift me up.

He holds me up, and rearing up push upwards as he descend his weight down in rapid fashion, continually drilling into me.

As he move me up and down on my manhood sliding in and out of my sex, my breasts push forward by the wire of my bra cups, intimately rub over his chest. As he push me up, my nipple aligns with his mouth, and he capture it, sucking in deep pulls. When he drills into me again, my muscles inside my sex tighten inside.

“Kungawo!” I try to scream.

He capture my other nipple in his mouth. Suck it hard. I push my head back as he shove his dick hard into me. Holy Mother Mary.

He move the angle of my buttocks, tilting them upwards, and roll his hips once he enter me and locating his favorite spot, he rub and massage it in circles with his manhood stimulating us both. My hands find his back, nails running through him.

Finally he rear again, and push himself into me fast and hard in rapid succession as he raise my buttocks and descend me onto his conquering erection.

I shout my pleasure as my teeth latches onto his shoulder.

“Fuuuuck! baby! Yes!” he hiss as he spurt into my sex thick and hard and me washing in his semen. My eyes loses focus during the peak of my ecstasy, my mouth opens and then my teeth clamp shut, air hissing through with a mixture of pleasure and lust. The jolts of orgasms can be felt in the tips of my toes.

Finally our lips meet and feeling of waves of orgasm transfer into each other.

“I love, love and love you, baby!” finally he pulls himself out of me, barely tamed.

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I wake up this morning and fluttering my eyes open and they meet with roses on the empty side and only his cologne is left behind. Arg I have to go to work? No ways, I’m going to go there tomorrow with

a sick note or something because I'm so exhausted from the bottom of my heart I am. Maybe I should have my own practice and work on my own hours, sounds perfect.

I groan but the roses bring a smile on my face and I grab them taking in the scent —and well they just smell flowery this is not a movie. There's a note on a side table and his bank card. "Go buy yourself new lacy numbers so I can rip them off again, I love you" the note reads. Arg I am going to buy myself a truck of underwears. I love him too. He wants to marry me, that's a lot to take in and I'm glad he understood me when I told him we are both not ready. There's still a lot of sex to be done, we still need to get to know each other more but I love all of him and I want to marry him and husband him just not now. And also his family needs to stop treating me like I'm an angel that was sent to tell Mary that she's pregnant or like I'm some special alien, not that I don't enjoy making Amanda—that satan—not that I don't enjoy making her jealous and seeing the

bitterness on her face which is why I mentioned hugging Muzi by the way and speaking of him, that one has something powerful about him. Not authority. Not power. Not money. Maybe that is part of that too but there's something supernatural about him. His singing? What he said about ancestors? His intellectual mind? Whatever it is, but he's a special force in that family. He managed to make old men and women cry by just singing, powerful.

When I'm done getting dressed I decide to go for a while legged and open back jumpsuit with my dreadlocks tied not so neat and showing the shape of my face and just lip gloss and earrings. I look beautiful and I'm not going to work, instead I'm going to take out the kids and have fun and be a teenager for a day and forget all about being an adult.

Getting in the living room I find them coming from

their morning jog all sweaty and dancing to some song when I walk in they quickly turn off the music and turn to me “mama can we go see malume Muzi performing tonight” Cataleya is the spokesperson whenever they need something they send her.

“Where is he performing?”

“At a festival Oppi Koppi and he’s like one of the special guests” Mpumelelo responds sounding as elated.

“Oh is he like a performer?”

“No” they all respond at once.

“Well he performs once in a while when he wants to be on stage, this is more like a hobby to him regardless of a huge fans base but he travels too

overseas and stuff”

“Okay we’re going”

“We?” Wanele

“Yes all of us are going. And your father”

“I don’t think he’ll agree we’ve tried him before and he said it’s teenagers’ event” Nomahlubi, I’m also friends with this little beautiful devil now, she’s under my black magic.

“We are going”

I’ve called everyone in this family and told them we were attending this event, festival whatever that you call it and well some disagree into it but Sarah was

the first one to jump on the train and her sister wife and well the other two wives have left for Cape Town with their husband and I'm glad because I was going to kill Amanda if she dares "hmmm" me again.

I'm not sure about Mnotho and his wife though but that one that just said he hates noises yet he's the loudest one, I threaten all of them and they succumbed to come excluding the king of course which is understandable but he asked for videos. I don't know why but I'm so elated about this, that I even invited the Mcelu family and my best friend that should be Bongeziwe by the way he said he was coming because I promised to punch him and that one marrying my sister cannot say no to me. And rather than that we are all going to the festival and my children are exuberance as I am and they cannot hide it more especially after taking them for shopping for their outfits tonight and I bought brand new lace numbers, it's waste because Kungawo just rips them off.

We park next to other cars and this is actually a full blown festival in fact. There's cars everywhere—it's vibrant and beautiful and everyone seems ebullient parking their cars as we are. We have a special access though because Onalenna pulled some strings for us and speaking of her they surprised her with people shouting her clan names outside her gate and she's marrying Bongeziwe soon. I am filled with glee on their behalf and I still have to tell them that marriage has knocked on my door too.

When Kwanda sees us she screams and jumping up down in her white minimalistic dress alongside her now husband matching in all black, they're are the stylish ones anyways—what do you expect a designer and stylist together?

I introduce her to my children whom are gawking at her beauty and throwing compliments while we are waiting for others and in less than a second

everyone is here and Sarah gives me one of her gigantic hugs well the person we are here to see doesn't know we are coming.

Okay everyone who said is coming is here and we look like one big beautiful family walking through the gate and we are given wrist bands then Kungawo laces his hand on my waist the teenagers are already out there and surely this is what they wanted, they have their phones out and taking videos and pictures.

We make our way the gazebo because we have an access there—very important person—and already these men are gathered together by the bar and having beer, well my brother in law will only see us after the performance.

“You look so happy!” Onalenna says to me and wiggling her eyebrows. We cannot do that much of talking and gossiping today but she warmly

embraces me “you deserve all of it baby” she says the winks and pulling away, she also has a ring on her finger and mine is kept somewhere safe. I don’t think I want to tell anyone about it because they’ll pressurize me into it. Everything will happen when the time is right and now we are enjoying this phase of our relationship. I glance towards him and I catch him staring and he smiles.

What I thought were my kids seems to like my sister more it must be the tattoos on her body so they think she’s cooler than me, bloody hypocrites and maybe it’s a swollen stomach but rather than that I’m happy that everyone is getting along and having as much fun as I’m having.

Finally they announce that Muzi is going to be on stage in three minutes and screams erupt and people taking out their phones. We have the backstage access too. “Baby I’m going backstage!” I whisper in his ear and kiss his cheek and he tells

me he prefers watching from here which I understand by the way.

But I'm going there with or without him and Kwanda is here with me alongside the now drunk Sarah and Onalenna who are holding each other's hands and well Unathi and guess what Khethelo has a packet of chips with her.

Don't get pregnant man!

By the time we get back stage he's there and the light have been dimmed, everyone has their phones out and towards him that's when we see the candles lighting on stage, they're white and they illuminate him and we get to see him. I can see him from here, screams erupts when everyone sees him on that stage wearing his tank top and high waisted jeans as always with hanging earrings on his ears.

“Yessssss!” Kwanda and Sarah screams when the guitar starts to play softly and he burns an incense on stage, this is so beautiful.

“Sisondela kuwe weno phezulu sicela ukukhanya (we are coming closer to you most high and we are asking for light)” he sings velvety and soulful and the band starts playing and the crowd is quiet. That’s what his music needs to you to do, stay silent and listen to the message.

That song was a opening prayer and after that moment the lights are on and the crowd loses their marbles when he starts singing something that sounds like a groovy modern soulful maskandi and I’m enjoying every moment of it until I feel hands wrapping themselves around my waist I turn around ready to fight tooth and nail but it’s him. Oh he came here! I kiss him gently before we both dance along to his brother who’s having the best time of his life on stage moving along to the rhythm oh his

very own mellow vocals. “That’s my brother in law!” I scream and clapping my hands together. I’m going to lose my voice shame. Kungawo takes my hand and we dance. This is it. The best night of my life. Okay not really I mean I’ve had great nights but here with him.

After his performance he thanks the crowd that’s still screaming taking a bottle of water waving and drinking from the bottle and he smiles when he sees us backstage with his hands brought together. “What are you guys doing here” he’s standing from a distance making sure there’s no physical touch or whatsoever. I wonder what happened. Has he always been like this?

“We came here to support you that was beautiful bafo!” Kungawo says. Well the rest of us we are still heavily breathing from all the screaming we were doing and there’s people asking to take pictures with him it seems his fans knows about him and

respect him not wanting to make physical touch but at least he shakes their hands then we all make our way back to the gazebo where another scream erupts and picture taking but we decide to leave and my rascals want to stay so I beg their father and they'll come back home with a driver. The only person they're sad that is leaving is Kwanda but the rest of us they don't care, well are not as fun huh?

We decide to go to my house, my house yes and well the queen, you see the queen? Sarah Langa is intoxicated with her newly founded friend Onalenna as we drive in different cars back home. That was a great night, we should have more nights like this.

We are hosting basically for the first time and Bongeziwe is having fun annoying me and jokingly asking if I cooked, too much for a best friend huh?

We have music playing loudly and Muzi is filled with glee because the only topic is about his

performance tonight.

“That was really a beautiful performance you’re in tune with your ancestors” Mongezi and well they get along very well because they’re both into those spirituality business and astrology. I know absolutely nothing about that and that’s fine with me really. I don’t meditate. I don’t know chakras and I’m good.

“Dr Mkhungo” Kungawo calls me aside and we make our way to the kitchen, today he’s the first one to get tipsy then he places me on the kitchen island getting in between my legs with his hands on my thighs and burning me with his eyes “what you did for my brother today, thank you”

“It’s nothing baby”

“It’s everything baby. I never attended any of his

performances until you dragged me there today. I had fun”

“We should attend them more”

“Has long as I’m going to see that animated look on your face then I’m good”

“Muzi. . .” I pause “why he doesn’t want to be touched?”

“This happened after we lost our grandfather he died in his arms and at that time he was just a teenager, we learnt to love him from the distance all these years and after our father also died in his arms it made the matter worse”

“Do you think it’s because he doesn’t want to feel comforted but just succumbing to grief?”

He looks at me without any response before he says “I never thought about it that way but we’ve tried getting him professional help though. Emotionally he’s in a better space now”

“He said he’s a healer and I believe him”

“He is, his voice have that power”

“What’s your super power then?” I chuckle.

“Making you scream”

“What’s wrong with you?” I laugh.

“You asked me and I answered, let’s go back to others, I love you”

“I love you too”

You won't believe it!

This morning I woke up to my pictures with Mongameli because that's how they called him, splashed on newspapers. As in me, I was on a newspaper on a front page and also a magazine with bold fonts written “Has the prince moved on already after a messy divorce?” and then another one was written “the royalty was seen last night at a festival having fun with the Mcelu family and prince Mongameli was with a new woman”

It's shocked that even the Mcelu family is as famous, I guess in the business but I'm on the front page.

I've been here stuck in this room holding these papers that Cataleya brought here, shame she's just

a teenager who just saw her step mother and father on a magazine and got excited while her father has been on his phone since this morning pacing up and down shouting at everyone and everything.

“No, no, no don’t give me that shit, don’t!” he shouts on his phone and glance at me, flaring his nostrils “I’m out with my family and you decided to invade my fucking privacy? I don’t care. That’s my woman and you have no fucking right, we don’t want to do any interviews, no!”

I’m actually a celebrity now!

[03/02, 07:15] : LOVE ON DEMAND

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YOLOKAZI

I don't know why is everyone making this such a big deal because celebrities like me always make it to the front page of newspapers, magazines and sometimes just trend on social media—this is actual part of our lives basically our daily bread.

Journalists always want something to write about but this man right here has been pacing up and down this room shouting, yelling and screaming and turning down some interviews from radio stations and television shows, I don't know why but everyone from his family has been checking to see if I'm okay and Kungawo has pretty much made sure that no one leaves this house as we speak outside the gate we have journalists parking and waiting for anyone to come out.

When he turns towards me he sees his daughter who has fallen asleep on my creamy thighs while I'm playing with her hair then a smile etch on his face before he quickly turns away and continues speaking on his phone with a calmer tone now then he breathes out before he throws his phone on the

bedroom couch and sink there, leaning backwards and running his hand on his face, he's vex "you cannot go to work today" he announces then takes another sharp intake of breath. Okay wonderful news. And tomorrow and following day?

"Okay" I respond nonchalantly and he narrows his eyebrows and leaning forwards clearly surprised that this was just a walk in a park for him, did he think I was going to fight him?

"Dr Mkhungo" he calls me with his eyebrows narrowing further and running his finger on his lower lip "yesterday did you go to work?"

I look at him once and then down to the sleeping forward daughter of mine whom is peacefully sleeping, shame, they came back in the early hours of the morning and intoxicated and when their father wanted to hang them on a door handle with a wet tissue I had to intervene—I'm joking he wanted

to beat them up with a belt. “No, I didn’t go”

“Are you going tomorrow?”

“I don’t know” I shrug my shoulders and he chuckles softly and shaking his head before he stands on his feet attentively looking at me.

“Why you’re not going to work these days?”

“I wake up exhausted from. . .” I look down at the sleeping angel to see if she’s really asleep “from the night activities and I wish the working hours were not as draining” I whisper to him and he grins lasciviously surely proud of himself and that tail dangling in between his legs.

“And how about you open your own practice with your own working hours?”

“That sounds perfect but it will take me years to actually build one for myself”

“I’m here for that Dr Mkhungo, I’ll take care of everything just tell me what you want and when you want it and I’ll take care of it. You’ve gave me what money cannot buy this is the least I can do”

“That sounds perfect” Again I’m not fighting him as he thought I would. No man I don’t have time for that nonsense, if he wants to spend money on me, fine and if he wants me to spend his money, again that’s great. I’m not going to feel bad for it because he knows my genuine feelings and he knows I’m not here for his money—well him being wealthy as he once said is a bonus.

“You’re not fighting me today, are you planning on killing me?”

“What no? I wouldn’t give you the signs if I want to kill you you’ll just see lightening striking you” my favorite laughter erupts and fills the entire room while his broad shoulders moves up and down. Oh man he’s gorgeous, ten years older than me yet he gets fine like wine. Yey they say age is just an alphabet, I’m joking a number. “It seems like a big deal to you that the journalists splashed us all over social media, why?”

He takes a deep breath “news travel fast Nokubonga and next thing back at home they’ll know about us and questions will erupt then we might find ourselves in a similar situation I was in before when you’ve made it clear you don’t want marriage right now which I understand but they won’t”

“What situation?”

“Uhm I had my first born when I was sixteen but his mother passed away giving birth and that’s when we met with Palesa. I was tainted at that time and empty, just teenagers who were being teenagers and she got pregnant for my family to hide that disgrace as they said I had to marry her. Which was something she didn’t want until she learnt about my family. At seventeen I was married and a father of two” hehake.

“And you were not condomising?”

“The thing is baby. . .that thing is painful” haibo, what is this? Is he listening to himself right now standing there shirtless and showing that honed and chiselled stomach is he hearing himself. And when he sees the look on my face he laughs softly “I’m joking. I was young and reckless but I’m clean. I can show you” and a his lips form a broad smile “I love you”

“What will happen when they find out about us back home? And what if they cannot accept me as your wife?”

“As my wife?” he creases his eyebrow and the corners of his lips stretching once again.

“You know what I mean Mongameli”

“As you said as my wife not their wife, I don’t care about what they say, we are going to cross the bridge when we get there” he always knows what to say at the right time then he strides towards me and sitting on a side table placing his hand on my face and trailing his fingers on my cheek “you have nothing to worry about but few things are going to change after that article, for you, media will want to know more about you, us and they’ll invade in our privacy which is something I hate about this but nothing is going to change here”

“What’s other few things?” I ask concerned.

“Uhm security”

“I don’t understand”

“You’re going to have body guards”

“I’m not comfortable with that” I mean it sounds tempting having people in all black following me around maybe for few days but everyday? I’m not okay with that. I still want to be that girl who runs into a store wearing the left shoe on the right and right on the left with a heavy hang over but suddenly my life is taking a drastic change all because of a man, hah.

“Okay this is something we cannot negotiate about

baby your safety at this moment is everything to me. I understand this all new to you but we are in this together”

“Okay does this mean I’m a celebrity now?” he can see the mirth in my eyes and he chuckles and looking deep into my eyes, beyond my soul and bones and what’s under my bones—what’s under my bones anyways?

“And this is why I’m always falling in love with you everyday you’re witty”

“I’m just wondering that’s all”

“It means you’re marrying to a royalty and one day you’re going to be a queen and my wife and a mother of my children. But you are still Dr Mkhungo, nothing has change”

“If you say so then but I’d love to revisit the conversation about body guards”

“I’ll take that I’m going to make us something to eat now, what do you feel like eating?”

“Granola”

“That’s not food”

“I’m on diet Mongameli”

“And since when you’re on diet and why? You’re perfect the way you are so what’s this baby?” and then why the sudden change of tone.

“Cataleya said my body is like Khloe Kardashian I don’t know who’s that but since she’s not Kim

Kardashian she might be the opposite of how Kim looks” and the way he just frowned I know he’s thinking I’m slowly growing a penis on my forehead.

“Google that person then and also I don’t care about any of that, I love you the way you are and I’m not making you granola we are going to have a full breakfast and that’s that” Oh shame he’s getting angry because I said I’m on diet and he just left the room after putting on his shirt and well his daughter is snoring here on my lap with her mouth slightly opened. I am left here all alone drowning in my thoughts and thinking how it might’ve been hard for him not being a normal teenager but having to become a husband and father in a short period of time. But then again his reckless landed him there. Why thinking about all of this is making me heart heavy? This is such a stupid organ.

I was actually enjoying my ten minutes fame and now I have to stay afloat in agitation and his family

that might not like me and come up with thousands of excuses and rules for us not to be together and now I'm going to have body guards following me around? The day my mother finds out about this she's going to drag her jawline on the floor. Ah worse I'm dating someone almost her age—this time I drank one bottle of cider and stayed drunk forever I'm telling you.

Ah!

As I am striding downstairs in a short dress that is holding me so tight and showing how my body was sculptured when God was elated I find his brothers there, they just arrived and making themselves comfortable on the couches there's no way I can turn back because Mnotho just saw me, "Mfazi ka mfethu" he calls me his brother's wife with a broad smile "we came here to see you" he announces. My feet are planted on the spot immobile not knowing what to do but just staring back at them. "MaMkhungo come here" he says and I have no choice but walking into the room and sitting next to

a man who's sulking because I said I'm on diet. Eh this one is dramatic I'm telling you. I grab a cushion and covering my things when he places his hand there underneath and catching a glance towards me. In a nanosecond I feel his hand traveling all the way up and lifting my dress but I tightly close my legs. Is he crazy? No wonder he had children when he was a teenager, what kind of a sex drive is this?

“We've come to check if you're okay after the newspapers wrote about you” I'm a celebrity I'm going to learn how to handle fame eventually, this is my life they shouldn't bother about me.

Ha ha ha, I wish it was so easy shame. I'm actually drowning in sorrow after the information I had to take in.

“I'm okay” I tell them honestly but guess what? Their brother's hand is attempting on separating my legs and his warmth is spreading through me. I press my thighs together harder and he glances at

me with his eyes searing through me and a roguish smirk.

“Okay as long as it didn’t affect you in anyway because we were worried about that but from now we will make sure that we keep you safe, we are sorry about this maLanga, Sodi” no one finds joy in praising my clan names like Melusi and no one finds the same joy in making me squirm like his brother in making all attempts to finger fuck me here and now. I shift away from him and he comes closer. I try removing his hand and he puts it back on top of my thigh and gives me a look once again dancing with lust and need. “And we wanted to thank you for what you did last night my brother has been talking about it” he continues saying.

“We are family” I smile and then clear my throat because Kungawo’s hands are now resting in between my thighs one move and he’ll have all access he needs “do you want something to drink?”

I ask them and they nod their heads at once. This is my final escape. I get up from the couch and walking out of the room and pulling my dress down. My breathing has hitched. I'm shamelessly horny and this wanton behaviors is absolutely unacceptable.

Okay but why do I want him so bad?—The injection was actually a great idea. When is my date again? I don't remember but soon.

I'm opening the fridge when I feel his groin pressing against me and my hands now clasped against the fridge that looks like the rest of the cabinets and I turn to smirk at him before he sniff my hair and trail his nose from my hair to my neck and gently start to suck there. I cannot move. But he's dry humping against me causing a deep moan to elicit.

“Mongameli” I call him out breathlessly.

“Nokubonga”

“Stop it!”

“I need you so bad baby” he says still moving against my buttocks and his breath fanning down my neck.

“Be fast” I instruct him and he a nanosecond by dress has been lifted up and he separates my legs with his, massaging my buttocks, stroking before a slap lands there making me gasp for air.

“Kungawo!” I call him as my body jolts.

“Hmmm”

“Inside me, now!” he enters into my sex in one swift move. Warm, wet, tight and soft. He hold my hands for a few seconds and my eyes are closed, completely lost in our ecstatic connection. I push against him urging him to move with my body. He

withdraws and spears into me, first slowly, then picking up my rhythm and bending me over until I'm touching my painted toes, moving with him, pushing against him and countering his movements.

“Baby stop, I'll come way to quickly!” he hisses. I cannot stop.

His heavy balls smack against my now swollen clit repeatedly. Even the sound of it renews my arousal, an intimate connection, sound of our rhythm. Then the rim of the crown of his erection scrape and kiss my tender spot buried deep inside me bringing me to the brink of orgasm.

“Fuck!” he hiss through his gritted teeth and spreading my legs wider, pounding deeper into me, caressing pleasure point and thrusting into the embrace of my tight sex to get lost in a mind-blowing pleasure. I arch my head back and my body tenses, taut under the assaults of his relentless

storm of my drives.

“Siyahamba ke nizosala lapho nama fuck!” I hear Mnotho saying that they’re already leaving and we should stay behind with our “fucks” and at this moment I don’t care whether they’re aware that we are having sex or not. But I want to land in a world on orgasm and pleasure.

I hold onto to my toes and they almost fall off with my body trembling and my inner muscles of my sex envelopes him harder then I feel his body jerks and a deep animalistic shout comes, forgotten there are people in this house. Then I feel his manhood tending as his ejaculation release a wrenching orgasm. When the last jolts comes he pulls out and pull me up pressing me against the fridge again after he turned me around wrapping my one leg around his waist and this time thrusting his fingers inside me. “Look at me” he says after pausing his necromancy and I look at his eyes then he smirks

before he pounds me with his fingers faster and harder and my one leg around his waist succumb and falls to the cold tiles yet I'm standing on my tippy toes "Nokubonga look at me!" he says when my eyes were closing again. I snap them open and he circles my clit when I'm about to close them again he pauses. What the fuck! "Look at me!" I look at him and now he's pounding harder than before and so hard making my mind run around a riot. Our eyes connected and this time I don't dare flutter them close. Then one of his hand circles me around my neck tightening gently, choking me while his fingers are doing magic in between my legs. I'm being choked and finger fucked all at once and I cannot close my eyes. "I love you. All of you from the follicle of your hair to your toes, uyezwa Nokubonga" I cannot utter words. My speaking capacity is not working and all I can do it rapidly nodding and feeling a wave of pleasure attacking me at once and waterfalls run down my legs. I'm staring deep into his eyes yet he's not stopping. My heart is beating beyond my rib cage. "If I dare hear you talking about diet I'm going to fuck you worse

than this do you hear me?”

“Hmmm” Then he pause and brings my shuddering body against his, wrapping me around his arms so tight and I start to cry. Gripping him so closer to me and nuzzling on his neck. I don’t know if I’m crying from the amount of pleasure I just received or what he said to me or because everyday it’s a new revelation that nothing Kungawo will ever do that will change how I feel about him.

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I wanted to take this time and apologize for a mistake I made in my unedited insert yesterday regarding to Kungawo’s age.

I love you, be safe, we’ll meet in Monday

[03/02, 07:16] : LOVE ON DEMAND

YOLOKAZI

I thought I was going to wake up to what I call my man and my children singing happy birthday with adorable smiles on their faces making me hysterically cry like I just lost a husband while they place a gigantic cake on my lap but well I woke up to an empty side of bed and the sun rays escaping through the windows and blinding me.

My phone is buzzing with notifications though from different people posting my pictures on every social media and brands who've sent me gifts to be delivered—I've become that person. After I was on front pages, we decided to just post on social media making things official and now I get invited to events inclusively as a guest and some brands asking me to be their brand ambassador, there was a lot of negativity being thrown my way as well not

that I give chicken about it when they said I'm the reason behind Kungawo's divorce.

Well some were saying I'm in this for money and I'm one of those narrow minded women that was until I posted a picture in my work uniform and looking stunning that was also controversial. I learnt that social media is a very negative space and now it made so much sense why the whole family was fussing about it and endlessly calling to check if I was okay. Of course the idea of being on front pages, having my followers increasing every second, having talk shows talking about me and complimenting my looks was elating that's what we all dream of as young girls. To be famous, to be known, to be on a magazine blah blah blah it's an endless list but we are never taught about the consequences of being in a lime lights. Everyone wants to portray it like it's only glitz and glamour but no one wants to take a stand and talk about how it has affected so many people emotionally. More especially when you're beautiful woman in

this country people always feel for you to be successful there's always a man behind it. A bles ser or anything because we have this mentality that woman needs a man to make its ridiculous honestly.

But with me though, I don't care who says what about me, it doesn't bother me and it doesn't take away any money from my account.

I stride to the living room to find Sarah looking sophisticated as always, she's such perfection and she's wearing a white dress with thin strap tied legged heel "you better go take a bath, we have a make artist on the way and get yourself ready" she announces and suddenly I'm bubbling with elation but where is my husband and kids?

I already know something has been planned because for one I'm wearing all white as if I'm my twin sister and I look extremely beguiling unless if

they're going to sacrifice me since we are looking like angels that it will make perfect sense. We are in a backseat with a my queen who's extremely exuberant like this is her birthday and she gave me diamond earrings and necklace like a real thing that I could sell for millions when I go broke.

I've been warming up to this being driven around and having body guards following me idea—I don't like it all and most of the time that's one thing we are always fighting about with my man who's nowhere around on my birthday and he wants me to marry him? He he he.

We drive through a beautiful lush greenery garden and there's already cars all over the place and when we get off the car my dearest twin sister also gets off on another car and looking exquisite, she's giving birth just next month and I am planning to surprise her with a baby shower even though she made it clear that she doesn't want one. "Oh my

look at you” I say to her as we stride towards each other meeting half way, she hardly goes out now and always in her house and staring into her man’s eyes, they’re in love really.

“You look so beautiful, do you have an idea what’s happening?” she whispers in my ear and I shake my head in disagreement before Lulama comes towards me giving me a gigantic hug. I know I’m always surrounded by beautiful women all the damn time but this one, she takes the trophy for me, she’s the most gorgeous human I’ve ever met almost unreal and she look absolutely gorgeous in this asymmetric white dress and animal print high knee boots with dramatic gold earrings.

When we walk through a floral gate everyone shouts at once “surprise!” and looking absolutely gorgeous in white.

Oh my

Not that I'm surprised that they threw me a birthday party but I'm more astounded by how beautiful it looks and how they made these into two parts. On my side is a cherry blossom theme with a tree and everything looking so simple yet elegant and on the side that belongs to Kwanda whom I shared a womb with it's all white from the flower wall to the balloons and everything, we are celebrating both her birthday and baby shower at once, damn Mongezi beat me at it.

This is absolutely beautiful and this is the first time I'm having a birthday party in my life where people sing for me with beautiful smiles on their faces and sounding so horrible while at it but it makes me happy. When he walks towards me I completely forget that I was angry because he was not on my side of the bed this morning and I throw myself in his arms as he welcomes me warmly we have cameras flashing on our faces as I look up at him with a smile while he wipes my tears.

“You cry a lot these days huh?” Oh well yes I do for unnecessary reasons “happy birthday muntuza wami” his delicate fingers are brushing against the bottom of my eyes “your make up is not coming out” this man, this is waterproof what’s he thinking?

We both chuckle under our breathes as he kisses both my eyes and taking my hand where everyone else is hugging and kissing me and leading me on the chair while my sister is on the other side, we facing each other with our eye balls drowning in salty water beads.

My mother is making a speech and she looks impeccable and nothing warms my heart as seeing her in such a great space well she has a glass of champagne in her hand she winks towards me then Kwanda after that what comes out from her mouth is nothing but embarrassment and everyone is sharing gales of laughter—It’s all beautiful seeing all of us here so blended and I’m glad “hmm” is no

where in sight because I was going to kill her.

They're a lot of presents there under the cherry blossom tree that's used as part of my decoration they belong to me and then Kwanda has a huge teddy bear with presents next to it.

Finally I get to perk up from this chair and engage with everyone with a glass of alcohol in my hand and that's until Muzi stands on stage with his guitar and microphone stand and clearing his throat immediately we all pause doing what we were doing and turn towards him.

This should be my favorite part of the day!

When he opens his mouth and starts singing so beautifully and heart soothing and sultry Kungawo takes my hand leading me to the dance floor lacing his hand around my waist and I look up at him as

we move to the rhythm of the perfect melody our bodies in sync “What did you buy for me as a gift?” I ask him deeply staring in his eyes and he looks down between his pants then at me with a mischievous smirk and I laugh slightly and shaking my head “you’re the most nastiest man I’ve ever met in my life Mongameli”

“I can’t get enough of you” he smiles “and when you’re unwrapping your gifts you will find mines hopefully you’ll love it”

“I know I love it and thank you so much for all of this it means so much”

“You have Onalenna and Khethelo to thank as well because they helped us pulled this one otherwise it would’ve been a disaster” he states and I look towards my friends whom are dancing with their men. Everyone is on the dance floor moving to the rhythm of the music and having fun. “I love you” he

says.

“Yes”

He frowns at me bewildered and well if he didn't leave me alone this morning he would've seen my finger or if he's paying attention to my hands and not my face when the song ends I step away from him and winking leaving him standing there baffled and walking towards the ladies we've gathered all together as we clap when the song ends and honestly speaking I'm not that much of a person who cares about this kind of genre that my brother in law sings because sometimes it makes you drown in your thoughts and you finally find yourself in a darkness but with him—there's something healing about him.

I look towards Mongameli who has beer in his hands and he seems deep in thoughts surely thinking what I meant by my “yes” I'll leave him to

figuring it out alone.

The music is throbbing loudly on the sound system and I'm hiding my ring finger because I don't want anyone knowing about this until that man who keeps stealing glances towards me with a sphinx like look and narrowing his eyebrows figure it all out.

Lulama gets up so quickly from her chair screaming this her husband's song and instantly when Bambatha sees her, he smiles broadly and taking her hand and dancing as Blaq Diamond sings loudly.

We watch them dancing and dry humping each other and they're such an amazing couple.

"Bhuti!" Kwanda just screamed and standing on her feet with her eyes all out "I don't know if I just spilled my drink or I urinated myself I don't know what's happening and I'm in pain" she says and

then she starts crying and Mongezi holds her hand “I’m in labour. What the fuck? No ways” she screams attempting on going back to take a sit. For what reason? To run away from giving birth. Now we are all fussing over her. “I don’t want to give birth Mongezi. I didn’t have sex while conceiving this baby. I’m so scared” At this moment I should be laughing like Bongeziwe but I can’t because this my sister who seems to have lost her mind because of fear, of having to push a head out of her vagina, maybe.

“MaMkhungo”

And Kwanda starts hysterically crying “that’s how I got pregnant you called me like that Mongezi, you called me exactly like that” I can longer hold back my laughter at this moment I just explode as we’re taking her to the car and Mongezi looks at us and shaking his head pressing his lips hard from laughing.

“I want you to stay calm baby, we are going to be just fine” Mongezi says to her as they get on the backseat of the car and we all rush on separate cars following them behind. Basically everyone is leaving now. And I’m wondering how is my sister screaming in that car. I’ve chose to be in the backseat while we have Muzi in the front and Mongameli keeps stealing glances at every chance. That “yes” really left him in turbulence of thoughts I’m telling you.

In less than a moment we are filling the private hospital and pacing up and down not hearing anything from the doctors or anyone for that matter. Mongezi went with my sister in the labour ward and my mother is praying underneath her breath, basically there’s drama happening here. Everyone demanding answers from the doctors and we have been warned more than three time to keep it low because these men are sonorously shouting in anger and they’re going to turn into Sams on any

time from now.

After what felt like an eternity Mongezi walks into the room wearing blue scrubs I cannot read his face, he's always impassive "there's two of them" he announces "the doctors couldn't see the second one during scans but we have two boys" he announces and I just open and close my mouth in total shock "I have sons" he winces under his breath.

You're saying all along Kwanda was carrying twins?
That's crazy.

Omg I hope this doesn't mean one day I'm also going to give birth to twins because I'll slice off my own vagina.

The room erupts with celebration and noises and clapping of hands, they were born on their mother's

birthday —they're such mommy's boys and I'm so excited with being an aunt honestly.

“Can we see them?” Bongeziwe

“No not yet and including Kwanda, but tomorrow sure you'll meet my sons. I'm a father of two boys” we will never hear the end of this brag I'm telling you “I have to go back to my wife and my sons, thank you guys for being here it means a lot” Oh he's such a braggart this one.

When we get home the moment I close the door behind us he pins me against the wall and looking deep into my eyes and his are glossy, what's going on? Then he pins my hands on top of my head and when he sees the diamond on my finger his chest heaven up and down before averting his eyes towards me again with his breathing ragged.

“Mongameli?” I call out for him.

“You were saying yes you’ll marry me?” his voice is lodged on his throat. I cannot understand his emotion but I can see a bit of lust there in his eyes. “You’re going to marry me Nokubonga?”

“Yes” I respond to him and breathe “I want to marry you. I thought about it and I’ve made up my mind. I choose to love you for the rest of my life if you don’t fuck this up of course” The smell of lust fills the room and bouncing between the both of us. “And so yes Mongameli I’m going to marry you”

His nostrils flare “you want to marry me?” and why it sounds like he doesn’t believe me when I say this “sometimes I feel like I’m not worthy of you which is why that day when you said you don’t want to marry me now it was easily acceptable than hearing you saying you want to marry me”

“Why?”

“Because I’m fucked up. I’ve fucked up so many times in my life and I’m so scared of doing the same with you. I know I love you but sometimes I don’t know how to be the right man for you”

“I don’t want perfection from you. I want you as fucked up as you are. I don’t want you to pretend that you’re perfect. You’re the right man for me and I’m going to marry you”

“You will marry me?”

“Yes baby”

“I love you so much”

“I love you too”

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We are going to see Kwanda and her sons today at the hospital and I still cannot believe that all along she was carrying twins.

I am actually engaged now.

I check my purse to see if everything I'm going to need is here, I'm planning on unwrapping my gifts today when I come back from the hospital when my card falls out of my purse. I grab it quickly and checking my date and it was actually two months ago. Wait, wait, wait. What's this supposed to mean? I missed my injection?

My head starts to scream all at once. Okay let me

calculate when was the last time I used condoms.

You don't use condoms, my subconscious response to me and my heart is now thundering against my chest threatening to come out of my mouth. Okay but that doesn't mean anything. I mean the injection stays in your body for too long.

"Baby are you ready to go?" Kungawo asks coming out of the closet and I quickly hide my card "what was that?" he asks me.

"Nothing" I quickly response.

"What's going on you look pale"

"Pale? Hah no, not even" I chuckle "I'm fine perfectly fine and not pregn. . .and not pale" he attentively looks at me and I want to throw this purse on his

face for observing me so much, nxah. Why is he not listening when I say I'm fine.

I'm glad when his phone rings "Mama" he answers the call but his eyes are still fixated on me "Oh she's here, let me put you on loudspeaker"

I swallow the denim on my throat and smiling up at him as he puts the phone on speaker "mama" I smile as if she can see me.

"We were eating gigantic mangoes in my dream maLanga do both of you want to tell me something with Mongameli?"

"Oh no mama there's nothing" I respond

"Okay maybe it's the other wives, did you get my gift nana and sorry I couldn't be there yesterday"

“Ewe mama but I haven’t opened it”

“Okay ke sana lwami, bye” she says then hang up and Kungawo is looking at me with rapid fire gaze before he throws his phone on the bed.

“You’re pregnant Nokubonga” he furrows his eyebrows.

What the fuck, no!

“No I’m not”

“I was not asking you but I’m telling you that you’re pregnant”

“I’m on injection” I defend

He takes my purse from me and digging from it and coming back with my card looking at it before he looks at me. “You’re pregnant Nokubonga” he tells me again “Is this why you want to marry me now? It’s not because you genuinely just want to marry me”

“I’d really appreciate it if you can ask me that again so you can see what will happen to you Kungawo”

“Having children now was not part of the plan”

“What was the plan then? Fucking me every single night and expect some miracle to happen after that? Is that what you’re saying? Did I fuck myself and made myself pregnant? We are not even sure if I’m pregnant for heaven sake”

“You mind your tone”

“Oh fuck you” I seethe. He wants to stand there and tell me I’m trying to trap him with a baby? Did I lay on the bed while he watched me using his penis.

“You can take your ring, I don’t give chicken shit” I throw it at him and it hits his lip and starts to bleed. He looks at me and touching his bleeding lip then he walks out of the room.

I didn’t mean to do that!

What’s wrong with me?

But he started.

I grab my purse and walking out of the room to find the rascals in the living room “where is your father?” I ask them.

“Oh he just walked out, he didn’t speak to us and

looked livid” Wanele tells me.

Mxm!

[03/02, 07:16] : LOVE ON DEMAND

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YOLOKAZI

I really wanted to go and see my nephews today but the sudden thought of having to hold a baby and look at their adorable faces looking so serene like they will never chew on their toes one day or being caught sleeping in a closet, that idea scared me, knowing there’s really a high possibility of being pregnant with a man who left from the morning and not yet back home and the night is already approaching outside made me sick in the stomach—I don’t even want to take a look at the

card anymore because the more I allow that thought to invade my mind it makes the matter worse for me. I can feel horror stricken and my tongue stops producing saliva.

I have these rascals endlessly knocking on my door regardless of telling them that I'm okay. I should be gone by now, gone home with my mother or at my apartment with my friends, well they might be with their men, sigh. But I shouldn't be here, that's one thing for sure but here I am with tears flooding in my eyes, Oh yes me, I'm crying in a guest room.

Another annoying knock comes from the door "Mama" that's Cataleya, she never gives up this one until she gets what she wants and then she breathes "Utata said I should make sure that you're okay, he just called" she says on the other side.

"Go tell him to fuck himself Cataleya!" I shout from the inside. I don't know where is that enrage coming

from because I was weeping like a widow but when her father gets here I'm going to. . .I won't do anything, I already feel like drinking liquid soap for hitting him with a ring. There I was wrong I shouldn't have done that.

I hear Cataleya gasping on the other side of the door so dramatically "should I really say that mama because I can edit your words for you. Remember I'm a writer" Oh my God this child is going to drive me crazy. Everyone here wants to see me going crazy I'm telling you. If it's not her father then it's her, who said she must edit words for me? "Mama" she calls me again and I ignore her "I know that you're angry but I want you to know that tata is happy with you" that all she says before I can hear her footsteps fading then she comes back again. "Mama" she calls me again.

I breathe out and asking that one in heaven to give me strength, "Cataleya"

“I love you” she says for the first time ever, she has never said this before to me. I get off the bed and my feet propelling me towards the door and I wrench it open. I look at her as she smiles at me warmly with glossy eyes then I take her into my arms and embracing her “please don’t leave” she begs with a trembling tone.

“I’m not leaving stop crying, I love you too” I tell her and then she pulls away from me and wiping her tears, she’s such a beaut. But took most of her genes from her father, I don’t know anything about her mother and for me personally it’s better that way, I’ve already involved myself in shoes that doesn’t fit and now here I am with possibilities of being pregnant with a man who’s not home surely somewhere with a broken lip.

“Do you want something to eat, Wanele and I cooked pasta dad taught us?” she asks me with

elation. I don't feel like eating because I'm just full from the morning and now what's the time? Oh it just blinked eight pm. And he's not yet back.

I decide to go down stairs with her and they hand me a bowl full of creamy pasta it looks and smell delicious but eating it? My throat is blocked and I cannot swallow. I shouldn't be worried about Mongameli right? I shouldn't be bothered about him. But I am that maybe he bled from his lip and died. Okay that's highly impossible because it was just a tiny scar.

But where is he?

We sit with the children in the living room and my son is trying to make me laugh until they both choose to come snuggle next to me with a cup of hot chocolate and marshmallows while we watch some series on Netflix that Cataleya recommended.

A door opens and my heart drops to my stomach before he can appear from the corridor and now the time just blinked twelve am. I hear his loud singing and a drunken voice stumbling everywhere before he appears being held by Palesa.

This is wow, this is whoa, this is great. A man who was shedding tears wanting me to marry him ran to his ex wife and left me with two of his big head children.

I sit on the couch immobile and if it was any other days I would be fighting. Oh Jesus I'm always advising people to throw punches like wrestling yet here I am watching my man holding onto another woman unable to walk and smelling like whiskey and nicotine. Until the one who was pretending to be my friend makes him sit on the couch and turning to me "It's not what you think Yolokazi" she says to me in a lower tone. I just sit here not saying

anything, no words, my speech is paralyzed.

“Pales e!” Kungawo shouts “You see right there is the woman we spoke about. I will never love you the way I love Nokubonga, in fact I never loved you. Nokubonga has my mind, soul, heart and everything else that belongs to me” he says dragging his voice from his throat.

“Go to bed!” I say to Cataleya and Wanele whom wish they can slit their father into two and throw him in the oven. “Go to bed” I repeat again and they both get up leaving the room that’s looming with total silence.

“I was at the restaurant. . .his restaurant and he was alone in the corner drinking from the morning until he was drunk so I drove him home” she starts explaining “nothing happened and I was with my boyfriend, he’s waiting for me outside” she continues.

“Okay” that all that rolls out of my mouth.

“Look Yolokazi you heard what he just said. Remember that day when we spoke? I meant every word. Kungawo will never love anyone as much as he loves you. And one day I hope you see that. Again nothing happened and goodnight” she smiles at me and turn to walk out and then I call her.

“Thank you” I smile.

“No problem, I know you would’ve done the same for me and remember what I just told you, this man is madly in love with you” she winks then walk out of the room and I’m left with Kungawo who’s now looking at me and I stride towards him and straddling on his lap. Tomorrow I’m going to call my father who doesn’t want me because of morals blah blah and ask him to pray for me. I don’t want him to

be in my life I just want him to do exorcism since I'm possessed.

He places his hand on my hips and mines are not on his face "give me one reason why I shouldn't strangle you to death right here and now Mongameli?" I ask him in a soft tone with tears at the corners on my lip "Just one reason and I'm going to let you go"

"Because we are in love with each other" I can see the bruise on his lip as he darts his eyes between mines while he smells like a brewery "about what I said I'm sorry" he apologizes "The idea of having children always scared me. I never wanted them for my personal reasons but I made that mistake once and made it again but this time it doesn't feel like a mistake. It feels like it had to happen. I wasn't a father to my children the way I am now until you came into my life. I wasn't present because of self loathing and I somehow blamed them for how

things turned out for me”

“But they love you so much Kungawo”

“I know at that time I couldn’t love my own children they way I have to. I’ve learnt to love them now. They’re my everything and I will lay my life for them. The reason why I never wanted to have children it’s because I didn’t want them to grow up like me” he breathes out, he’s venting because he’s drunk

“From the time I was born my life was planned out. That how it was for each and everyone of us. We grew up having to be perfect because they injected the idea of being kings one day in our minds. I had to be prim and proper and perfect. We were never allowed to have some sort of imperfections. We grew up having to impress my father and having to prove that we were worthy of being on the throne one day. I hated it so much. I think that’s one of the reasons I always want to be perfect for you. I grew up knowing I have to be perfect. Growing up at

home everything was earned. You had to prove you're worthy of something for you to have it. I was never worthy of anything. Muzi got to be a son to my father the day he died when he sang his favorite song until he took his last breath, that's when he got to be his son" he touches my face "One day I just wanted to have a taste of imperfection and I became a father, from there on I was just fucked up. I didn't want to screw up but I'll end up making the matter even worse than it was"

"Why you never told me this?"

"Tell you what? That the sight of my children made me angry because I feel like they snatch away a part of my freedom when it was not their fault but me being irresponsible?" he chuckles sardonically "I don't deserve you Nokubonga"

"Are you saying you don't want this baby with me?"
I'm not even sure if I'm pregnant.

“I want everything with you but I want you to know that I’ve never been always been a perfect father. If we are pregnant of course I may mess this up but please don’t leave me when I do. I want to be a better husband and come out of this self loathing and be a better man. I fucked up”

“You don’t know how much you fucked up”

“I’m sorry” I just look at him and leave sitting him like that with glossy eyes. No just because he chose to open about to me about his issues doesn’t make everything right. This man left me here the whole day and came back drunk, tomorrow morning he may not be remembering any of this conversation.

I decide to sleep in one of the guest room again and getting under the duvets and soaking my pillows. This is me now. I’m possessed with

demons and I'm the under the spell.

I'm being awoken by a knock coming from the outside, it's a soft knock that surely should be Cataleya because she knows I've been here since yesterday morning but when I open the door it's him with a wrinkled shirt from yesterday and standing here looking at me with pain in his eyes. "You didn't sleep in our bedroom" Is he asking me or telling me?

"Your bedroom"

"Ours Nokubonga"

"What do you want? To accuse me of trapping you with what this time?" he hangs his head low and clears his throat. I have forgiven him. Yes once you know how penis tastes like then you won't dare judge me.

“Nothing”

“Then why are you here? What do you want?”

“I want you to forgive me”

“I forgave you”

His eyes widen with disbelief “I love you”

“Tell me something I don’t know”

He gapes “You’re making this hard for me”

“Hmm”

“Have you unwrapped your gifts?”

“No”

“When are you. . .”

“When I come back from the doctor to find out that I’m not pregnant”

“I’ve been throwing up”

“Must be nice”

“You don’t understand what I’m trying to say don’t you? I’m very sensitive when it comes to smell and I have a toothache”

“I’m not pregnant Kungawo and if you don’t leave my face now I’m going to bruise your whole face”

he looks at me then smiles before throwing his hands in the air succumbing.

“I’m sorry for what I said and I’m going to give you your space, whatever you want call me”

I don’t want anything.

In fact why I’m grumpy?

[03/02, 07:16] : LOVE ON DEMAND

35

KAYISE

My journey to fatherhood hasn’t been the easy one and I think these are the conversations we tend to run away from.

We are both clueless about what it means becoming parents, we are given different advices on what to do and what not do without people understanding that what worked for you might not work for us —regardless of having a hard time navigating the whole process of having a pregnant girlfriend I've not, not even once thought about walking away from because at the end I know it's all worth it, the paroxysm and arguments it's all worth it.

Most times she always give me assurance too that I also matter, everything might be centering around her but she always make me feel as much special, she understands where are my fears coming from as much as I understand hers.

I don't know how many times this woman have dumped me for something so unnecessary like not being able to buy her chicken wings in the early hours of the morning or not scooping her while

she's sleeping. Her insecurities about her body tend to grow everyday because her body is also having changes as well and adjusting and accommodating the little human growing inside her. But I'm falling in love with her everyday. I'm falling in love with those stripes around her stomach and buttocks, I'm falling in love with her swollen nose and now much fuller lips.

When she walks in a room full of people wearing nude and brown while they're balloons everywhere across the room matching the entire decoration exactly as they've planned for her baby shower she looks at me twisting her lips into a scowl to stop them from trembling while tears are crowding her eyes, she looks so beautiful in that dress that shows her shoulders, it's long and holds her perfectly showing her belly bump and literally in the next two weeks we'll have a little human with tiny hands and sweet cries in our hands. "I didn't expect this" she says and now crying fanning her face after everyone yelled "surprise" all at once and joviality

noises erupts and clapping of hands in jubilation. We are having another celebration, women seems to like it, I think that gender loves everything that will have them getting gifts and be the center of attention.

Last time my sister went straight into labour and gave birth to two beautiful boys whom are Lesedi Roho and Kgotlelelo Rafiki Mcelu, I don't know why the Sesotho names, is that Sotho or Tswana?

Well it sounds the same to me. They're adorable things that looks like their father.

When she walks up to me my heart beat accelerate even today she still manages to snatch my soul and breath away from me and put it inside her bag and keep it, walking around freely with it. I wrap my arms around her as she looks up at me "I thought we spoke about you wearing high heel shoes" I say to her in a soft tone, she loves risking. Why would you wear high heel shoes when you're pregnant,

she actually loves those that wrap her legs around with ropes but it also make her feet look impeccably beautiful.

“Nothing is going to happen to me when you’re around Kayise” she smiles and her teeth appears behind the glossy painted lips then she’s taken away from me to the table and men are asked to leave for at least an hour then come back later. I don’t know for what reason but we are leaving and going to Bambatha’s house —it will be my very first time there yet we are brothers but he has managed to keep his private life very private, a famous business man who’ve knocked at all door and made it but we’ve never caught a glimpse of his personal life on the media.

Upon arriving at his house I’m mind blown about how beautiful is his and how much money he makes for a living when he’s living luxury, he’s humble that’s one thing about him and never brags

about what he has maybe it's because of his upbringing since he was adopted but he's down to earth. We make our way to the living room following each other as he welcomes us warmly to his home.

The live walnut tree inspires many elements of the contemporary living space, influencing texture and colour choices. A criss-cross pattern fills the rug, like the great intertwined limbs of the tree, and a modern chandelier branches out above it. A patinated brass fireplace strikes a lavish note beneath walnut wood media cabinets.

“Okay since my wife is not around then I'll have to be a great host anyone wants something to drink?” Bambatha asks us as we'll settle around the walnut living with wonderful view.

“I'm going to have beer” Bongeziwe answers first.

“Okay so the kitchen is on your first right and you can get yourself beer” Bambatha responds to him and then grins making himself comfortable on the couch leaning backwards, didn’t he say he was going to be a great host? Laughter has fill the entire room before his wonderful helper attend us and then silence falls into the room.

“Have you got any leads with whom killed Tumelo since you said you were going to handle it?” Avulele asks Bambatha who’s eating amadumbe and raw chillies. Speaking of her I remember finding out about her death and going to her funeral, it was glum surely the most heart breaking thing I’ve ever seen having to see her mother and her family that shattered but I stood there and just indifferent because really what was I supposed to feel about my dead sister whom I once fucked? I thought some sort of emotion was going to wash over me but then again nothing.

“Oh that” Bambatha responds like we are talking about a soccer match or something “I found him” he responds chewing and leaning forward “But no one will ever find him”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Bongeziwe frowns perplexed. The answer to this question is so lucid, very.

Bambatha flashes his teeth devilry and then chew from the raw chillies and gets up from the couch “whatever that you have in your mind, I mean that” he responds and then disappears somewhere leaving us eyeballing each other. And he comes back carrying a ceramic bowl and returning back to his seat “well he killed someone from my family and attacked Mongezi’s wife what was I supposed to do?” Mongezi couldn’t make it because they’re still at the hospital with their sons since they were premature so the doctors are still keeping a close eye on them.

“You killed him?” Avulele

“Ay man don’t be stupid you already know an answer to that” Bongeziwe answers him “I’m not trying to offend you Bambatha or anything like that but I want to know have you done anything like this before? I mean killing of course”

“It depends on why you’re asking question”
Bambatha responds.

“I just want to know”

“I’m in a business world so you either murder or get murdered. No one wants to talk about that, you can be a saint and read a bible but you know how messy it gets here. We fight over deals. We fight over meaningless things and what we need to do? Protect our wives and children. I’ve killed before, I

don't regret it because I was doing it for my wife now when it comes to that woman even you, I can pull a trigger in between your forehead without remorse or regret but with a smile on my face. Because of the love I have for her. My mind, my soul, my heart, my body all belongs to her. I lay my life on her feet”

“That sounds like obsession to me” Avulele responds and taking a sip from his beer. What the fuck is he talking about? Are you telling me he doesn't feel the same for his wife? Because I'd take a bullet for that woman who wakes me up at three am wanting pie even if she was the one holding the gun.

“What he feels for his wife is pretty much what I feel for Yolokazi. That woman gave me more reasons to be happy to wake up every morning to breathe to be grateful that I'm breathing” Kungawo says “and what Bambatha is saying about the business world

is totally true, I'm not entirely wealthy as he is but it's crazy I'm sure Bongeziwe can agree to this”

“Basically we are peasants to Bambatha”
Bongeziwe jokes and we laugh loudly.

“Money is nothing without humanity, love and happiness. All these material stuff means nothing when Lulama Gum is not by my side”

“Do you literally call her by her full names every time?”

“From the time we actually met, she was helping out her aunt at work and I found her drinking water” he laughs as if he remembers that day vividly “and she choked. I don't really know if I caught her off guard but she coughed rapidly in that moment I knew I want to marry her, I wanted to make love to her than just fucking until this one time she came to my

house and sat on my lap that day I knew I had to fuck her some day”

“You know instantly about your intentions when it comes to a woman. It’s crazy when I hear some guys say they waited for four years to decide on marriage. I knew I couldn’t go another day without Onalenna being my wife” Oh so this conversation went from killing people to marriage, wonderful. Do you really know instantly that you want to marry someone? Now that they’ve raised this topic I totally see what they’re saying. It’s more like being afraid of losing the person you’re in love with. Afraid that someone can snatch them away from you, I’m not saying marriage means they’re tied up to you for a lifetime.

“Exactly man you just know even when she’s pregnant, you know exactly, you can feel it”
Bambatha says and opening his beer “I cannot explain it but you feel it”

“Okay then what happens when you fall out of love with someone you married to?” Avulele asks and we all eye him. Ah, ah, ah.

“Are you falling out?” Bongeziwe

“I don’t know” he winces “since the pregnancy things changed man”

“And that happens man but that doesn’t mean you’re falling out of love. Both you and your woman are still adjusting into this new space, environment or whatever you want to call because now it’s not only about you and her but it’s about the human you’re bringing into the world. Women have hormones during pregnancy and us men sometimes we don’t really understand because it’s all new to us which is why sometimes this can either be your fall out or build up it depends”

Bambatha is wise, he's that one person you just want to sit down and listen to him talking and feed you with knowledge. "Obviously the sex is now different, it's either she's more sexually active than you are or she's not sexually active at all, she doesn't want to do it. With Leago my wife didn't even want me to touch her, I was her least favorite person but I understood. I was the reason she found herself in that situation. I was the reason her favorite things she loved eating made her nauseous. I was the reason some of her favorite clothes didn't fit. The least I could do is to be there and assure her I wasn't going anywhere. Anyways when Leago was two months she got pregnant again, we don't know how that happened because the doctors normally say it's impossible but when she was carrying our second son she was more active than I am. In the middle of the night coming from a meeting and exhausted she'll wake me up, she'd even get on top so I don't have to do the work. So with all these changes and transformations the least we can do is be supportive, give them assurance and love them because you're as

responsible for the pregnancy”

“This is deep” Kungawo chuckles and takes a sharp intake of breath “Yolokazi is pregnant but don’t want to admit as we speak I am not sleeping at my house but one of my apartments because she doesn’t want me near her or the children, that woman loves my children more than I ever did”

“It’s very rare finding someone who can have a relationship with your children man, that’s your one there. My daughter didn’t like Onalenna because she felt she was taking her space but Onalenna still loved her as her own, she loved her as though she was her mother” Bongeziwe.

“Ah this conversation just made me realize that I actually love my wife. This was refreshing man”
Avulele

“You see as men we can either build or break each other. If it was someone else the moment you said you’re falling out with your wife I wouldn’t have asked why you’re feeling that way but instantly I would’ve said I’m going to find someone for you who can help you release your stress. We need to be careful of who we surround ourselves with. It’s fun and cool bragging about how many women you’ve slept with but imagine bragging about one woman, one woman who brings the moon into your palms? Imagine walking confidently in a room with that woman and no one can disrespect her because you don’t respect her like that. Temptations are there, always. But are they worth it? A man cheat because he wants to not because it was a mistake or because it was a temptation. You take her number, you call her, you meet her at the hotel, you lie to your wife about your whereabouts, does that still sound like a mistake? The fuck not” Bambatha says.

“Why are you attacking us?” I laugh asking him and

laughter erupts in a room. Why is he spitting like this though.

“This conversation is so intense that I keep drinking from an empty bottle of beer not paying attention” Kungawo laughs.

Bambatha shrugs his shoulders “but then again we are people and we are different and again I killed that guy”

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36

YOLOKAZI

We had another baby shower that was aesthetically pleasing with all shades of brown and Khethelo looks so beautiful and gracing us in her high heel

shoes, walking so perfectly like her stomach is not humongous and now I'm driving back home, the reason why that man kept pestering me about opening my gift is because he bought me a sport car that I saw when we stopped by a robot and complimented it—it was really beautiful really and screams everything luxe, and yes he bought me red in color with a standing horse at the front and it's small like a toy.

After that day he knocked in a guest room we had another argument about the possibility of me being pregnant so I decided to kick him out, yes, yes, in his own house I sent him packing and asked him to leave his children behind. The way I'm so attached to them now scares me because if anything ever had to happen between me and their father it will tear me apart knowing I'll also have to walk away from them. Anyways that one whom is my son asked me to buy him teeth grillz and for those who don't know what is that it is basically that gold tooth your boyfriend Thabo has but it's more expensive

than that and also decorated with diamonds and its removable, you can wear it any day and also take it out any day unlike Thabo who has it forever, grillz are practically dental jewelry.

And yes I did buy it for him, what my children wants they'll get it. What makes our relationship so organic is because we have respect for each other. They respect my position in their father's life and I respect them as his children, my children.

Getting home I find him in the kitchen cooking and my children helping him—yes they're mines and they're traitors because all this time they were cheerleading me after kicking their father out so now what is this?

When they see me standing on the entryway they literally just froze, the other one has butternut on his hand and then the other has a knife in her hand. "Ma" they harmonies at once and I just flap my

eyelashes at them “you look great, nude is actually your color” Cataleya says and flashes a nervous smile “I missed you” she says, she doesn’t have to be this adorable when I’m trying to keep a marble face.

That one who has been accusing me of being pregnant is just looking at me with palpable look on his face wearing an apron that he makes look sexy then his lips forms a beautiful smile. “What are you cooking?” I ask him.

His presence is filling me with excitement even when I saw him at the baby shower I unexpectedly threw myself in his arms and he welcomed me joyfully and touched my lips with his making adrenaline shooting through my bloodstream and his delicate fingers laced on my skin. I don’t really remember why I’m actually mad at him but I have to stay mad for as long as I can and for other reasons that at the moment I prefer the distance since I’m in

agony.

“We’re making braised lamb” he responds smiling at me and I just nod my head walking out of the room with my feet propelling me to the bedroom, taking a sit on the edge of the bed so I can take off my shoes but his hands engulfs my leg. I look down at him as he takes off my shoes yet making sure we don’t make physical contact “are you okay?” he asks me taking off my shoes. And no, I’m not okay but I cannot breathe because of his proximity.

“I’m fine”

After taking of my shoes he takes them to the closet that I’ve invaded then comes back and standing in front of me breathing out before he comes and sit next to me. A demonic voice whispers that I must lean my head on his shoulder and I do before he kisses the top of my head. “I miss you Dr Mkhungo” he says after the pink

elephant has been doing ballet between the both of us. “And words cannot really describe how sorry I am for whatever I’ve done that makes you punish me so much, I’m even scared to touch you” and then I start crying, tears crowd my very own eyes and something sits on my bowels. “Nokubonga” A guttural sound comes out of my mouth and he comes and kneel in front of me taking my hands to his “Muntuza” he calls me and I try to look away from him but my face is now in his hands. How do I tell him this? “What’s wrong?” he asks me.

“I did the tests” he gives me that look that I should continue talking before he turns the whole city upside down, causing catastrophe “I’m pregnant” I smile weakly and I see that look I’ve been longing to see full of elation because he’s becoming a father again. A look I was hoping to see. That look I had seeing that black and white screen and a little blip that was I was told was going to grow into a human for the first time and an idea of becoming a mother wrapped its elf around me before a gynaecologist

announced some news that shattered my hopes of becoming a mother “I have scans” I tell him but he’s observing me. My body language. My eyes. The sound of my voice, he’s over analyzing things.

“What are you hiding from me?”

“We won’t get to. . .” I look at him. “I love you Mongameli” I confess, this might be the last time I get to stare in these eyes and these words roll out of my mouth.

“We won’t get to what?”

Another drop of tears touches the bottom of my eyes and I push him from me getting up from the bed and attempting to walk out of the room but he grabs me by my hand turning me to him, holding me tightly around my waist and his eyes searing through me, already he has tears shimmering in his

eyes “we won’t get to what Nokubonga?”

“We won’t get to hold her” I finally say and it feels like those words were made of knives and my tongue starts to bleed while my throat is internally bleeding “I won’t make it to full nine months. It’s either me or her”

“Look at me” he cups my face in his hands. Oh why there’s no hurt there in his eyes or maybe anger or anything. But there’s hope, love and tender.

“Nothing is going to happen to either you or the baby do you hear me Nokubonga?”

“The doctor said. . .”

“Listen to what I’m saying. That doctor is not God. We were given this gift for a reason and for purpose. It was not given to us to be snatched away before we can even get to meet her or hold her. You are

going to carry our child for full nine months and nothing is going to happen to you”

“They said I have to terminate”

“Badakiwe” he sternly says that the doctors are drunk, he said with an infectious accent and honed face “you are not terminating, we are going to be okay”

Does he mean the doctors drink before going to work or they drink at work?

“I’m scared” For the first time in my life I’m scared. I’ve never been scared of getting into a stranger’s car that I met at a party taking me to his house and having sex. Never been scared of walking alone in the middle of the night with a street full of men. Never been scared of a snake we once found outside our backyard. Never been scared of that

grandmother who stays three houses away from my house and was accused of black magic. Never been scared of literally nothing but today, I know what scared means, feels, and tastes like. I'm more scared of losing this little life inside me than losing mines.

“And I understand but we are going to be okay and I need you to trust me on that one. I don't care what the doctors say but you and the baby are going to be okay”

“I want you to promise me something”

“Anything baby”

“If ever you'll have to choose while I'm unconscious between me or the baby, make sure you choose her”

“We are not having this conversation Nokubonga because it will never get to that point”

“Promise me Mongameli”

“No because that won’t happen and if it does happen I’m going to choose you because we can still have more children so don’t make me make promises I won’t keep”

“Promise me Kungawo, now!”

“No!”

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KUNGAWO

For the first time I'm seeing her vulnerable, soft as a feather and so, so fragile even in her sleep with tears at the corners of her eyes and her hands are shielding her stomach, my heart clench against my chest pulling her closer to me and kissing her forehead before getting off the bed it's the morning and the weather is drizzling, mirroring the gloominess and sombreness I'm wrapped around. When I'm trying to right my wrongs I'm being given such punishment, I don't mind at all, anything can happen to me, literally I don't mind even if the most contagious disease in the world affects me that's fine but not that woman here, not that human she's trying to protect with her hands even in her sleep.

The doctors said she'll never be able to carry a child in her womb for full term, ever and to me that sounds crazy, they're out of their fucking minds. I'm not losing this baby nor am I losing this woman for that matter, they're going to make it, alive. I serve an omnipotent God and if he leaves me into agony

then I swear I'll be a lost sheep and walk away from him.

I look at her once again with a satin head wrap and black silk night dress with her mouth slightly opened and her lashes resting like a crescent at the bottom of her eyes she's so beautiful, undeniably.

After taking a cold shower and droplets touching my skin and endeavoring my muscles to relax I come out wrapping a towel around my waist and exiting the bathroom. When I'm done dressing I glance at her once again and she's deep in her sleep, she's surely going to wake up in the early afternoon since she's become such a sleeper and I'm going to make sure she doesn't go to work at least not this month, I'm not sure if we're going to fight about this or not because sometimes she surprises me. What I think we'll argue about, we don't argue and what I think we'll not argue about we actually end up arguing.

I get to the kitchen to find Minenhle coming from his morning jog and making a smoothie and when he sees, he pauses still breathing like a bulldog that needs an inhaler. “Is mom okay?” He doesn’t greet me, he doesn’t ask how I am but he wants to know about his mom. When I ignore him he sniggers under his breath “good morning baba” he finally greets but so impatient to find out about his mother.

“How are you?”

“I’m okay and you, are you not jogging today?” I shake my head in disagreement and starting to busy myself around the kitchen when Mihlayami also walks into the room drenched by the rain and the drops have a mixture of sweat. We are very athletic and that’s how our relationship was formed.

“Where is my mom?” Mihlayami asks taking a

sitting on a bar stool “Okay but it’s still early she’ll probably wake up at twelve, tata is she mad at us?” she could never be mad at them maybe me but not them, they’re her children more than they’re mines.

“No, no she’s not mad” I respond to her and they both let out a relief breath.

“Uhm can I take her out for lunch today baba? I’ve been planning on doing so” Minenhle asks with elation. I’ve never been taken out for lunch, ever.

“Today is not a good idea but maybe tomorrow that’s fine”

“Alright I totally understand. I’m going to get her flowers and some chocolate though last night she seemed a bit off, you didn’t do anything that might force her to walk away from us right baba?” I answer to him now? When he sees me creasing my

eyebrow at him he swallows his saliva and hanging his head low. “Are you okay baba?” now he wants to know.

“I’ll be fine”

“I know you surely thinking we don’t care that much about you which is not true but uma has been a great mother figure to us, we found a best friend and a mother in her and I hope that doesn’t offend you in any way baba” Minenhle says to me “And she bought me grillz baba, the most expensive ones with ice on them”

“They have ice?” I frown.

“I mean diamonds” they both laugh with her sister. Does he think I’m their mother who understands this language they speak “and whatever that’s bothering you don’t overly think about it leave it to

God that's what you always say"

I smile at him, I'm not that much of a bad father actually "Thank you so much" I say to him "Go shower so we can have breakfast"

"Alright I'm out of here!" Mihlayami is the first one to get off the bar stool and walking out of the room but her brother stays behind and watches me nervously. "And then what happened?"

"I'm falling in love" he tells me and takes a long gulp from his smoothie.

Whoa what the fuck? "I met someone at school baba" he continues saying "well she doesn't know about me or even know my existence for that matter because I always see her from the distance"

"Gwababa?"

“No, not really apparently she’s royalty”

“And so are you”

“I know that but baba she’s the most beautiful thing I’ve ever laid my eyes on, her name is Himawarri”

“Is she foreign?”

“A Khuzwayo” he waits for my reaction. I just stare at him immobile not knowing what to say to him. That family is the chosen one. Yes we are from royalty but with them it’s different, I cannot explain, but they ooze sovereignty amongst all royalty. “I know it sounds surreal but I’m in love with her”

“How old are you again?”

“I’m turning one year old next month then one year old, then one year and then thirty is the next years to come” What fuckery is this? And then he looks at me and grins idiotically “Those numbers don’t really matter”

“We’ll have this conversation but not now, go shower so we can have breakfast”

“In my situation what you would’ve done?” Oh he’s not letting this one go huh?

“Follow your heart”

“That’s all I needed baba” he says and then smile walking out of the room disappearing in the corridor and I’m left with my own brain threatening to come out of my nose. I have a son who’s falling in love and that might cost us money. A lot of money

Jesus Christ. I have a wife that needs me more than anything in this world. I have doctors who're surely doing drugs and making my woman vulnerable.

After making breakfast I make my way back to the bedroom and I find her lathering her skin with a moisturizer and the entire room smells feminine, she woke up early and she has a towel wrapped around her body with her dreadlocks neatly tied up and tiny drops of earrings. "I thought I'll find you sleeping" I say as she looks at me through the mirror and then smiles.

"I had to throw up so I ended up waking up all at once"

"Are you okay?"

"No, not really but if you can change your cologne maybe I'll be fine after you left the room I was

nauseous”

Sigh!

“Let me shower again before coming near you then. I’m going to use a different cologne, is that okay?” she nods her head rapidly and I want to hold her but I can’t because my favorite cologne doesn’t smell as good to her now. This is the least I can do right? Understanding and being supportive.

I come back from showering for the second time in less a than hour and when she sees me she comes and wrap her arms around my waist looking up at me “thank you” she says with a serene tone, yes she has a smile on her face but she’s not her usual self. All bubbly and making me laugh until a sound doesn’t come out of my mouth. Oh God make sure you protect our baby and her, otherwise I’ll have to watch her shatter in front of me.

“You don’t have to thank me Dr Mkhungo we are in this together remember?” my index finger is under her chin.

“I remember that and I also know that you surely made an omelette but I cannot eat it because it smells rotten”

“I didn’t make omelette Dr Mkhungo”

“What did you make then?” I drop my towel on the floor and my manhood points at her and she laughs loudly “Is this what you made?” she continues care freely laughing and shaking her head.

“No you made him like this” she catches her breath and before she strides towards the bed and dropping the towel and laying on her back spreading her legs apart.

The evidence of her arousal is slick against her upper thighs. I want to taste her. I move to stand between her legs and slip two fingers inside but she pauses and gaze at me before she gets off the bed running to the bathroom all I hear after that is a scream making me run to the bathroom and finding her patting her woman organ with a tissue paper and it comes back with blood.

What the fuck is happening?

She looks at me with teary eyes and I don't bother saying another word before picking her up from to the bedroom and dressing her up then I hold her to me to the car, no words are exchanged, the kids are panicking without even knowing what's happening but I assure them that everything is fine, everything has to be fine.

I'm here pacing up and down in a waiting room and God knows how much of agony I am in and how utterly broken I am. I see my brothers and their wives approaching towards me before I'm being given a gigantic hug by the hugger of this family but the rest just make themselves comfortable on the chairs and plaguing me with questions. "What happened?" Menzi asks with a baritone voice.

"Yolokazi is pregnant" I announce and I see glee on their faces "but the doctors want her to terminate because it's risky"

"That's not happening" Menzi says "why they said? Is she okay? Where is she now?"

"I just inserted my finger. . ."

"How many times do you guys actually sex a day?" Mnotho "You were inserting your finger?" he smirks,

I don't have time for him.

“What happened?” Melusi asks.

“I was inserting my finger and then she just jumped off the bed running to the bathroom when I heard a scream and I found her bleeding”

“She's going to be okay” Sarah assures me “Both her and the baby are fine” I want to believe those words. I cannot count how many times I've prayed underneath my breath since I got here and finally the doctor attends us taking me to her ward and I find her sleeping on the bed and she has my favorite smile.

They're both fine!

“What happened doctor?” I ask her.

“The bleeding during the early stages of pregnancy is normal so there’s nothing wrong but in this case we still have to choose between the mother and the baby, because they’re both at risks. We can lose either the mother or the baby” I glance towards my woman who’s gazing at me.

“We are choosing the mo. . .”

“We are not choosing” Yolokazi interject and her eyes still on me “you said we are going to be fine didn’t you Mongameli?” and I nod my head “exactly then we are not choosing”

“Miss Mkhungo you need to understand”

“Can she make it to at least seven months?” I ask

“Yes that’s possible but we don’t know. . .”

“Exactly, no one knows but God. We are going to carry this child and you’re going to help us make sure they both make it out alive” I say to the elderly doctor who looks at us and then broadly smile.

“That’s my promise to you, both will make it out alive. I’m going to try my best”

•

On the 23rd of February we are going back to Eternal Sunshine, we might be going to Aishitemasu page soon who knows? It depends if you guys want to hear from the Khuzwayo’s again.

Himawarii and Wanele? Hmmm.

[03/02, 07:17] : LOVE ON DEMAND

YOLOKAZI

I am sure that my two rascals are probably not talking with their father thinking he's the reason behind I left and decided going to my mother, they have been calling asking if I'm ever going to come back home and if everything was okay.

I had to come here and be with my mother, because maybe she understands the situation that I am in better and she'll know how to console me, how to hold me, what to say and how to say it that's all I need. I've never imagined myself having children, I never wanted them in fact and if maybe it was under different circumstances I would've aborted the moment the doctor suggested this but I cannot, I've connected with these three big heads growing

inside me. . .suprise, I'm carrying three humans which makes this even more dangerous for me than it was before. At this point even if one of them make it out alive, I'm fine.

Why was I having sex to start with? Everyday I was just screaming and cussing and under his mercy now I am here. And Kungawo is so optimistic about all of this and he managed to inject that energy in my mind. He has bought pregnancy magazines and spend hours watching videos too on the internet and that what scares me, if these big heads actually don't make it out alive he'll be coming and going in different rooms of grief and unable to come back from that tour with unrelenting tears flowing down his face.

"Yolokazi" my mother appears from the kitchen wearing an apron. I got here two days ago but haven't said anything. A lump just grows in my throat and words are unable to roll out of my mouth;

she has heard me running to the bathroom to throw up and complaining about certain smells, yes we are there already. I watch her as she stands by the entryway of the living room and she places her hands against her hips “how many months are you?” oh she knows but how? Funny how old people don’t know how to put airtime on their phones yet they know other people’s business, yeses.

“Months? What months?”

“You’re pregnant” is she telling me or asking me?
“And I had expected this to happen right after your sister. It’s not a surprise to me Yolokazi”

“Oh so next time Kwanda gets pregnant I’m also going to follow months later?” she should stop having sex then, not me, her.

“No but the moment you vat and sit and start fucking like rabbits then obviously you’ll get pregnant more especially when you don’t know how the condom looks like” eh but she never said this to Nokwanda so why me? Why she’s being hard on me? I only had sex once, once.

Once? Well not really.

“I was not staying with Kungawo”

“How many months are you?”

“I’m only a month but I’m not sure if I’m really pregnant” I say nonchalantly and she tugs her head in and shaking it. “But the doctors said it’s dangerous. One of us could lose lives”

“One of who Nokubonga?”

“Either me or it could be the baby” I’m not going to mention that they’re three of them because that might scare her further. “But everything will be okay hopefully” I say and hang my head low then I hear her taking a deep sigh and her footsteps approaching before she sits next to me and wrap her arms around me. My head on her shoulder and her hands on my back inviting tears to drown my eye balls powerfully and that’s all it takes for me to finally cry. After I have been holding it and concealing my emotions now here I am, crying and my mucus tastes watery, that’s weird.

“You’re going to be okay Yolokazi both you and your baby will be just fine. There’s no need for you to cry, no need but pray. Start praying and I am telling you God will listen and he will answer”

You should see how much that man who put me in this situation prays, I’ve never seen him that

spiritual nor imagined him but he prays even in his sleep. One of the reasons I wanted to be away from him for some time, I hate seeing him like that, seeing him that vulnerable.

“I have something to tell you”

“He wants to marry you?” oh she reads minds now huh? Wonderful mama. “He already asked for my blessing, I know”

“He’s royalty”

“Oh I know that too Nokubonga but also worried more especially for my grandchild. Royalty can be dangerous, fighting for the throne and all of that”

“Mongameli doesn’t want to ever sit on a throne” I tell her and she pauses “he made that decision that

he will never be a king and I support him fully, I cannot imagine myself being a queen”

“I want you to call your boyfriend right here and right now Yolokazi, he won’t put your life in danger and my grandchild. He better come here” what is she talking about now? “Yey call him now!” I have never seen my mother angry. I’m getting used to seeing her like this, sober, glowing and so beautiful and so motherly. Sometimes I gaze at her and smile seeing how her exquisiteness is now just showing and how effortlessly beautiful she is.

She just left the room and breathing rapid fire and I can hear her talking to herself as I call Kungawo who panics thinking something happened and promises to be here within five minutes. Maybe he’s flying with a helicopter who knows?

Within minutes I hear a car parking outside and I walk out seeing him getting off looking scruffy with

his crispy white shirt folded up and the last two buttons are unbuttoned when he sees me his lips forms a smile eliciting my very own before Wanele comes out of the backseat with a bouquet of flowers and he comes and throws himself in my arms.

“Ma” he says with an ecstatic tone seeing me, it’s only been two days and he’s acting like he hasn’t seen me in two decades “Are you okay? I miss you. I bought you flowers and chocolate” he hands me flowers and a gold wrapped chocolate with a proud smile on his face.

“Thank you, I miss you too slime” we both chuckle before he kisses my cheek and step aside as his father comes and wrap his hands around my waist looking down at me, darting his eyes between mines.

“Are you guys okay?” his fingers stroke my stomach and I nod my head rapidly. “I miss you, home

doesn't feel like home without you" he says in a raspy tone. I might as well just go back today huh? Because I miss them.

"Where is Cataleya?"

"We left her home with Nomahlubi and she was not happy at all, let's go inside so I can talk to your mother" he says and we walk inside with my son having his hands around me showing me affection, I'm sure he has no one entertaining him home.

The moment we walk through the door my mother has a gigantic smile, wasn't she angry just minutes ago? She welcomes the two important men in my life right now and maneuvering them into sitting. At first they have a casual conversation until I am asked to leave alongside my son, I am craving for lemon cake so Wanele is driving me there, what's there to discuss without me? The wedding? The pregnancy? Why my mother said Kungawo is

putting my life in danger?

“Ma” Wanele calls me changing gears “are you pregnant?” we haven’t told them. I look at him once and nod before looking ahead “but you don’t look okay, is my brother fine?” who said it’s a boy?

“He is absolutely perfect, don’t worry okay” I smile at him and he smiles back, I guess the sound of having a brother excited him. “And you, are you okay?”

“Yes, I have an interview at school and my crush will be interviewing me. I don’t know how to act because it will be the first time I talk to her” he tells me venting and I listen carefully. He has a crush? Who is she?

“You have nothing to worry about, we both know you got this, wear your grillz” he laughs loudly and

throwing his head back as he park and we're getting off the car to the bakery store.

“If she was like one of the girls surely she would've been charmed by that but she's not like that, not even close, she's different” he says in a super low tone, as we walk into the store I see his body language changing seeing a girl wearing a long translucent dress with perking nipples and she's wearing a head wrap, she styled that head wrap beautifully. In actual fact she's eye pleasing, you've met someone who doesn't need to put effort to be beautiful? She can wake up at four am yet she'll still be beautiful now that's her.

I look at Wanele whom is love struck then taking step closer until we are standing right next to her and she's with someone, boyfriend maybe? I am going to help my son into making them break up.

As we make our order she turns swiftly about to

take hers but her eyes meet with Wanele and she smiles warmly and her dimples dance on her cheeks, I wonder if I also have such genes, what a beaut.

“Hey, Keith right?” Is that Wanele’s name? Other name? Third name? Or fourth name? Or alias.

“Yes, yes, yes” Wanele clears his throat
“Himawarri?” he smiles back at her. Did he somehow forget about me? His mother.

“Yes sure, I’ll be interviewing you tomorrow for being best dressed, now I see they weren’t lying” she still has a smile on her face as they shake hands “It was great seeing you. I’ll see you tomorrow” she then walks away carrying bunch of cakes and a man follows right behind her, oh is that like a body guard? I don’t know, it seems they’re trying to keep it undercover.

“Keith” I say and Wanele turns to me and he finally catches his breath laughing and making my order before he turns to me.

“My mother gave me that name so people are using it at school because it’s easy to pronounce”

“I also like it, so that was her?” he nods at me and then turn looking towards the glass door hoping to see her maybe “she’s very beautiful”

“I know” he breathes out “but we are not going to talk about her ma”

“I want you to focus in your school work and also ask yourself is it love or infatuation. You’re young, you’re still going to meet different women”

“But they’re not her ma”

“I know that but I’m saying be weary” I know how much his father is overly protective when it comes to him, because he fears he might make the same mistakes that he made in the past “I love you” I tell him for the first time and his eye brighten and glisten with love.

“I love you too mama” he smiles at me and unexpectedly steals a kiss on my cheek before we get our order and then leave returning back home. I wonder if their conversation is already done.

Upon arriving they’re more cars outside. Walking inside I find Melusi and Mnotho here and it seems they were having a deep conversation they’re done talking but it’s tense, very tense and my mother has reddened eyes and hide them with a smile. Kungawo announces that they’re leaving and I tell my mother I am leaving with him, she wants me to leave

anyways she has been saying and also hiding her emotions.

Melusi and Mnotho greets me and yes no one cares about me anymore but they want to know about the big heads and if they're okay. Has always we have great laughter before we all leave.

Returning home there's ghostly silence in the car until we are parking and getting off all the way inside the house. My girls have fallen asleep already as we make our way to the bedroom. I sit on the edge of the bed and he takes his phone out and making a call, avoiding making eye contact with me.

"Hello ma" I hear him saying "Dr Mkhungo is fine, yes we just have a slight problem and I'd love to talk to you" he says in a respective tone "I'm forced to have this conversation with you over the phone ma, tomorrow is far for you to come here" he pauses "I don't want to be disrespectful but when it comes to

my wife I am forced to be. I am saying we need to talk right now” Who is his wife? Oh me. Ah I wonder where is my ring, I last threw it at him “After Menzi who’s meant to sit on the throne?” It’s getting interesting now. I get up the bed to stand in front of him. I want to hear. He looks down at me and smiles circling his hand around my waist and kissing my forehead, the muscles around his face are relaxing as we look in each other’s eye, “Why me?” he frowns. Whoa, whoa. “And why you never told me that he’s not supposed to sit on the throne? No, no ma don’t give me that right now please. Yes I did say I don’t want the throne but you were supposed to tell me about it. Stop crying ma, I’m not trying to disrespect you but making things right here. Nokubonga can lose her life over this are you aware of that?” now he’s not looking at me. What is that supposed to mean? He places my head on his chest and I listen to his thundering heart. “Hawu you knew about this and never bothered telling me? Eyi ma angisazi (I don’t know) someone raised this up to me and that’s why I am calling you because I cannot lose Nokubonga or my babies. Even if it

means sitting on the throne of course” You got to be fucking kidding me “When? Tomorrow. I’ll be home then. I doubt she’ll want to come. There she is trying to listen to our conversation” he chuckles before putting the phone on loudspeaker.

“MaLanga” she greets me with a shaky tone.

“Mama”

“How are you? Are they giving you a hard time?” she must be referring to the big heads.

“Just morning sickness and cravings but I am fine for now”

“Please come home with Mongameli tomorrow, I know you both are still making preparations regards the negotiations but please come nono”

I look up at Kungawo and he looks back at me
“Okay mama”

“Thank you nono wami for everything, you don’t know what you’ve done for us. Bye bye I’ll see you tomorrow then” she says and that’s it, she’s gone.

“What I’ve done?” I ask Kungawo

“I need you to keep an open mind”

“What’s happening?”

“It seems my ancestors want me to sit on the throne as soon as possible”

“But your brother is next”

“He doesn’t have the birthmark so he’s not the chosen one for the throne and he knows and understands that. I don’t want to sit on the throne, I know you’re not ready for that but I cannot lose you Nokubonga or my babies for that matter”

“What that got to do with anything”

“It got to do with everything baby”

“What have I got myself into?”

I should’ve ran away when I met him at the store, why didn’t I? Or even chase him away when he came to my work place. Look at me now. Being caught up in situations I have nothing to do with.

“I love you Nokubonga”

“I know that Mongameli”

“Please don’t leave me”

“Then I’ll die? You know I cannot leave you now”

He laughs, he thinks this is funny?

“Let me make you something to eat before we can sleep, we have an early morning”

“I had lemon cake”

“That’s not food”

“Wait if you sit on the throne that means I’m going to be a queen?”

“Yes”

What the fuck?

[03/02, 07:17] : LOVE ON DEMAND

40

YOLOKAZI

Upon arriving KwaZulu the house is located at the foot of a local nature preserve. In order to maximize the views of this stunning landscape, attention is placed on opening up the North side of the home with plenty of glass of outdoor entertaining areas. This resulting home is a testament to its architects, with its unique exterior and open, welcoming interior the best of what a home can really be with a sense of open simplicity.

There is water-based system that runs through the polished concrete floors. This system provides both heating and cooling with minimal environmental impact.

The architects of this home are particularly have an ability to merge indoor and outdoor spaces. The living room and lanai become one space by virtue of frameless folding glass doors. When open, moving inside and out is simple and when closed, the view is still lovely. Outside, a floating pavilion and sloping garden create a serene space for entertaining, only made more inviting by a cantilevered koi pond and its north facing views.

The entryway of the house is also quite interesting. Natural timber in a herringbone pattern softens the look of the steel exterior, making the house a bit more warm and welcoming. Meanwhile, diagonal strips of light toward the entrance actually serve to

guide guests to the gate

It's a beautiful home honestly exactly how I've imagined it would look like in my mind, screaming nothing but luxury and I was told I cannot go inside but at the roundvel that belongs to Mongameli because we are not married. No one seemed elated seeing me as Sarah more than anyone well it seems Amanda hates my guts even more now, she has every reason to since her man is not sitting on the throne, she gave me that look like she wished she could spew all her guts on my face.

There was a lady introduced to me, she's more like my helper and we'll be doing everything for me and Mongameli cannot share this room with me for that matter. They're so many rules and regulations and I don't even know why I had to come here, there's been a meeting since we got here, I'm still stuck with a young woman who brought me a fruit platter hours ago, and she's not using words. "What's your

name?” I ask her and she picks her head up nervously and fiddling with her fingers.

“Ziyanda” she responds to me.

“I’m Yolokazi”

“I know you’re going to be Ndlukunkulu” Oh fuck me side ways please. The thought of being called like that makes me dizzy. I don’t want to be a queen. Who needs a queen? Why should I be one? Now I’ll have to pretend that I am the most perfect human being in this planet so this people could see and believe that I’m the right queen for them. I don’t say a word to her but continue eating from the platter when a knock comes in and Ziyanda instantly stands up to get the door but she seems nervous, I don’t know why but her body language tells me she’s neurotic and that’s up until Mongameli walks through the door and she walks out, he breathes out and comes to sit next to me. What happened now? I

have been here from the moment the sun was rising and now it's setting. I haven't met everyone but my mother in law gave me a gigantic hug when saw me, although she had a worried look but she concealed it. Ah yes ancestors could be selfish and manipulative sometimes more especially when they don't get what they want. It angers me so much at times. Some of us have to suffer for some things we didn't do and not well aware of. But we are not there now. I want my big heads to survive more than anything even if it means having to become a queen, this love is demanding everything from me—love on demand.

I'm on the bed sitting up straight watching him taking off his shoes and he comes and snuggles right next to me and placing his head on my chest. "Are they okay?" What about me? He won't ask if I'm okay? All he cares about is his children now huh?

"We are fine" I emphasize on the word we and he

looks up at me and smiles weakly before returning back to my chest and now his hand playing with my breast, his fingers circling my nipple. Breath is caught on my throat and we cannot sex, sigh. “What’s wrong baba?” calling him like that excites him, I know it does.

“You’ll meet everyone tomorrow, I’m sure you’re exhausted and we all are after the meeting”

“What happened?”

“My uncle’s are going to your house tomorrow” They are going there for what? For what reason? What for? “Although you won’t be there but the negotiations have to take place” he gave me my ring last night after asking for it and threaten me about throwing it at him ever again.

Wait he said negotiations?

“What negotiations?”

“Amalobolo” I know that but isn't he supposed to talk to me about that first? Are we not supposed to have discussion about it? Am I not supposed to be there? “I know you have questions mamazi but right now I have to do what I should've done long time ago. I'm sorry you were not aware about this but it has to happen”

“You're speeding up the process so you can take over the throne is that what's happening here? You said you're not with me for the throne”

“And I am still sticking with my word. I don't care about the fucking throne Nokubonga” and why are you furious? “It's about having you as my wife, a mother of my children and making sure nothing happens to you. At this point Nokubonga losing

them is the least of my worries, we can have more children in future but losing you. . .” I’m sure this tastes bitter in his taste buds because he just paused “I cannot lose you” in a nanosecond he’s in between my legs and I am beneath him. All of this scare me. All of it. The pregnancy, the throne, losing my life, losing my children, marriage, being a step mother. It’s all scary and I am trying to keep together, God knows I am trying.

“I want to make love to you” he murmurs warm against my mouth. “Please let me make love to you mamazi” Molten heat explode low in my belly, rushing out to my extremities like wildfire, making my pulse race, my consciousness narrow.

“We can’t do it and you know” I unbuttoned his shirt and slid my hands onto his chest “But I want you”

My breasts are pressed against his chest, my hard nipples under my dress. He looks at me with

lechery and swallow. He wants to make love to me. He wants me. “Please be my wife Nokubonga” now he’s begging that the negotiations should go on tomorrow. Real kindred affection burn into the heat of my lust. It is heady, delirious.

“Make love to me” I whisper against his mouth, my tongue seeking his. He fumbles with my buttons, unclasping my bra. A small moan of pleasure escape me as he cups my breast, hard.

He moves faster, unable to restrain a moment longer, and I meet him with equal fervor—just as hungry, just as fierce. I fumble for his zipper, tongue tangling with his as he hooks my leg over his thigh. No thought now. No logic. Only sensation.

He peels my dress over my shoulders and I lift my hips and he pulls off my dress and kissing me deeper, relishing the sensation of muscle against the swollen, tender skin of my breasts.

He parts my legs and I feel his mouth, his tongue slick between my thighs, and pressure builds like a bomb in my chest. I draw his head back up to my mouth, not wanting to come yet, but he forces my thighs wider with his knees until I am almost shaking with need for him.

“Be my wife” he says hoarsely. And then he enters me, the smooth tip of his erection hot. He grips my hips and I arch into him, wild. With one hard thrust he is in to the hilt. I gasp. We shouldn’t be doing this but here I am drawing him closer, deeper inside me, moving my hips under him, heightening the sensation of his pelvis pressed to me. “Please say yes baby” He moves faster, hotter. Angrier, hungrier—two bodies digging deep for something we are unable to define.

“Yes, yes, yes” that all it took and tomorrow his uncles will be screaming outside my gate and I am

going to be wife. There's no turning back now. I'll sit right next to him on the throne. I dig my nails into his back, suddenly still. He stop moving, looking into my eyes. I jerk, releasing with a sharp cry. He comes almost simultaneously, unable to hold back with the exquisite sensation of my muscles undulating around him.

He takes me into his arms—hold me, touch me, stroke my skin, my hair.

We make love again, slow and languorous this time, naked and primal on the bed. And we sink again into the sheets, sated, glowing with perspiration.

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I just got a call from Kwanda and Onalenna ululating, they said it all went well, they have no idea because they just saved me from turbulence of

thoughts and floating from agitation. I am still stuck in this roundvel and my now husband who was not supposed to sleep here woke up in the early hours of morning and left. We have a white flag floating in the air in their yard, surely announcing to the community about what is happening today, the yard is buzzing but I cannot come out either or even enter the main house, I've been stuck here with Ziyanda, she's sweet.

Unexpectedly Sarah and Unathi walks through the door ululating and they look beautiful from head to toe with their head wraps, they turned me into a beaut too this morning. "Finally I'll get off the throne and we can finally have three sum" Unathi says winking at her sister wife and they both erupt with laughter. Oh Jesus Christ why that thought made my own vagina hums. The visual images of Menzi thrusting deeper inside both of them while they harmonize plays in my head. I need to stop now "Congratulations mama" they both say giving me a gigantic hug.

A part of me wishes I was home seeing everything unfolding but also a part of me is happy that I am here. Within minutes my roundvel is filled with singing and dancing, and video taking from the wives of this family whom are happy to have me as their sister wife excluding “hmmm” she didn’t bother showing her face.

Now I can walk in and out of the main house. The uncles just got back from my house and we are having a full blown celebration before Mongameli comes to fetch me in the roundvel, I told everyone I’ll only come out of here when he’s back.

There he is looking impeccable and I am sure he charmed my uncles especially the gay one whom was out of the country but now back. He closes the door behind after Ziyanda walked out and he smiles. “So I am your wife now?” I get up from the bed striding towards him as he stands in the middle of

the room and he smiles placing his hand around my waist and pulling up my dress while my left leg is wrapped around his waist and I balance by putting my hands over his shoulders “What are you doing?”

“Thank you” he pushes my underwear to the side and starts running his fingers to my slits slowly and looking into my eyes “Ngiyakuthanda mamazi” now he’s circling my swollen berry and I nuzzle my head on his neck and breathing closely to his ear.

“I love you too” he thrusts his fingers inside me.

[03/02, 07:17] : LOVE ON DEMAND

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YOLOKAZI

Apparently I cannot be a queen because I know

nothing about royalty and I am just a pretty face from the city whom they see narrow minded but I have been treated much differently lately regardless of the gossips aside, I'm being treated with much more respect. The workers slightly bend when they see me but it's also frustrating that I don't have to do anything but sit around and doing nothing but today Sarah decided we all go out to celebrate and tomorrow I am going home, my husband leaves in the morning and comes back at night exhausted from one meeting to another, he needs to learn about everything from his brother before he steps away and Menzi is also as exuberance as his wives and planning on moving to another province since they won't have that much responsibility anymore. If people are celebrating stepping down, how hard this can be?

But anyways I have to do this, I was also warn not to trust anyone by Sarah not even within the family because not everyone is happy about Mongameli being back home or even me being his wife since

they were so many woman impatiently waiting for him after hearing about his divorce.

We walk into the spar apparently I cannot get a full body massage because of my pregnancy so it seems I'll be getting a manicure and pedicure.

“Mongameli really made up his mind about polygamy and I am happy for you honestly it gets hard” Sarah says to me, well the others are changing and both of us are here getting pedicure with our feet drowned in warm water. I glance her, she looks happy to me and they have a relationship with her sister wife so what's wrong?

“I thought you and Unathi get along”

“It wasn't always like this of course but we started by tolerating each other because at the end of the day it wasn't either her fault or mines. We both didn't know what we were getting ourselves too. I met Menzi when he came to my school to do a talk

and I asked him a question. The way he looked at me at that moment as my hand was raised, I knew he wanted to fuck me but I didn't think there was love. He loves me, he loves her and I am okay with that and our sex life is spicy" I knew she was the wild one, she just gave me a wink and then looked away "I am going to protect you and be there for you, I know hard it is not being accepted"

"I don't really care about all of that" I tell her honestly. I don't care about having to fit in or being liked by anyone, I don't care a damn honestly. I am doing this for my man and my children. If he has to do it for all of us to be alive then I am going to support him but rather than that, no fucks given.

"I see why Amanda don't like you" she smiles at me and we both laugh softly and shaking our heads "you are what we all wished we were or could've been. You don't care who says what about you or what they think of you. You are you and you stand

for yourself, my husband told me you put him in his place this one time that was before meeting you. He couldn't believe it but he liked the fierceness. I was jealous of course but it makes sense why now. The legacy of this family is in right hands with you and Mongameli. Both of you are powerful together, you are going to make a great queen" another reminder that I am going to be a queen, it should be exciting and bringing joy but we were technically black mailed into this by the family's ancestors. "The council expect women to be seen and not heard, I know you'll change that and when you do I'll stand with you" she says with a much warning tone leaving me drowning in my thoughts.

After hours of being pampered we are going out for lunch and the restaurant was booked out for us, a table full of beautiful women and just one with dark energy. "Okay that's it what's your problem with Yolokazi?" Unathi asks Amanda who diabolically looks at me and then towards her.

“I don’t answer to you”

“Of course you do, I am your queen and that woman you just glare is going to be your next queen. You don’t know her, she know you and you’re hating on her for what, no reason at all?”

“My queen” she chuckles and takes a sip from her glass “suddenly everyone is so drown in her, some of us had to prove ourselves that we deserve to be part of this family. Everyone loves her. And I should step aside and clap hands for her?”

“All of this because of jealousy?” I look at her “My father is a pastor, he doesn’t really give chicken shit about me but I am sure he wouldn’t mind praying for you” I tell her. All of this because she had to seek for acceptance in this family?

“Are you talking to me?” she creases her eyebrow

and stands up and I also get up, standing face to face with her.

“I am not a queen as yet so I’ll fuck you up really bad Amanda and you’ll regret even spitting my name, don’t dare me”

“And you think you’re going to be a queen with this behavior?”

“Yes and when I become one you’ll be sitting in the corner envying that you were me”

“Bitch!” she attempts on slapping. Me? She wanted to slap me? Yolokazi Nokubonga Mkhungo Mthabela? Me? Kungawo’s wife? A mother of . . . wait let me calculate. . . a mother of six? Whoa what the fuck so many children. But anyways she wanted to slap me?

I return back the slap and when she attempts throwing another one I hold her hand again and slap her, you cannot mess with me, ever, ever. I refuse. In the name of Jesus. I rebuke. I just feel manly hands holding me back because I am livid and kicking and throwing punches. Nxargah.

When did he gets here? What are they all doing here and why is Muzi laughing?

“Nokubonga asambe!” that’s all Kungawo says that we should leave and already he has my bag and intently looking at me.

“Ngizokubamba (I’ll get you)” I click my tongue saying to “hmmm” and Muzi has turned into a tiny insect from laughing and looking charming and handsome as always before he winks at me as I follow behind a spitting dragon and a body guard opens the door for us. He looks at me and I get in before he follows and the door is closed. Okay he’s

really angry at me. We are not exchanging words and I am still wondering when did they get here.

Honestly I hope I don't see Amanda around the house today because I am going to kill her with my bare hands.

When we get home we get off the car and he walks out first, we meet my mother in law "what happened?" she's holding back her laughter and her son walks pass her, still he hasn't said a word to me or anyone. The last words that rolled out of his mouth was when he said we should go. After he has disappeared my mother in law laughs and shaking her head "I knew this fight was going to happen. It took longer than I thought. I am not saying what you both did was okay. It was wrong and it shouldn't happen again more especially since you are pregnant but I've seen these fights happening in this house hold" news travel faster here huh? No magazine or journalists needed. I just

nod my head and make my way to the roundvel where I find him taking of his wrist watch and he picks his head up to look at me and then turn away.

“But she started” that’s the first thing I say “and she called me a bitch” he just glance at me and then unbutton the first button of his shirt without any word coming out of his mouth “Kungawo” no response “Mongameli” well still mute “I’m sorry” I don’t know what for because if I meet Amanda while I am still this deranged I am mostly definitely fighting her. “I am sorry baby”

“What are you sorry for?” I don’t know. I look at him and then blink “Exactly so just keep it to yourself Nokubonga” he has paused the unbuttoning.

“But I am sorry”

“Do you understand or you’ve forgotten that we are

in a critical position with our pregnancy? Do you get that? What if she pushed you or you fell or anything happened to you and our children? What would've happened after that?" his tone is stern "We are doing things one step at a time. I am trying to save my children here and what are you doing Nokubonga? Fighting people? Have you forgotten we are pregnant?"

"But she started" I repeat. A cold creep runs through me thinking about what he just said, anything could've happened.

"Yazi uyangicasula (you're making me mad)" he says and then walk out of the room leaving me behind.

I don't regret fighting, not even. But the guilt that I put my children's lives in danger is what chewing my brain cells.

Ziyanda just came to call for me since I am being called inside the main house and upon arriving to the room where the meetings are being held I find my mother in law with my husband, Melusi, Menzi and Amanda patiently waiting for me. I take a sit right next to Mongameli and he's angry, I can see by the way his body is tensing as I sit next to him. I put my hand on top of his and he doesn't fight me, instead our fingers intertwine. I breathe out. I look up at him but I can still see the anger but I can feel the love in his fingertips.

“What happened today makoti?” that's Menzi, so powerful and looking at me.

“Amanda attacked me” I answer looking straight into his eyes, that surprises him. “This has been going on from the time we first met and she has been making remarks until today she confessed that she doesn't like me because she's jealous of

me”

“I never said I am jealous of you” Amanda defends.

“What did you say then? Say your exact words” I respond to her.

“I didn’t say I am jealous of you though”

“You’re going to deny as well that you didn’t say I can’t be a queen with my behavior?” I crease my eyebrow “do you think you can be a queen with your behavior since you’re so judgemental about mines?”

“Makoti” Menzi warns.

“I’m not going to sit here and keep shut and I am

also not going to sit here and not defend myself from people like Amanda who thinks I don't deserve Mongameli because I'm just a girl from township. I may never had everything you've had in life Amanda since you think I am unacceptable because I am not coming from a well family like yours but what I want you to know is that I have everything I've ever wanted in my life now whether that gives you sleepless nights, I don't care but keep it in your mind that I am not going anywhere and I am going to love Mongameli even more because that's what he deserves and I also deserve him" I say with a calmest tone and Kungawo squeezes my hand, I look up at him and this time his face has soften.

"I'm sorry" Amanda apologizes crying—honestly fuck her. "I shouldn't have judge you like that but it has been hard mostly for me because I always wanted what you have and always wanted to be like you"

“The other day did I not ask you if you were forced to be in polygamy Amanda and what was your answer?” my mother in law intervenes.

“I said no”

“Then what’s all of this?”

Her head hangs low “Melusi and I are divorcing”
Yessssssssss. Yes. Yes. Yes. I am not going to feel sorry for her not today maybe tomorrow “things have changed between us and we’ve come into that conclusion of divorcing because I am no longer happy”

“Melusi is that true?” Menzi. The atmosphere in the room has become suffocating and unbearable for them but as for me? You’re the one. I mean as for me. . .I don’t know honestly, I am indifferent.

“Yebo, Amanda was with me for wrong reasons not love and I am tired of her playing victim, she wants the throne and she can do anything and everything to be there” Melusi.

“But I loved you Melusi”

“Oh no you didn’t Amanda”

“Nokubonga lets go” Mongameli says and perking up from the upholstery couch, we are not listening to the whole story? Yes, no. I guess that’s a no.

[03/02, 07:17] : LOVE ON DEMAND

42

YOLOKAZI

It been meetings after another about when Mongameli has to sit on the throne and it has been decided that in two months he is officially taking over and our wedding is also taking place next month and we both decided on keeping it traditional as possible—I've never dreamt of wearing a white dress anyways so it shall stay that way. I have to think about the planning and think about what can I do to bring change as a queen, it's all a lot and I've been constantly reminded not to stress.

On other news “hmmm” is gone. That same night I watched her as her bags were being dragged to the car and she had tears shimmering in her eyes getting in the car and and hanging her head low. I should've felt some sort of sad emotion for her huh? But I didn't, I still don't, the way you treat people it's the same way you get your karma and that's just that. Which is why I am always trying to be a great person to other people to have good karma knocking on my door. And also at work they finally had the guts to fire me.

We're back home but Kungawo is always swamped with work and his presence at home is also missed and even the kids could feel his absence at home but they understand the changes as well, eventually this will be our lives.

And today I am going to see my twin sister and my nephews, I want her to help me with the planning but I also just miss being in her presence. Upon arriving to their beach house and being driven there she appears behind the door wearing a gym gear and she has put back her dreadlocks. Didn't she give birth few weeks ago for her body to look like this? And she looks so beautiful in all black.

"Mrs Mthabela come in" she laughs at me and stepping aside and they're boxes everywhere in the house which means they're moving. And that's when Mongezi appears from the kitchen also in his gym wear all sweaty and holding a bottle of water,

they're so beautiful together and compatible.

“Bhuti look who’s here” she will never stop calling him like this huh?

“I cannot hug you because I haven’t showered but it’s great seeing you Mrs” Mongezi says with a mocking tone surely because I once told him I will never get married when I was drunk. “MaMkhungo I am going to shower and check on my sons” he kisses Kwanda and then disappears around the room and she turns to me swallowing her smile back.

“Are you moving?” I eyeball her.

“We bought a new house that’s more child friendly which also has an open space so we are moving sometime this week” she tells me and we take a sit on a couch “how are you ndlukunkulu? you are

glowing and you look happy” she doesn’t know as yet about the pregnancy. “Are you pregnan. . .” before she can finish asking I am already rapidly nodding and she attacks me with a gigantic hug, all sweaty and kissing me all over my face screaming but covers her hand with her mouth when her husband shouts about waking his sons, he’s so attached to them it’s amazing to watch. Then she pulls away “congratulations I am so happy for you”

“Thank you so when are you planning on having a wedding?”

“We’ve both decided to have one next year. I want to focus on being a new mom and my business” she has launched her business by the way and I completely forgot to mention. It’s a beautiful store with a black and white interior design and yes she’s officially a stylist and a buyer and she’s doing so great. “Next year it is and you? But Onalenna is getting married four months from now”

“We have coronation two months and my wedding next month so I need to start planning which is why I came here” I announce and another joyfully scream elicit.

“MaMkhungo!” A baritone voice echoes.

“Bhuti” she responds back.

“If one of them wakes up I’ll give him to you” he warns and she turns to me laughing slightly.

“Let me shower quickly then we can go out. I don’t know if Mongezi will let me take his sons with me but he doesn’t want them out of his sight” she says “You can make yourself something to eat, I love you” she runs out of the room and I look at her toned body and firm legs and buttocks as she disappears before making my way to the kitchen

and making myself something to eat. And there's no junk food in this house, what the hell? I want something sweet or greasy. What am I supposed to do with leaves? But I eat the salad I found in the fridge anyways. It tastes good and has chicken.

After what felt like eternity Kwanda is back wearing all white as always with her sons in a black and white pram. They're so adorable and I take one of them as we get in the car and he's peacefully sleeping on my chest. They have wonderful genes, honestly.

Finally we are at the restaurant and I choose a corner because I have become yet another topic and something to talk about upon discovering I am going to be on a throne and Kwanda doesn't want media to catch a glimpse of her children, they trend as much as we do since her husband is a successful designer.

“I know you’re hiding something from me, you know I can sense everything about you right? Now tell me what’s bothering you? Becoming a queen? Because I think you’ll make a great one” her sons are peacefully sleeping in their pram. I hope I get to see mines too. Looking this beautiful and wearing neutral colors. They look so much like their father though.

“No, no it’s not that”

“Then what’s the problem?”

“Kungawo didn’t want to sit on a throne until I became pregnant obviously and that forced him too because I could either lose my life and my babies”

“Your babies?” That all she heard? I just said I could lose my life, doesn’t that matter? “Are you also carrying twins?”

“Three twins” her laughter echoes the entire restaurant until I realized what I just said “I mean triplets” tears spill out of her eyes and she chokes from her saliva “whatever” I dramatically roll my eyes.

“Three twins? That’s really a lot but how are you holding up?”

“Taking it one step at a time”

“I mean supernatural forces doesn’t really care whether you believe in them or not. I know exactly how you feel. I was so angry with the ancestors with what they were doing to bhuti but I’ve learnt that I am going to make everything right traditional so that my sons don’t have to suffer because of the things I did or their father you know. I am glad you guys sacrificed your lives for your three gifts. You’re

going to be a wonderful mother trust me” you know Kwanda has grown. I’ve seen her growing right in front of me, the way she has grown sometimes and what comes out of mouth shock me, she’s amazing really. “And don’t stress about everything you’ll be fine. Just tell me what you want with your wedding and I’ll sort it out and remember Lulama is my family so you’ll have the best wedding dress and my husband is also a designer. I got you” she winks at me as the waiter places her plate on our table but we are disturbed by my phone vibrating and it’s a number I don’t know upon answering I am asked to rush to the hospital because Cataleya has been admitted and Kwanda comes along with me. The amount of stress I am under as we being driven there. I call her father who announces that I’ll meet him there, he’s on his way. What happened? I hope she’s okay.

Kwanda holds my hand as we drive to the hospital seeing the amount of agitation dancing on top of my head and when we get there we find a young

man covered in man and hanging his head low. Who is this now? And what happened? In that moment Mongameli gets here and I throw myself in his arms. I want to hold him so he doesn't do anything to this young man whom is in tears or start asking endless questions but I can see the sight of him sitting there is making the man in my arms shake with anger, he wants to know what happened. I look up at him so he can see the tears in my eyes and making sure my lips tremble. I don't know what happened but I know for sure that young man was involved and Kwanda is comforting him as he keeps saying she warned Cataleya. I don't know about what. But if he fed her drugs then I am the one killing him.

A doctor attends us and we step forward. Now all the brothers just got here. I look towards Kwanda telling her to take this boy away from here, otherwise he won't make it out alive, I don't care what happened but these men won't show no remorse to him. "Dokotela what happened?" that's

Mnotho asking. “Is she okay?”

“Yes she’s fine. But she could’ve lost her life doing an unsafe abortion” What on fucking earth is he talking about? “We have managed to drain out the pills out of her system but the baby couldn’t make it”

“My daughter was not pregnant” Kungawo says defending.

The doctor looks at the board in his hand “Are you not Miss C.M Mthabela family?” When and how did this happen? My Cataleya? No ways. I gave her a platform to talk to me about anything, why she couldn’t come and talk to me.

“I want to see her” Mongameli says.

“You can follow me” When he attempts following the doctor I hold him back. I know him going there is not a good idea. I am glad that boy is gone. Why no one warned me about being a mother to a teenager? No one ever told me about this.

“Nokubonga” He’s angry. There’s no way he’s going near my daughter like this otherwise he will kill her right there and then. I also sense some sort of guilt there. There are so many emotions painted on his face with different colors, it could’ve been a beautiful piece of art but it’s somber.

“I’ll go see her”

“I’m her father”

“And I’m her mother” he shouldn’t dare me.

I walk into the ward and she immediately pretends that she's sleeping. "I know you're not sleeping Mihlayami" I say and slowly she opens her swollen eyes, and start crying once again "no, no, don't dare cry so wipe those tears" I am being a mother, this is me being a mother "you could've told me about this Cataleya. I would've taken you to a much safer place. You could've lost your life are you aware of that?"

"I'm sorry ma"

"How is that going to change everything?"

"I know I disappointed you"

"Of course you did but I wasn't going to hold that against you. I am your mother, not an animal. I've been your friend, you could've told me and you father wasn't going to know about this"

“Is he mad at me?”

“No he’s very happy that he almost lost his daughter in fact we are having a celebration tonight” I sardonically say “Obviously he’s deranged what are you thinking? When did this happened?”

“It happened once mama I swear” That all it takes.

“When did this happened?”

“Two months back”

I take a deep breath “And the father?”

“He didn’t want me to abort, he wanted the baby. I did too but mama I was scared of tata”

“How old is he?”

“He’s uhm. . .twenty one”

“Where did you meet him?”

“We met on instagram” when she sees the look on my face she covers hers with her hands “we went on couple of dates before dating ma, I love him but I don’t think he’ll still want to be with me after this” she uncovered her face.

“I’ll talk to him just focus on your recovering. I am here for you”

“I am sorry ma”

“I’m still mad at you Cataleya so keep it to yourself but I love you and you know that”

“I love you too and please tell tata that I am sorry”

“Leave him to me”

•

In this house everything is intense and the fetus deleter, came back home yesterday and her father is avoiding her. I made him promise me he won't dare touch her. He swore on my big heads here in my stomach. Apparently I am spoiling these kids and that's why they're getting away with a lot of bullshit and this is my fault those were his words and he's also not talking to me for defending Cataleya.

I am caught up in a mess.

Basically in this house it's like this: Mongameli is talking to Wanele and not me and his daughter and Wanele is talking to me and his father and not his sister and I am talking to my son and my daughter but their father won't talk to me.

Messy huh?

Parenting is not easy trust me, I know I wouldn't recommend it to anyone—I wish as they start growing breasts and pubic hair you can hide them away from the world but we can't and also we cannot let them not make their own mistakes. I made mines, maybe might've learnt from them or not learnt from them but I made my mistakes and those were my life experiences. Every parent wants to protect their children, its more especially the daughters than the sons mostly. But instead of being so overly protective how about we teach them

about the real world at young age and not be too afraid or shy away from the conversation because if then they decide to make mistakes then you've told them about how it pans out. How about we stop wanting them to believe in what we believe in and let them choose. Allow them to be themselves and not the version we wanted to be. You don't believe in abortion? Oh well that's okay, but don't make it sound like a sin to other people. You don't believe in homosexuality? Oh wonderful but don't be judgemental about it. Oh you don't believe in God? Great but don't make feel bad for believing in him. Oh you don't believe in ancestors? Fantastic but don't call them demons because you don't believe in them. Oh you're atheist? That's just amazing but don't make me feel stupid for believing there's a God and Higher Power.

Let's give our children a platform to talk to us about anything more especially sex talks. Why are we so afraid to talk about sex? Why are we making women look like sinners for touching themselves? Why do

we make women be afraid to look at their own vaginas?

I don't know if I am making sense, I never wanted to be a stuck up mother, okay I never wanted to be a mother but meeting these three beautiful kids changed so many perspectives and the way I see things and that's why I've never been hard on them and I've always tried for their father to have the same relationship with them so they can never be afraid talking to us. You see with Wanele? It was easier for him to tell us he's developing feelings for someone. I am not disappointed with Mihlayami for having abortion, I am disappointed because she didn't come to have that conversation with me.

I love them, all three of them even Nomahlubi.

I am there for Cataleya emotionally since she in an unstable indecisive state and recently she asked me to buy her a black cat of which I did, I don't

know what's the story behind that but I am hoping that she can open up to me about it, she's no longer my bubbly gym freak who's always laughing but now she's always stuck in her room surely because of how the relationship has been with her father or maybe the shame because in our culture we made to believe that this is wrong and labeled as murder, sigh. It's been a common thread in all the conversations I have seen with other girls and women – that the act of having a termination, or talking about it, is detrimental. But that is so far from the truth. What is detrimental is going through it alone and that's why I want to be there for her as much as I can.

When I open my eyes as the sun rays are blinding me I find him on the bedroom couch with his fingers resting under his chin and watching me sleeping. At this time what is he doing here? He should be gone for his meetings and also his demanding business with the restaurants. Another thing he's not talking to me, so why is he watching

me?

I get off the bed, my stomach is swelling faster than I thought. I acknowledge him with a half smile and making my way to the bathroom. I don't know what to say to him really or even making him try to understand that his daughter needs him, he's allowed to be angry and mad but it been too long. When I come back from taking a shower I find the bed already made and he's back on the same position.

I guess I should start the conversation huh? Men are just exhausting honestly.

“Are you not going anywhere today?” I ask him and stealing a glance at him.

“Come here” he says in a soft tone. Oh. I guess we are going somewhere. I stride towards him and he

takes my hand making me sit on his lap “I’m sorry” he’s apologizing? Maybe he wants to kill me. “I shouldn’t have said you’re spoiling the kids and I understand that you’re trying your best to me a great mother to them and always supporting them, it was not your fault that Mihlayami did what she did”

“Did an abortion”

“Yes that. I was just mad because you let that boy get away that day too. He took advantage of my child”

“It was a mutual decision. Are you not taking advantage of me? Because I am someone else’s daughter as well”

“You know it’s different Dr Mkhungo” Not when you got me fired at work.

“It’s not different baba. Yes Cataleya made a mistake and she acknowledged that and been endlessly apologizing to you. Look you’re allowed to be angry because you’re her father but also eventually you’ll have to calm down and talk to her, she’s your daughter. Remember what you said? In your family you were always expected to be perfect and that’s how you ended up making mistakes. This is the same with her and more than anyone you should understand that” he looks at me attentively and breathes out, surely my words are sinking in his head and then he strokes my stomach “I missed you” I tell him. Although he still held me at night but I did miss him.

“I know. I missed you too and thank you for being a mother to my children”

“It’s our children and you know that”

“Hmmm. Are you okay?”

“Now I am okay. Are you not supposed to be working?”

“No, not today I want to be with my family maybe we can go out and then tonight we can have dinner just us, and leave the kids behind”

“And what about the three here?” I point my stomach and he chuckles softly “sounds perfect but if only you promise to talk to Cataleya”

“I will talk to her mamazi”

“Thank you and make sure that boy pays for taking a cow in my kraal. I am not saying beat him up Mongameli”

“Hmmm” he has already done doing it. I should’ve known. I look at him directly into his eyes and he flashes a smile “What?”

“I hope you didn’t hurt him”

He grabs my buttocks and making me feel his groin before he smiles with his lips in between his teeth. Arg, what should I do with him? “Get ready we are going out and I need you to tell me about the wedding preparations”

“Alright”

We are going out with the kids and I chose going to an aquarium because that’s Cataleya’s favorite place and maybe she can unwind a little bit. There was total silence in a car excluding Nomahlubi though she was talking more than she usually does and I think she’s now warming up to me, seeing

there's no chance of her parents being together, ever again. Ever.

When we get off the car I see Kungawo holding Cataleya's hand and she freezes at first stealing looks at me but her body is slowly overwhelmed by tranquility as we walk through the aquarium and seeing the beauty of it, this is exactly what I wanted seeing smiles on their faces once again and hearing Cataleya talking none stop. Now she's telling us all about these animals floating in blue water and caged behind the glass and now Kungawo has his hand around my waist before he looks down at me and smiles.

That's until they step away from us with Cataleya surely to have a conversation because they're sitting in one of the benches and facing towards the beautiful fishes while they talk. "Uhm do you guys want us to go sit on the floor and watch the view from there?" I point a perfect spot and the other two

agrees. They make sure that I carefully sit, so cautious well since Wanele found out about my pregnancy he's overly protective and buys me lemon cake whenever he comes back from school.

“I want us to talk” I say to both of them and they look at me and ready to hear what I have to say “Regardless of what your sister might've done that doesn't make her less of your sister, she made a mistake and I am so sure that both of you are still going to make your own. We have no rights to judge her but we have to be there for her more than anything in this world and support her because we are family. Wanele you not talking to Leya should stop and Nomahlubi just try being more of her sister. I know you feel her arrival meant she was here to take your space but it's not like that, your father loves you both the same and never doubt his love”

“Yebo” they both say at the same time. That went

great? Did it? Or they just want this conversation to end? Whatever the case maybe I am glad we spoke. I am glad seeing Kungawo hugging her crying daughter. I am glad we are family.

[03/02, 07:18] : LOVE ON DEMAND

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KHETHELO

I'm a mother to a beautiful baby boy and it was mentioned in that family there hasn't been a baby girl born in years, I was actually praying and hoping for a princess but my ocean is now here, adorable looking and looking more like me than his father, sounds good huh?

I want to talk about how hard it is adjusting to motherhood and having a full responsibility in your

hand. Having to wake up in the middle of the night because this little human needs your attention. It been only few days and sometimes I get that feeling where I'd hope for someone to just walk through the door and save me, I need a break and Kayise seem to understand that he's been supportive really. We are both clueless with what we are doing but we are making it work. We are trying to be the best parents we could possibly be. He's there to wipe my tears when I feel I am not doing this motherhood thing right. I was with him for couple of days but my mother asked me to come home because I have to be away from my man, it's cultural. His family was just here last weekend paying for damages and he was praised for taking full responsibility, we do that, praising a fish for swimming. We are not taking a marriage step as yet, it's a mutual decision and discussion that we both had. I had to raise it more especially because I felt he was under pressure seeing my friends getting married left and right and becoming mothers so he might've felt he had to do it but really he doesn't, I believe we don't need a piece of paper that will prove we are going to have a

long lasting relationship but I do believe we are soul mates, well those were his words and I believe so.

Lately I have been dreaming quite a lot about his late mother, she seemed happy when I wiped the tears off her face and a smile crept out of her face. I don't know what this really means but Kayise said I should visit her at the cemetery and have a conversation with her because this is some sort of approval from her as her daughter in law. Honestly regardless of what happened in our relationship at start I didn't really think it could pan out this way. I mean the drama? But I guess that's what drew me into him even more.

We are emotionally compatible before sexual compatible. Today we are going to the cemetery to visit his mother because he also wants to tell her about our new born gift, I call him ocean but his name is Lwandle. His father said it's because he has connection with the water, when he was born

we had heavy rains and during my pregnancy at night he'd play the sound of an ocean and he'll calm down from jumping and bothering me.

Anyways my son stayed behind with my mother whom is very attached to her grandson by the way and wants him all to herself. Well she wants cows from the Mcelu family and she's really pressing hard this topic of marriage and for those reasons I might as well leave home sooner and I am glad tomorrow we are leaving since we are celebrating our Christmas at the Mcelu family. The grandfather wants everyone there as always and we also even have a theme, you already know all families like going with all white right?

“Are you okay?” Kayise asks me as we park at the cemetery and I smile at him getting off the car with a bouquet of flowers. I'm somehow nervous about this. I knew his mother when she was alive but at that time she was just my friend's mother. My best

friend. Ah all three of us have grown over the year. The year is ending already but there's been so much growth from all sides. The one who was a rebellion and never wanted to be an adult is now a mother, a wonderful business woman and a wife by tradition. Onalenna always been the wild one too and setting us up with men well she's a great mother too and a wonderful curator and a wife. And then the last one who became a part of us in last few months, okay Yolokazi has always been the one preaching about not ever getting married and having kids or ever needing a man well she's a mother too, a wife and also becoming a queen, that's the major one really. We have got to explore the different women in us, maybe we are still peeling off those layers but it been great really.

He takes my hand and kissing the back of it and stealing a look at me "I should be asking you what's wrong?" I say to him as we walk in between the grave yards and he just smiles.

“I’m just thinking”

“What are you thinking?”

“That you could’ve just walked away but you decided to stay”

“Good sex” I look at him and wink and he laughs softly, he respects this place. It’s very sacred.

“We still going to have this conversation when we leave” he shakes his head with that beautiful smile that surely made me fall in love with him. Until we are at his mother’s grave and I help him with the cleaning as he speaks to his mother, with seriousness in his tone. He basically tells her everything. I like seeing him in this element and I even join in the conversation after he has told her that I am here and placing the bouquets of flowers in the grave yard. We clean and talk and talk then

we pray. There's something that he said that really caught my attention.

He asked his mother to talk to his ancestors and show him the way if we are really meant to be and for them to bless our relationship and gives us guidance, he said he doesn't want us to waste each other's time when we are not meant to be together. I am looking at him in amazement, listening to him. I actually feel this should be an important factor in all relationships. That we ask our ancestors if really the relationships we get into is the long lasting one especially when you've both agreed on commitment and marriage. Yes we say don't pray for "umjolo" but when you feel you've found the one and you want the light and guidance for it then pray so you don't find yourself wasting your time for so many years for something that's not blessed.

But then again there's difference between dating and relationship right? So I'd say pray for

relationship but not the dating.

We are leaving now he seems rather tranquil than he was before, more brighten up after speaking to his mother. They had a wonderful relationship of course before she took her own life. “Are you okay?” I ask him and taking his hand leaning over his shoulder as we walk back into the car.

“My mother chose you for me. I chose you for me and I believe she brought you to me. The day she died you’re the only person I allowed to console me and gave them access into my emotional state of mind. I don’t know but your presence has always been calming. Even at those nights when I’ll be deranged with Kwanda but you’ll manage to just speak to me and through me. I was giving up in my own sister but you always told me one day I’ll look at her and be proud. I am not saying Kwanda changed because of a man in her life but I am staying they both groomed and brought growth to

each other. And that what love should be like you know . And that's what your love is like. You've watered me and I've grew so much. You filled my cup. And I've learnt not to just give to people but also accept what I'm being given to and receive the love, support, everything. Trust me if you were not in my life upon finding out about Tumelo being my sister, I would've shattered but the thought of you kept me alive. I knew you'd give me wisdom not with words but your physical presence. You're such a spiritual person and very powerful but you're not fully aware of that" We have paused in a car parking and deeply gazing in each other's eyes and mines are moist. "It might've been good sex that kept you from walking away from me but. . ." we both snigger "we are soul mates and that's why it was not that easy for you to leave me"

"I did run away to Cape Town though" I joke as he wipes my tears and slight laughter erupts.

“But where was your heart when you were there?
Who did you think about almost everyday baby?”

“Ha ha ha you’re so spicy”

“You’re my best friend before anything. I never thought I’d love anyone as much as I love you but with our son you’ve taught me a different kind of love, you’re my dawg, dawg”

“You’re my dawg, dawg” I laugh with him. He has never been this vocal about his emotions or expressed them before. Damn Kayise doesn’t want to show his vulnerability to anyone for that matter. He always wants to be emotionally available for everyone but never allows anyone to be there for him. “I love you”

“I love you” he smiles “I think I might reconsider marriage”

“You want marriage now?”

“You’re my wife obviously but I want to make it official within the books but not now because that’s what we both agreed on. Maybe a wedding in three weeks?”

I laugh at him “And you’re saying not now?”

“I mean not now, now but your mother is making sure she’s giving me a hard time. That woman is technically cock blocking me”

“What the fuck Kayise?”

“I swear” he smiles “marriage?”

“In three years”

“That sounds perfectly fine with me by then we’ll have three boys running around”

“You’re planning on having me pregnant every year?”

“Kind of”

“You’re out of your damn mind”

“Let’s go home” he smiles.

[03/02, 07:18] : LOVE ON DEMAND

YOLOKAZI

“Noma besho njalo ngamkhetha libalele (Even if they say so I chose him during day light)” The singing elicits as we are taking a bath in a bone chillingly water at the river and the ululating erupts—the singing doesn’t stop either. It’s my wedding day and here I am bathing in a river and not at some five star hotel room under the spray of water coming from the roof. We chose to do things the traditional way and for that reason everything should be that way. He thought I was joking as we were planning our wedding with only a month time to prepare but this is what I want and nothing extravagant. I wanted the singing of these young women with their perky breasts and the ululation from the old women. My bridesmaids are accompanying me and Onalenna has been complaining since the week started since we had practice for this day; it brings me joy seeing them here and holding my hand at every step and just supporting me.

“Nokubonga you better come out before you catch cold” my mother scolds since I am the only one left here and taking the bath but she wouldn’t understand how the cascading water is so healing and bringing tranquility into my burning skin from the agitation that I am drowning in and the trepidation. I am getting married. Me. I am going to be someone’s wife and in nine months time I am going to be a mother; I actually have three humans s growing inside me as we speak. And some days I wonder. I wonder how is she going to look like—is he going to be like his father? I hope they don’t have such bad habits like their father.

What bad habits does Kungawo have by the way?
Actually he doesn’t have any.

“Yolokazi come out man!” my mother’s voice sounds thick this time and I have no choice but pushing the water aside with my legs and my hands

as I grin like a disobedient adolescent and coming out of the water while they wrap me around in a blanket “Stop acting like a child wena!” she smiles at me as she covers my shivering body “you’re going to be someone’s wife now and a queen” she reminds me of what I have been trying to hide under the table from—a queen.

The sun is slowly rising as we at the forest and I am being don in a leather skirt known as isidwaba; the isicwaya is skin that’s covering my breasts and a hat for my head referred as the inkehli. I am also accessorizes with colorful beaded necklaces and bracelets which my bridesmaids are also wearing. Red and white ocher designs are decorating my legs and arms.

I am also wearing veil made of beads and twisted fig leaves and bags of pebbles tied to my ankle because of their rhythmic effect when dancing. Also, I have tied oxtail fringes around my elbows

and knees. And I am also wearing goat's hair fringe around my neck and carrying Assegai which is a small knife that symbolizes my virginity—I don't know why they made me carry this because I am no longer a virgin and been having sex since I was a teenager.

We had ceremony after ceremony taking place for the past week. We had izibizo where gifts are given to my family and that was followed by umbondo where I reciprocates by buying groceries for the groom's family, and finally today is the actual wedding which we call umabo.

By the time the sun that feels like a flame brought too close is out we are already clad in our traditional wear and my brides maids are matching in their traditional attire but instead of walking around with their breasts they're wearing stylish nude corsets and they're looking beguiling as though we are all going to get married to the same man.

Whew we are now leaving!

I am walking in front and leading the song with my bridesmaids aside me while the rest of my family is walking behind me backing up my horrible singing. And they're carrying casket behind me and this holds such a powerful meaning or message or whatever is that you want to call it. It means from now on I have no business with my family and even if I do die then they won't be burying me; but the Mthabela family will and I'll be buried along their family but not mines.

“Umathandana wami lona

Ubaba wengane zami lona

(This is my lover, this is the father of my children)” I yell out the song with a high pitch tone.

I am really doing this to myself for a man?

Love really makes us do senseless things like getting married doesn't it?

I left my home in the early hours of the morning today and covered in a blanket that I was given to by my mother. Well my father was supposed to be part of this, I had a conversation with him and trying to make things right but his words were we are not his children but his regrets and mistake—I am not hurt, not all. Who I am kidding? I was despondent of course but he can go to hell and shove the bible somewhere where the sun don't shine.

But my uncle is the one whom is acting as my father today. He's the one who was leading me into my new family and I was advised not to look back even when the nostalgia of my own home were dancing in my own head but I couldn't look back. Apparently that invites bad luck.

He called out our clan names and telling our

ancestors that I was now officially leaving home and joining another family. Does this mean my ancestors will not recognize me anymore? Marriage is not as sunshines and rainbows as people make it seem. The wedding is absolutely gorgeous but after that—I won't be a Mkhungo anymore. I won't be the young woman who went out every weekend and enjoying her best life but I am going to be a mother and a wife and a queen. What hell bazalwane?

On our arrival at the Mthabela family I had to walk around their house as to be introduced to my husband's family before entering their home through the kitchen while nobody noticed me —the groom's family then paid a penalty for not being aware that I was here and they didn't fetch me. They should've fetched me.

Unexpectedly Kwanda takes my hand and I look towards her with tears shimmering in my eyes and a lump expanding on my throat. I don't know if it's

tears of exultation or perturbation or maybe it's both. But all I know is that I am marrying what I feel within my bones and my heart that he's my soulmate.

I'd do this over and over again. I'd suck on a goat's bile again just for him. Yes they made me suck that thing and then they poured it on my head, feet and hands too meaning I am now part of their family, there's literally no turning back from this now.

Kwanda squeezes my hand and I smile back at her then she winks at me before we both continue singing. Okay now I feel so much better and less apprehensive and I've managed to wipe my tears under these beads hiding my face that's painted with wonderful make up and my singing sounds much more powerful than before. The baritone voices that belongs to my drunk uncles and their friends whom already smell like alcohol makes the whole song sounds so beautiful alongside with the

feminine harmonies.

It's my wedding day, I am getting married.

We are approaching the open ground at the Mthabela's yard where the ceremony is taking place, our singing is interrupted by another loud singing it sounds better than ours. Oh here they are approaching towards us but I cannot see him since they're still distance away. I can hear the whistling and ululating, screaming, clapping of hands but now my head is bowed and my hand carrying a spear is trembling and my heart is taking slow steps to my throat.

Finally both sides of the family are standing face to face each other and singing competitively and I whip my head up to steal a quick glimpse only to meet him with a charming smile and clad in his traditional wear from head to his bare toes and "imbesho" looks so good on him, in fact he looks

sexy as a sin with that roguish grin on his face as he sees me stealing looks at him and he winks—oh he should stop before I jump on him in front of these people to shove my tongue down his throat. It's amazing seeing him in his element and being a leader because that's what he is. A leader and a powerful one at that. Look at him singing and dancing as he jumps up and down so gloriously.

The singing pauses!

An old man comes and stand between us. My side of the family and his. It's the time. That time I am sure leaves every women urinating their lace underwear and sweating from the follicle of their hairs to their toes. It's the moment that changes everything including your surname.

Last night I sat in my room and watched my mother packing my bags with her eyes filled with tears up to the brim after I had elderly women filling up my

room and advising me on how to treat a man. How to treat a man? Doesn't it sound ridiculous that they don't sit with a man and give him the same advices—they said I should have missionary sex for the rest of my life. Imagine. That freak I am marrying to would be found dead if I could give him missionary for the rest of our lives together.

The sonorous voice interrupts my thoughts as it asks for the first time if I am taking Mongameli as my husband. I am sure everyone could literally hear the tiny drums thundering against my chest since there's so much stillness and soundlessness. I don't respond. Instead I have my head yet still bowed and a lump still expanding on my throat. I catch yet another glimpse towards him to see him with the same smile on his face. It hasn't left that beautiful face not even once with a spear and shield in his hands. It's that very same smile he had in our first encounter at the store corridor as he was sizing me up from head to toe.

I am being asked for the second time and yet again no words rolls out of my tongue but instead sweat forms on my forehead threatening to fall down my face and ruin my make up but it wouldn't dare that make up artist told me this is waterproof, no amount of tears is going to smudge my face. That's why I have been lamenting behind these beads.

And what follows up when I am being asked for the third time is me singing loudly and dancing which means I agree. It's basically my "I do" in a sense. Ululation follows and there he is dancing along with me and lifting his leg up. Oh my—Oh my I didn't make a wrong choice here. Look at that. Look at those arms and and perfect legs. Look at him as he traditionally dances and proud. Just look at him. My husband. I've agreed. I've agreed that through sickness and health I'll be with him. Through dark and light. We are now in sync mentally, spiritually and physically, in every way.

I've changed into an off shoulder mermaid green dress, embroidered with lace flowers and it almost looks like a ball gown at the bottom matching it with green beads earrings. And inkehli and beaded veil haven't been removed. I look absolutely stunning, beautiful and prepossessing. This is basically my wedding dress. I am drop dead gorgeous—like a queen.

Lulama did an amazing job designing this stunning dress.

Mongameli bought cows which were slaughtered and they're eaten today and he also bought a goat that was slaughtered after the head of the family—Menzi spoken who also opened this ceremony by welcoming me and then my uncle also said few words as sign that he approves this ceremony.

I am the one handing out gifts today as the symbol

of forming a new bond between the two families.

We bought grass mats, blankets for the women, beer pots for men and some piece of furniture alongside side brooms that were given out to the guests by the brides maids clad in green and also my sister, Kwanda.

I am sitting on the grass mat as this is happening refraining from talking or even looking at anyone out of respect.

The names of the various people receiving the gifts are called out one by one then they come and lie on the grass mat before being covered with a blanket from my family.

They then sing and dance as a sign of appreciation for the gifts. This is such a glorious occasion.

“Mongameli!” they call him out and I get up from the mat it was hard since my dress is long and everyone is now ululating as I have to go and look around for him.

I search through the crowd and he’s nowhere to be found. I walk out of the tent leaving behind the singing and beautiful laughter searching for him and there he is, standing behind his car with his ankles crossed and he has changed into green pants that matches my dress and a shirt with a similar patterns on my dress alongside izibhadada and when he sees me his face etch into a smile eliciting my very own as I take steps towards him until I halt right in front of him. We are now wearing our wedding rings. We’ll say our wedding vows on our white wedding after I’ve given birth of course. “MaLanga” he says in a velvety tone lacing his hands around my waist looking straight into my glossy eyes “you’re crying” I am. I am crying. “Why you’re crying Nokubonga?” he has a bewildered expression on his face.

“I am—you make me happy” I choke in between my tears and now his face softens “I love you” I tell him and flaring my nostrils and he brings me even closer to his chest, kissing the top of my head.

“No vocabulary could explain what I feel for you Yolokazi” he says sultry and his words travel through my bones “Ngiyakuthanda” he says.

“Okay ke now let’s go” I say after he has wiped my tears and he chuckles softly shaking his head as I take his hand and when we appear together another joyful noise erupts.

I place the grass mats on the floor leading to the bed where he comes and sits. I grab a basin with a towel and soap to wash his feet. They’re so soft and so beautiful unlike mines that have different shapes as though God was unsure. I massage them softly

as I wash them gently glancing up at him and he has a passionate look in his eyes and so full of adoration then he smiles. I love those set of white stones, they're perfectly aligned. I love washing his feet like this and watching him aroused by the feel of my hands and wishing he could do something about it. But he can't do anything about it and this torture, sensual affliction.

I then pull back the bed covers for him to lie down. As part of the drama the brides maids and other young ladies from my side hit Mongameli with small sticks and he finally manages to escape and run away, I was already complaining.

It's all over now people are indulging in the meat galore and alcohol.

“Makoti come here” Kwanda comes and take my hand as I am still sitting on the grass mat and I get up chuckling, she's so delighted as though this her

day just like Sarah. I swear this feels like her wedding. “Woza, woza your husband wants to talk to you. You cannot be sitting there whole day. You look beautiful mama. Our ndlukunkulu to be” she winks at me. “I am so happy for you” she says genuinely smiling.

“You’re next” I remind her and she dramatically rolls her eyes at me.

“Don’t remind me. . .here’s your husband” she says the moment we reach towards Mongameli who’s surrounded by his brothers and his friends then Kwanda smiles at me already in her bhuti’s arms.

We walk together and holding hands, he takes my mines and rubbing my fingertips against his lips until we are on top of a mountain and he makes me sit on a stone staring in each other’s eyes and he cannot stop smiling. “Stop it!” I playfully slap him and then take a deep breath “What?”

“You look beautiful”

“You’ve been saying that”

“And that because I mean it. You’re absolutely amazing and I appreciate you for being in my life and just choosing me”

“You do know there’s plenty of men I could’ve chose from right?”

“If you’re trying to hurt my feelings then it’s not working because you would’ve still chose me, umubiza” we suppurate with sonorous laughter and throwing our heads back when we see Wanele approaching towards us and he’s not his usual self. Ah this one would come and sit with me on a grass mat and they’d chase him away alongside his sisters. They’re my children and I love them. There’s

nothing I could literally change about Kungawo and what he comes with.

Wanele stands in front of us and his eyes reddened and nostrils flaring. “Is it true baba?” he asks with a quivering voice and his eyes are glossy “Is it true?” this time he seethes and balling his fists at the sides of his body and Kungawo instantly gets up from where he’s sitting and so do I.

“Wanele—

“Ma please stay out of it” he gives me a chilling and cold look. He looks absolutely handsome in that traditional wear, umblaselo but he donned it so modernly with those dental jewelry at the bottom of his teeth. “My mother would still be alive right?” he asks and Mongameli remains impassive, I cannot read him.

“You will not talk to me like that”

“So they deserve to have a mother and I didn’t?” he glances towards me. Is he referring to my unborn children? Oh yes he is. Those beautiful eyes are shimmering with tears coated with sadness “She would’ve been here, right? But because you chose that I don’t deserve a mother, she’s gone”

“I never wanted to be on a throne Wanele!” Kungawo seethes and his chest moving heavily up and down. “I never wanted to a king and you out of all people know that. You’ve seen me suffering as the ancestors punished. You’ve seen the pain I endured”

“But you saved. . .” he pauses and takes a sharp intake of breath and roughly wiping the tears falling from his eyes “Why you couldn’t save my mother the same way you saved uMa?” by the way uMa is me. I am Ma.

“Wanele” His father warns.

“I want to know because she also had the birth mark which means she was chosen for you so why? Why you couldn’t do it”

“Because it was different Minenhle!”

“How different?”

“We are not doing this right now” Mongameli says.

“Can we talk about this later baby?” I ask him and he shakes his head rapidly.

“How different?” he asks again and stepping closer towards his father. They’re intensely looking in each

other's eyes both shimmering with tears.

Mongameli clenches his jawline "I love Yolokazi"

"And you didn't love my mother?" Oh I hate where is this going "Do you love?" his chest heaves. "Do you love me?" he pesters.

"I love you more than anything"

"But you didn't before right?"

"Minenhle Wanele Keith Mthabela!" I warn him. Why he has so many names? He looks at me and his lip trembling "Don't you dare doubt the love your father has for you. He'd do anything for you. This—all of this is not only for me and your unborn siblings but for you. For your sisters. For everyone. You will not stand there and question the love he

has for you”

“I will never treat any woman the way you treated my mother. The way you treated Cataleya’s mother and the way you treated Nomahlubi’s mother. You might’ve changed now and became a better man but I pray even in my sleep that I don’t turn out like you”

“How dare you!” His father seethes “How dare you say that when you don’t know what I went through? You don’t know shit Minenhle. You don’t know nothing” his tone is quiet. Too quiet. “I never treated any of them any less but they knew exactly how I felt. With your mother I didn’t know how to save her. I wish I could but at that time I was unaware that it was my stubbornness. Do I wish to turn back the time and make things right? Of course but you will not make me regret for choosing myself this time. For choosing love. For saving you and the next generation and your children. Don’t dare Wanele.

Don't dare ruin this day for Nokubonga”

“Please give us space” I glance towards Mongameli whose anger is menacing. One look towards his son he kisses me chastely and then walk away. “Your father loves you Wanele”

He sardonically chuckles “Right”

“You could've died. Not only I could've died but you too because you're his heir that's what he never told you. But he did this for all of us. He loves you. He regrets not showing the amount of love he has for you and your sisters before but he's trying his best”

“It's . . .It's hurts knowing my mother could've been saved”

“And he didn't know at that time that he could've

saved her but that doesn't change anything”

“I love him too”

“I know but you're telling the wrong person. You should go and talk to him and apologize” He breathes and I open my arms for him wrapping him around my body and squeezing him tightly “You're just like him and you cannot change that. One day when you find love, true love you'll know why your father made the decision he made this time”

“I love you ma”

“I know and I love you too” I smile “Now lets go and you will apologize to your father” I remind him again before returning back at the tent where now the singing is much more louder and also the dancing is chaotic.

I breathe!

I see Wanele talking with his father and they're hugging when Onalenna comes and grabbing my hand until we get in the car where there's Kwanda and Khethelo.

"We've been looking for you" Khethelo complains and we all chuckle in the car.

"What's going on?" I ask them.

"We all need a break and some time away from everyone and children and husbands" Onalenna takes a sharp intake of breath "Isn't it funny that a year ago we were sitting together drinking alcohol unaware that one day we are going to be mothers and wives and queens" she smiles.

“Life is full of surprises” Khethelo

“Love changes everything” Kwanda “Look at Yolokazi, she’s a submissive wife”

“Oh fuck you, bhuti” we erupt with laughter in a car and shaking our heads and Lulama gets in the car as well and groaning making herself comfortable.

“I’m sorry. Bambatha needed a round” she says and we laugh loudly “That man can be a pain in the neck”

“They all are” Kwanda “But they love us”

“Oh there’s no doubt there” Lulama says.

Khethelo grabs out a bottle of non-alcoholic

champagne and paper cups and pouring the bubbly liquid before giving each one of us. “Who wants to make a toast?” she asks.

“Me!” I quickly say “I’ve never made a toast in my life nina” I continue saying and we share gales of laughter once again.

“Okay go on Ndlukunkulu” Onalenna mocks.

“What do they normally say when making a toast?” I ask them. Okay I’ll just say it. “To us. Powerful black women. We are strong, we are beautiful and we are. . . I don’t know. We are in love” I shrug and they nod their heads “And we should be friends forever.

“To us” we click the paper cup glasses.

The End.

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The new story is starting on Eternal Sunshine page
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