

NDUMISO

My Alpha Male

NOMCEBO MYENI

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Insert 1

Ndumiso got off the taxi followed by a lady and closed the door as the taxi drove off.

The lady smiled greeting him and they started walking whilst chatting.

They passed by the tuckshop and greeted the few guys seated on the crates playing cards and continued walking.

Lady: (stopped walking) wait you're Ndumiso from UJ?

Ndumiso: I'm not sure about the UJ part but I guess so.

Lady: I see.

She chuckled softly recognizing him from the pictures she once saw from a certain girl in their village. Actually a lot of girls knew him from her because he was all she spoke about during their meetings.

Looking at his features she was also gonna go crazy dating someone like him.

They turned to the sandy road and approached the cliff and he frowned placing his palm over his forehead as the sun bounced on it. A shallow smile spread across his face when he saw a few women disappearing into the thick forest carrying their plows coming from their fields. That was a confirmation enough that he was back home.

Even with the recent developments of the electricity that has just been connected the trees and their fields on the other side of the

village still remained unaffected. It confused him though as to how did they manage to keep their trees from being cut off and have the transformers connected on the other side.

The community must've refused to have the forest destroyed which was going to affect their ancestors. It was crazy but everyone believed that the forest and some of the trees in the village symbolised their ancestors and losing them would mean losing their identity.

Even though others complained about ghosts in the forest destroying it was out of the question.

Lady: I'm here.

He turned to her and nodded then bid farewell to her before proceeding with his way.

He released a sigh of relief when he saw their home but his relief was short lived when his eyes fell on their neighbor coming out of a burning hut supporting herself with the wall.

He went to her and helped her walk to the other house then went to look for water after placing his bag nicely on the grass.

He put off the fire and rubbed his eyes coughing endlessly.

He went back to the old woman as she crawled out of the house coughing and he crouched lifting her up.

Mampanza: Did you manage to put it off?

Ndumiso: Yes the hut is fine but your stuff has been burnt.

Mampanza: Thank you. May God bless you. I was trying to make something to eat Nhlahla was late for school so she couldn't make it.

Ndumiso: I'm sorry to hear that.

She grinned and sat on a plastic chair as he helped her drink water. She leaned back and brushed her wrinkled face frustrated. Her stomach rumbled and she rubbed her eyes

blurring her vision even further as they got more reddish.

Ndumiso: Is there something I can do for you?

MAMpanza: You've done more than enough you can't mess up your expensive clothes. I'm sure my granddaughter will be here soon.

Ndumiso: Actually I don't mind.

MAMpanza: (coughed) You can make soft porridge. Everything is in that cupboard.

She pointed at one of the cupboards.

He went to take his bag then started preparing something to eat for her.

Moments later her granddaughter arrived and she held the straps of her backpack tighter quickening her footsteps when he heard her grandmother's laughter which she mistaken for something else.

She swallowed and rubbed her teary eyes then picked a lighter wood from the firewoods next to their traditional hut. She wasn't going to beg and cry again seeing them taking advantage of his sick grandmother.

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She dropped her backpack and got inside the house. Ndumiso stood up holding two bowls and without any second thought she lifted her arms about to hit him. He dropped the metallic bowls and held the wood pushing her back as she lost balance and fell hitting the back of her head on the 20L bucket.

She shut her eyes and lazily opened them grinning as invisible sparks circled her disoriented face.

Her grandmother rubbed her eyes looking at them.

Mampanza: What is going on?

Nhlahla: He tried to kill me.

Ndumiso: If I wanted to kill you believe me you'll be dead. What were you trying to do anyway?

She clicked her tongue and got up rubbing the back of her head.

Nhlahla: What was he doing here gogo?

Mampanza: He was helping me.

Nhlahla: He came out of nowhere and helped you?

Ndumiso: You're crazy and it's not even cute. (to her grandmother) Ntomb'endala let me leave I'll see you tomorrow.

Nhlahla: You're not..

Ndumiso: (annoyed) Angikhulumí nawe wena.

Mampanza: It's okay my boy. Thank you so much may God bless you.

He smiled briefly and picked his bag then left.

Nhlahla looked at him as he brushed his dreadlocks to the back and walked out of their gate.

She saw his expensive watch on the table and sat down taking it into her hands.

Nhlahla: Gogo what was a man like him doing here?

Mampanza: He saw the hut on fire then helped me put the fire off.

Nhlahla: (suprised) That's all? He didn't try anything?

MAMpanza: No he didn't. He actually made me something to eat. He's a sweet soul

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he's Mdletshe's eldest son I'm sure you know them.

Nhlahla: So he didn't do anything wrong?

Mampanza: No (stood up) Let me go and lie down my eyes are itchy and I'm tired.

She helped her to her room and removed her shoes then she got on bed and laid on the side.

At Ndumiso's home...

His mother dropped her plow and fixed her pinafore as he chuckled hugging her.

Mazikhali: Your tshirt is going to get dirty.

Ndumiso: Forget about the tshirt. How are you doing queen?

Mazikhali: I'm fine. You look so grown and beautiful but skinny.

He placed his fist over his mouth laughing and shook his head walking to the main house whilst holding her hand. It was always the same thing with her he was always skinny on

her eyes. Maybe it a mother's thing he has been lifting weights for a while now so being skinny was impossible.

He placed his bag on the chair and started making tea for his mother whilst asking her about the Ndwandwe family. He sighed sadly when he heard the reason for Nhlahla's outburst.

Ndumiso: What are the police saying?

MaZikhali: Those useless people. They don't trust them some even went as far as saying Nhlahla is making up stories because she's seeking leverage so that she can blackmail them into giving them money for food.

Ndumiso: What?

MaZikhali: It's expected though those men drink with the police kwamzobe so they won't arrest their drinking buddies.

He scoffed in disbelief and placed the tray in front of her whilst thinking of ways to help those defenceless women.

MaZikhali: Don't do anything stupid.

Ndumiso: (faked a smile) I won't.

MaZikhali: I'm serious. I don't know the things they taught you in Joburg but don't do anything stupid. It'll be easy for them to arrest you than to arrest those rapists. Tread carefully.

Ndumiso: I hear you.

He took his house keys from the room divider then walked to his house next to the gate. He pushed the door open and saw his high school girlfriend Thembalami walking to the river holding an empty bucket. She saw him and walked away. Minutes later his phone rang as he settled on bed then he shook his head chuckling in disbelief when he realised that Thembalami was calling him.

It has been years that ship has long sailed she should get the hint and keep moving. He bent removing his sneakers and then laid on his back pressing his phone.

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Insert 2

At Ndumiso's home...

The next day he finished raking the yard and went to fetch a wheelbarrow as Thembalami walked over.

He sighed and started loading the grass on the wheelbarrow.

She smiled nervously looking at his muscles maneuvering as he lifted his arms straightening then dropped the grass on the wheelbarrow.

Thembalami: Hey.

Ndumiso: Lami.

Thembalami: You've been ignoring my calls.

Ndumiso: Oh...

He continued cleaning until he was done whilst she watched him admiring his dark chocolate skin as sweat went down his spine.

He washed his hands and wiped his face with a towel then drank water from the bottle.

Thembalami: We need to talk.

He walked to his house holding a bucket full of water then placed it in his house as anger build up.

Ndumiso: What are you doing here?

Thembalamí: I thought...

Ndumiso: Thought what?..Huh?..What? I don't appreciate what you're doing. Coming to my father's house as if you own it needs to stop. I was going to call you when I get time right now I'm busy.

Thembalamí: You weren't busy when I came in here.

Ndumiso: What was I doing? Dancing?

Thembalamí: I still love you Ndu.

Ndumiso: I also do but you don't see me acting desperate for attention. I know where you stay and I have your number. Can you please leave before someone sees you? I don't want to disrespect my mother really.

Thembalami: Okay I'll see you later.

Ndumiso: Maybe tomorrow. Today I'm going to St Lucia I'll be there till late job related.

Thembalami: You're working?

Ndumiso: Something like that. I'll call you.

She nodded and stepped closer kissing his lips he sighed and kissed her back as she rested her hands on his bare chest. He broke the kiss and faked a smile then cleared his throat seeing Nhlahla behind them.

Ndumiso: Hey I didn't see you there.

Nhlahla: I brought your watch.

She handed it to him feeling Thembalami's eyes on her.

Ndumiso: Thank you.

She nodded dropping her eyes as he chuckled softly looking at her shiny face. He wasn't aware that people still used vaseline to lotion their faces. Her face was smooth though with a bit of blackheads here and there. She must've been the type who steamed frequently no skin routine whatsoever.

Nhlahla: Is everything wrong?

Ndumiso: No aren't you late for school?

Nhlahla: I'm not I still have an hour before my exam starts.

Ndumiso: How is your grandmother doing?

Nhlahla: Fine.

Thembalami cleared her throat and rested her hands on her hips impatient.

Nhlahla brought her hands together
apologizing.

Nhlahla: I'm sorry for disturbing you.

Thembalami: It's fine you can leave.

Ndumiso: Oh is...

Thembalami: You'll come some other time
Nhlahlenhle.

Ndumiso: Bye Nhlahla I'll go and check up
your grandmother later if you don't mind.

She swallowed feeling uneasy about him. He was still a man after all.

Ndumiso: It's okay good luck on your exam.

She nodded and left. Thembalami clucked turning to him as he walked inside his house.

Thembalamí: What was that? Are you sleeping with her? Is that why you're giving me a cold shoulder?

Ndumiso: No.

Thembalamí: Don't lie...

Ndumiso: If you're asking me then no and if you're telling me then that's on you. It has got nothing to do with me.

Thembalamí: I love you.

He sighed and held her hands.

Ndumiso: And I do too but can you please understand me. I'm not that teenage boy again

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Ndumiso: And I do too but can you please understand me. I'm not that teenage boy again you can't come in here like this. You're

making me feel uncomfortable and I don't like that.

Thembalami: We're still fine?

Ndumiso: Yes we're.

She hugged him as he rolled his eyes hugging her back. She was being dramatic for nothing.

She broke the hug and went back to the river and took her laundry going back home.

At Thembalami's house...

She hang her clothes on the line and picked her basin then went to their house.

Her friend Khanyisile sat on the chair as she started undressing and bathed.

Khanyisile: Ndu won't do you like that especially with someone like Nhlahla. That girl is plain and dirty with these rape allegations they usually make no guy will fall for her.

Thembalami: You didn't see the way he was looking at her. It was warm like something was melting inside him. I don't want to lose him to that girl. Ndumiso will soon get a job and take me out of this village. If I lose him I might as well forget about ever leaving this place. Mngenh I want to plait my hair with expensive hairpiece and put on make up. Ndumiso is smart and capable of going far in life. I have to be by his side. I won't get lucky twice I have to act now.

She thoughtfully reached for her towel and wrapped her body with it then slid her feet on her flip flops. A thought hit her and she smiled then stopped when she saw that her plan was impossible.

Thembalami: Mngenh I made a mistake. I did it with Musa.

Khanyisile: How? I thought the guy wasn't worthy enough.

Thembalami: I wanted to experience sex and Ndu wasn't coming back. He's a very traditional person. If he learn that he's the one who did it he will love me more.

Khanyisile: But how can you be so irresponsible? Now we have to do damage control. He can't find out the truth.

Thembalami: True but how?

Khanyisile: I'll give you my cream and you'll apply it down there. It'll hurt though because the cream will tighten your muscles so bad that penetration will be worse than breaking your virginity.

Thembalami: It's worth it. Ndumiso is worth everything and more. I'll take it.

Khanyisile: I'll get it for you. This afternoon we should go to the river and wait for that dirty thing. You man won't get taken by her whilst you're here never.

Thembalami: Definitely. I won't stand by and watch her playing house with my man.

She ran vaseline on her lips and applied ponds on her face then looked for one of her beautiful dresses in the trunk.

At Nhlahla's house...

Ndumiso and his friend Nkosinami placed the firewoods next to the hut and dusted their hands.

Nkosinami: If only we were doing this for the in laws I would be very happy to help but we're not.

Ndumiso: Not everything is about girls Namu hawu.

Nkosinami: Ai suka.

They washed their hands and went to the house where they found Mampanza seated crocheting something with her big glasses on.

Ndumiso: Ntomb'endala we're done.

She smiled and fixed her glasses before sending her hand to her breast and took out her wallet.

Mampanza: How much do you charge? I usually pay R150 I don't know about you.

Ndumiso: It's okay. You don't have to pay us. If there's nothing else we would like to go.

Mampanza: No I think we're fine for now.
Thank you.

He nodded and stood up then they reached for their t-shirts and putted them on after making sure that their vests were clean.

They stood up walking to the door and a guy staggered in smelling like brewery. They stopped walking and looked at him as he tried to stand still realising that she had company that day.

He wasn't familiar with them and from their colognes he could tell these weren't his partners in crime. They all knew each other and these guys were not part of them.

Ndumiso: (calmly) Can we help you?

Guy: Can I have...water...yes...I wanted water...

Ndumiso: Asinawo.

Guy: But...

Ndumiso: Asinawo now get the stepping.

He removed his cap and walked out as relief covered her body sending a warm feeling in her heart. For the first time in a while she was going to rest. After that one surely more were coming. The thought of them leaving her all alone sent tears to her eyes but she took a deep breath and swallowed a lump in her throat before she continued crocheting.

Ndumiso and his friend excused themselves and left.

Nkosinami: What if they go back?

Ndumiso: They won't.

Nkosinami: And you know that?

Ndumiso: Yes. You know where that guy lives right?

Nkosinami: Yeah.

Ndumiso: Right we'll check out his house when we get back.

They continued walking whilst he thought of a way to deal with that guy. He had to make sure that nothing traced back to him. But one thing for sure he was going to punish all of them. He despised rapists and what they were doing to that woman was inhumane. How does a guy get a hard on for someone that old anyways? People are really wicked out there!!

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Insert 3

In the forest...

Nkosinami saw a snake wrapped itself around a tree branch and tapped Ndumiso on his back showing him the snake. He looked at it for some time then continued walking.

He bit his lower lip thoughtfully and turned back to it.

Nkosinami: What are you doing?

Ndumiso: How far are we?

Nkosinami: Not far...what are you doing?

Ndumiso: Taking it with me.

Nkosinami: A fuckin snake?!!

Ndumiso: Yes in that way I can get the job done without getting my hands dirty.

Nkosinami: It's still a snake.

Ndumiso: And he's still a rapist what is your point.

Nkosinami: What if it bites you?

Ndumiso: It teeth are locked and I know just a way to get it to him without hurting us.

Nkosinami: Even on tv they use...

Ndumiso: (annoyed) Do you see a camera here? Stop telling me about useless tvs and help me or step back if you won't.

He stepped closer to the tree careful not to make noise and alert it. He took a deep breath and rubbed his sweaty palms together reminding himself why he was doing this. His mother stayed alone since his father was working in Pietermaritzburg what if he actually got a job

away from home and those wicked men come for his own mother?

The thought of his mother in the mercy of someone his age fueled his anger giving him more strength and he swallowed and held it.

He walked back and Nkosinami ran away leaving him behind as he paced up behind him.

Nkosinami: What if it....

Ndumiso: Nkosinami Ncube futeq!!

He kept quiet and led the way.

At the guy's house...

He took a sip on his black label beer then dropped the bottle on the floor then got on bed with his shoes on. He was very horny and drunk at the same time. It was a pity he couldn't go back.

He lazily unzipped his wet pants and took out his manhood. He slowly stroked it whilst thinking of his last sexual intercourse.

That dreadlocks guy wasn't going to stop him he was going back the next day. He couldn't depend on his hand forever.

He grunted with his eyes closed enjoying his handiwork. After a while he reached his peak

and sighed in relief then burped before dropping his head on the pillow whilst chewing then slept.

Outside his mother spilled the water she was using to wash dishes with her granddaughter strapped on her back. She went back to the house whilst cursing as Ndumiso and his friend waited for the yard to clear up.

His sister hang her school shirt and socks on the fence then went to the main house.

Nkosinami: Don't bring that thing closer.

Ndumiso: I'm not stupid.

Nkosinami: Uyalazi ihoboshe kahle wena.

Ndumiso: (impatient) Ngilidedele khona sizolazi kangcono?

Nkosinami: (swallowed) No.

Ndumiso: Good check the coast. I'm coming.

He rushed to his house and got in. He looked at him laying on bed and clenched his jaws feeling more angrier. The snake moved its body wanting to break free. He did a count down then placed it on the headboard before stepping back. It wrapped itself around his arm and then did a hiss sound again then bit him on his neck.

Ndumiso rushed out leaving him alone as it locked its teeth on his neck. He woke up from his sleep and his eyes fell on it wrapped

around his arm as his neck got numb. He screamed pulling it away from him.

Everyone got out of their houses and ran to his house. The neighbors rushed to them as they got alerted by his painful scream as his mother's cries followed.

One of the woman saw Ndumiso running with his friend

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check the coast. I'm coming.

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Everyone got out of their houses and ran to his house. The neighbors rushed to them as they got alerted by his painful scream as his mother's cries followed.

One of the woman saw Ndumiso running with his friend she followed them wanting to see their faces. He tripped and fell on a log hurting his ankle. Nkosinami pulled him up and hang his arm on his shoulder walking with him as he dragged his leg. The woman sighed and went back before she missed more action. She couldn't afford to come up with fake news to her friends the next day.

Nkosinami: You good?

Ndumiso: (grinned stretching his leg) I'll be fine. Let's go.

Nkosinami: It didn't hurt you right?

Ndumiso: Namu please.

Nkosinami: Sorry.

He took a deep breath and continued walking.

Meanwhile everyone stepped back with their eyes popped out. Most of them have witnessed people getting bitten by this type of snake in the fields but not like this.

A teenage boy ran to his mother and bent over with his hands on his knees gasping for air...

Boy: The car broke down on the way.

His mother: (crying) Oh Nkosyami what did I do to deserve this? Go and check his police friends.

He nodded and ran through the crowd as he laid in the middle crying painful with his

pants on his ankles. The weird stares he was getting from the people didn't matter to him but the snake was. The feeling of its skin on his was even more scarier. Maybe God was punishing him from hurting people but God doesn't judge people so it wasn't Him.

He teared his tshirt with his one arm as his neck turned green.

Man 1: Find something and tie him.

Woman 1: It's impossible since the snake bit him on the neck. It'll block his airway.

He gasped for air as his chest tightened. He breathed heavily seeing his life flash before his eyes and clenched his jaws in pain.

His body shook uncontrollably as the veins on his forehead erected.

He gagged and shook harder as the police car approached.

His mother: Please take him to the car... (to her daughter) Bring my handbag.

Everyone shook their heads stepping back.
What if they touched him and the snake bit them too?

Two officers jumped off and rushed to him.
They saw the snake and swallowed then picked him up as foam came out from his

mouth. His eyes rolled to the back and his mother got at the back with him and they closed the door and drove off...

Woman 2: Into zabantu lezi ngothi ngasho.

Woman 3: Ilumbo uqobo akaze ngikbone okunje.

Woman 1: They should consult this is a serious abomination!!

In the river...

Later that day Ndumiso placed his knee on top of the bucket and looked at Nhlahla as she shyly looked down unable to hold his gaze.

Ndumiso: Are you always like this?

Nhlahla: I want to leave. My grandmother is alone I can't leave her for too long.

Ndumiso: Let me walk you home.

Nhlahlala: I can't allow that. Please don't complicate things for me.

He raised his eyebrows and shrugged stepping closer to her. Her heart pounded as she swallowed a lump in her dry throat.

He touched her hair and pulled a few strands stretching them. He smiled impressed...

Ndumiso: Why aren't you plaiting your hair?

Nhlahla: I don't have mone...I don't want to.

Ndumiso: Can I pay for your hair?

Nhlahla: (frowned) Huh?

Ndumiso: How about I take you to the salon tomorrow?

Nhlahla: My grandmother won't allow that.

Ndumiso: Make a plan. I'll see you tomorrow.

He picked the bucket and placed it on her head as Thembalami walked over with her friends. They stopped in their tracks looking at him holding the bucket and her arm with the other hand. Thembalami scoffed in disbelief and attempted to walk to them.

Khanyisile: You can't do that. He could get angry and take her side. You'll get her some other time.

Thembalami: You're right. But this isn't over!!

They walked back...

Nhlahla closed her eyes feeling his minty breath fanning her face as his deep voice vibrated from his throat. Why was he whispering again?

He chuckled softly and stepped back wiping his lower lip. He was coming onto her too hard and he had to reprimand himself. Damn she

was too innocent handle with care type of things!

Ndumiso: See you tomorrow Nhlahlenhle.

Nhlahla: I didn't agree.

Ndumiso: You didn't disagree either. Goodbye.

She smiled shyly and walked away as he smiled back and walked back home. What he was doing felt wrong but then that was where the fun was!!

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Insert 4

At Ndumiso's home...

Mazikhali knocked on Ndumiso's house and stepped back with her hands rested on her waist. She scoffed in disbelief and shook her head biting her lower lip. It couldn't be him not her innocent boy. What has Joburg turned him into? She silently prayed that her suspicions were wrong.

Ndumiso wore his pants and stretched himself opening the door then stepped out greeting her.

MaZikhali: Someone died was it you?

Ndumiso: (yawned) Ma?

MaZikhali: Hey! Answer me.

Ndumiso: Answer what because I don't even understand what are you talking about?

MaZikhali: A few days ago I spoke to you about this and you said you understood but

one of those guys turns up dead how
coincidental is that?

Ndumiso: Ma I don't know what you're
talking about.

MaZikhalí: You didn't kill him? Others said
it's a snake but others believe that the snake
was planted in that house.

Ndumiso: I don't understand but the planting
of the snake part is ridiculous. I thought

snakes were dangerous who the hell is capable of holding a snake?

MaZikhali: Other people can it's dangerous but possible.

Ndumiso: I didn't do it if that's what you think.

MaZikhali: Are you sure? Son you can't endanger your....

Ndumiso: Ma!! I didn't do it. Why would I risk my life for a rapist?

She looked at him in the eyes as he looked at her with a straight face. Maybe he was right! She sighed and dropped her eyes feeling ashamed. How could she accuse her son of murder?

MaZikhalí: I thought you did it. Everything pointed to you.

Ndumiso: I understand.

MaZikhalí: Your breakfast is in the microwave. I'll cook your favorite meal when I get back.

She fixed her doek and the scarf over her shoulders walking away. She stopped and turned...

MaZikhali: There's some money in the room divider if it happens you go to St Lucia today buy fruits for me and keep the change.

Ndumiso: (chuckled) No I'm fine thanks.

MaZikhali: Okay.

He shook his head and went back inside. All of this because she didn't want to apologize. God bless our African mothers.

His phone vibrated on the bedside table indicating a message from his friend.

He reached for his phone and went to take a piss whilst reading "I spoke to someone in Durban in accommodating you. Everything is sorted."

He smiled and went back inside. In a week he had to be in Durban and he couldn't leave whilst danger was still roaming around the corridors nobody was safe.

Then there was Nhlahla she was left with one exam and that sent a wave of relief over him.

He texted Nhlahla and made his bed "Get ready we're leaving in 2 hours. That should be enough."

Nhlahla: I'm not leaving.

Ndumiso: I'm coming to your house then.

Nhlahla: You can't do that.

Ndumiso: Watch me.

He put his phone back on the charger and started preparing for the day ahead.

At Nhlahlala's house...

She stood up and went to wash the cow dung off her hands and rinsed the basin as her grandmother sat on the reedmat under the tree enjoying her tea.

She poured water in the basin as her stomach turned into knots. She has never lied to her grandmother before and she didn't know where to start. From the little he knew about Ndumiso she couldn't really say he was bluffing.

She undressed at the back of their house and started bathing. Why wasn't she standing her ground like she always did to other guys?

But then this wasn't other guys this was Ndumiso. The guy with a soft smile and those sharp eyes that sent electrifying waves to her joints.

Were all the guys from the urban areas like him or what? Nkosinami wasn't like that though. Maybe it was a just him moguy really did the things that make the pots to be undone.

She finished and wrapped a towel around her body and put on her flip flops before going back to the house.

She opened their metal trunk and searched for something to wear He was always clean and smelling expensive she couldn't afford to disappoint.

At Thembalami's house...

Khanyisile placed her empty bucket on the shiny stoep before walking inside the house where she found Thembalami bathing.

Khanyisile: You're bathing? I thought we'll go and fetch water in the morning.

Thembalami: We're

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I can't go there without bathing. Ndu is an early bird walking next to their home still dirty is wrong.

Khanyisile: It just water.

Thembalami: I know but I can't risk anything at the moment. I'm sure he's used to beautiful girls in Joburg who bath 5 times a day I have to keep up with them.

Khanyisile: If you say so.

She wiped her body and took the virginity cream and applied it on her vagina as her vagina dried up when her muscles constricted.

She pushed her finger deeper and flinched feeling a minor discomfort.

Thembalami: Is it supposed to be like this?

Khanyisile: Yes hurry mom needs to bath before they go to Mtheza's house apparently he was bitten by a snake yesterday.

Thembalami: Mtheza? Mtheza? Your Mtheza?

Khanyisile: He was not mine he chose his baby mama over me.

Thembalami: But still...

Khanyisile: Hayi Lami!!

She shrugged and reached for her ironed dress putting it on and went to spill water outside then took her bucket and they left.

At St Lucía...

Ndumiso hang up and went inside the salon where the hairdresser was laying down Nhlahla's edges. She fixed her face and smiled shifting away from her face as she smiled at the mirror admiring herself. She was beautiful and different it was the first time getting her hair done and it felt fulfilling in a way. She felt like a girl from movies as Ndumiso paid for her then leaned over resting his chin on her neck.

Ndumiso: You good?

Nhlahla: Yeah.

Ndumiso: After you.

She giggled and stood up then he put his arm around her waist walking out. She softly removed his arm around her feeling everyone's eyes on her.

She was certain that everyone was wondering what was she doing with an old man like Ndumiso. His body made things worse his big

arms made her feel younger than she already were.

What if people were assuming that they were dating? He paid for her hair surely they were dating. But she was supposed to make him wait or else she was going to look like a loose and immoral girl.

He led her to a seafood restaurant and pulled a chair for her before calling a waiter.

Ndumiso: What are you thinking about?

Nhlahla: Nothing.

Ndumiso: Really now?

Nhlahla: (sighs) Okay what does this mean? You didn't say anything to me except for asking to pay for my hair and now you took me to an expensive restaurant. Are you expecting sex in return?

Ndumiso: (leaned back) Let's correct the sex part if I wanted sex from you. I wasn't gonna pay for anything. As for saying anything do you want me to say anything?

Nhlahla: No I want you...

Ndumiso: Let us stick to no. Should I order for you?

Nhlahla: Yes.

She faked a smile as he placed their order playing with her fingers. He sighed feeling bad then reached for her hands.

Ndumiso: I'm sorry. I like you okay and I would like it if you could be my girlfriend.

Nhlahla: No.

Ndumiso: No?

Nhlahla: (knod her head) Yes I said no.

Ndumiso: Why?

Nhlahla: Because it's too early.

He chuckled letting go of her hands. He kind of expected that from someone like her but he wasn't taking no for an answer especially since he was going to Durban the following week for work. And besides he wasn't a type to beg baby girl better let him in or else he was bulldozing his way to that heart.

He reached for his phone and took a picture of her as she covered her face with her hands. He took more pictures baby girl was cute her cornrows made her look even more beautiful. For some reason her natural beauty was more appealing to her her caring and soft heart was a bonus. This was someone who was capable of making the house a home should they have

kids she was surely gonna take care of them like any good mother would.

Ndumiso: You know you gonna be mine right?

Nhlahla: I...I..we...but..

Ndumiso: Whoever said that was lying.

Nhlahla: Said what?

The waiter placed their food in front of them and Ndumiso pointed at her plate with that smile that made her shy.

Ndumiso: Enjoy your meal.

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Insert 5

At Ndumiso's home...

He opened the door and rubbed his eyes
looking at his father in front of him.

Ndumiso: Msindazwe? When did you get here?

Msindazwe: Last night I assumed you were sleeping so I didn't want to wake you up. Wash your face and put on something we need to go to the fields.

He looked at his overalls and gumboot then sighed.

Ndumiso: Is mom coming?

Msindazwe: My wife is tired she needs to rest.
We'll only carry the sweet potatoes and
bananas

Ndumiso: But father...

Msindazwe: I'll not argue with you Ndumiso.
Your mother is not going to pay people whilst
we're here. Let's go. I'll come and get you in 10
minutes.

He turned and left him there as he brushed his
face then got inside. He quickly made his bed
and washed his face then brushed his teeth
before walking out after sending a text to his
girlfriend.

He went to the main house rubbing his hands together. His father saw him and stood up.

Msindazwe: Take the wheelbarrow.

MaZikhali: We don't greet each other anymore?

Ndumiso: Sorry ma. I'm just tired.

Msíndazwe: That's so unfortunate because when we get back you're going to Khula.

Ndumiso: Father I have plans.

Msíndazwe: Cancel them.

He put on his beanie and walked out as his father followed behind him.

At the tuckshop...

Thembalamí took the mosquito coils and wrapped them with a newspaper walking away as Nkosínamí followed her.

He recharged his airtime and dropped the slip then continued walking.

Nkosínamí: You look different.

Thembalamí: I know.

Nkosínamí: All of this for my friend who doesn't care.

Thembalamí: And you care?

Nkosínamí: You know I do.

Thembalamí: Really now?

Nkosínamí: We both know that Ndu doesn't want you. Following him like this will only turn him off more.

Thembalamí: You know nothing about us. Ndu loves me he's just confused.

Nkosínamí: He ended things with you for a reason. Stop acting desperate Lamí why are you refusing to see the light?

Thembalami: (rolled her eyes and stopped walking) Look I know you think there's a chance for us to be something but there isn't. Accept that and live with it. Ndumiso loves me so much he's just confused Joburg does that to people.

Nkosinami: He's not confused he doesn't want you. Blackmailing him isn't gonna keep him. You have to understand one thing about guys we're never confused. We can cheat do all the unspeakable sh*t but we know who we love. It's either we love you or we don't there's no in between. Forcing yourself down his throat isn't going to help you. Accept that he doesn't want you and move on. Waiting for him like this isn't gonna improve your life. 5 years

later you'll still be here waiting for him to stop being confused whilst he progress in life.

She swallowed looking at him as he stared back at her. God knew how much he loved her and it pained him to see the way she was self destructing. She was living for someone who didn't even care about her.

After failing her matric she just became another village girl who basked in the sun all day and gossiped about the people who were trying to better their lives whilst they waited for a knight in shining armour to take them out from the village.

He faked a smile and turned brushing his face and looked at her trying to act strong.

Nkosinami: If you like I can give you the forms to apply for...

Thembalami: No.

Nkosinami: You didn't allow me to finish.

Thembalami: I don't want to hear it. Namu I know how guys operate you badmouth each other when you want to betray each other. I

won't allow you to use me like that I'm not that naïve and I know my worth. So whatever you think will happen between us forget about it. Don't be that guy.

Nkosinami: You know I'm not like that. I only want the best for you.

Thembalami: The only best thing for me is leaving this place.

He exhaled licking his lips as his heart shattered. His throat dried up and tears filled his eyes.

Nkosinami: (swallowed) You're right. I'm sorry for stepping the line.

He left her there and she sucked her teeth then continued walking as Nhlahla approached with her classmates coming from school.

She looked at the two girls with their inked shirts and smiled softly. A few years back that was her when she wrote her last paper.

Her smile dissolved when she was Nhlahla's beautiful face with her nicely plaited cornrows. Where did she get the money to plait her hair because they're poor?

It can't be her man never because if it was she was gonna bring hell on earth. The rand was gonna drop and the world was gonna stop moving. She wouldn't dare. She clenched her jaws and tried to keep it cool she was going to find her in the river she was going to find her in the river confronting her at that time was going to go South and she didn't want that.

She greeted them and passed as Nhlahla squinted her eyes looking at her. It was her she

had completely forgotten about her. Why was Ndumiso asking her out when he had a girlfriend? Or he wanted sex?

The lollipop she was sucking suddenly lost taste and she took it out and threw it away. She felt like unplaiting her hair at that very moment.

She thought of that sweet message he sent her during the early hours of the morning and clicked her tongue feeling dumber. The nigga was acting he never loved her. Who would cheat on Thembalami with someone like her?

At Ndumiso's home...

Ndumiso processed the payment for Nhlahla's application then tossed his phone to the side sitting down.

His father came from behind the house holding a rake and clicked his tongue walking to Ndumiso as he laughed standing up.

Msindazwe: I won't stand for your laziness. I won't have my wife sleeping with snakes because of the mini forest behind her house.

Ndumiso: It's not a forest father.

Msindazwe: I don't care. Finish up then you can rest.

Ndumiso: Father I'm not 12 you have to understand that.

Msindazwe: I don't care. Go and finish up.

He laughed and wiped his forehead then went to finish up cleaning behind his mother's house.

Later he emptied the wheelbarrow on the rubbish pit then saw Nhlahla going to the river holding a bucket.

He went to his house and came out minutes later then followed her. His father saw him and chuckled.

Msindazwe: Plans are breathing in Joburg.

In the river...

Nhlahla picked up the bucket and placed it on her aching head. She grinned and shut her eyes taking in the pain.

Ndumiso approached and her heart skipped a bit as he smiled seeing her. For some reason she looked as if she wasn't happy to see him which left him confused because the last time he checked they were fine.

Ndumiso: Hey babe.

Nhlahla: Hi Ndumiso.

Ndumiso: Okay. Is everything okay?

Nhlahla: Yes. I'm in a hurry.

Ndumiso: Wait. Why are you so jumpy? I'm talking to you.

Nhlahla: What are you saying?

He took the bucket off her head and she folded her arms pouting. He pinched her cheek chuckling.

Nhlahla: What do you want?

Ndumiso: Okay this isn't funny anymore. What is wrong with you? You don't get to do

that on and off sh*t on me. I'm not going to tolerate a bitcoin wannabe.

Nhlahla: Oh really now? When are you seeing your girlfriend when you're always following me like a puppy?

Ndumiso: Dare come at me with that nonsense again Nhlahlenhle I dare you. I don't even know what you're talking about but already you're insulting me. Don't try me. I won't even beat you but I'll make sure that you pee on yourself. Angzwaní nomuntu ophaphayo mína.

Nhlahla: Isn't Thembalámí your girlfriend?

Ndumiso: She's my ex. We broke up after I left for u. Was that all?

Nhlahla: But she said she's your girlfriend.

Ndumiso: That's on her. I'm not his boyfriend I'm your boyfriend.

Nhlahla: (shyly) You're not mine.

Ndumiso: Yes you're and I don't deal with people with fluctuating feelings. If you wanna know something ask me don't assume whatever nonsense that only make sense in your head. Let's go I'll carry the bucket for you. How is your head?

Nhlahla: Still painful.

Ndumiso: You need to get painkillers..how was your last paper?

Nhlahla: Great.

He picked the bucket and started walking taking the other route. She blushed looking at his 'boyfriend' in his overall and vest. She assumed that he must've been busy with something and probably dropped it for her. Maybe he did love her after all even though she wasn't too sure. Why did he dismiss their argument like that?

He stopped a few meters from their gate and turned to her.

Ndumiso: You'll be fine right?

Nhlahla: Yes.

Ndumiso: Okay. I got you something

He reached for his back pocket and took out a PS written Be My Bae and handed it to her.

She blushed and he chuckled softly raising his eyebrows.

Ndumiso: (smiled) Please be my bae.

She covered her face with her hand giggling shyly. She knew that it was cheap it was the

way he was handling the whole thing that got to her. That smile that smile!

Nhlahla: Okay.

Ndumiso: (smirked) Oh yeah.

He leaned over and kissed her taking her by surprise. She froze and her lower lip trembled as he softly sucked on it. Okay this was her first kiss so he was gonna be her first. He stopped as the thoughts of those guys violating her filled his mind. He brushed her lips with his

and kissed her again pushing those thoughts to the back of his head. He didn't care anymore. The girl was his. After sometime she slowly followed his lead. He placed his hand on her neck and broke the kiss pecking her forehead then whispered

Ndumiso: I love you.

She shut her eyes as her heart melted was it the words or the sound of his voice? Whatever it was it melted her heart.

Thembalami who was hiding behind the trees looked at them and swallowed tearfully as her heart pounded. Was he really into her or it was just a fling?

Ndumiso saw her and removed his hand on her neck stepping back.

Ndumiso: I'll call you.

Nhlahla: Okay.

She took the bucket and left as he jogged to
Thembalami who saw him and ran away....

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Insert 6

In the river...

Ndumiso caught up with her and grabbed her arm clenching his jaws as his ankle ached.

She fearfully looked at him as his chest rose and fell anger visible in his eyes.

Ndumiso: What is your problem? What do you want from me?

Thembalami: So you're cheating on me with her? Her out of all people?

Ndumiso: Excuse me? The last time I checked we broke up! I don't know where do you get this idea of me and you being together and I don't want to know.

Thembalami: No we didn't. You're just confused and it's normal. Ndumiso it's me you love me and you also know that. You can't throw away what we have for someone

like her. She's even... (sighs) She's not good for you.

He scoffed in disbelief. He didn't know what to say at this moment. The reason he kept on avoiding her was because he didn't want to sound rude. He was protecting her dignity. After she begged him to not end things with him years back he agreed for the sake of peace and he never came back home until now. He was expecting her to have moved on by now. Who wait for a boyfriend for years anyway?

She let go of her arm and brushed his face frustrated.

She looked at his veined forearm as he brushed his face then faced the other way. His nicely trimmed beard made the shape of his head more sexier. Everything about him was extraordinary he was perfect a macho guy!

She could already see herself wearing high heels standing side by side with him as he wore his expensive suits. Being rich was going to suit him being his wife was going to be a bonus.

God would have to forgive her but she wasn't letting go. Never!!

Ndumiso: What should I do to make you forget about me?

Thembalami: Nothing.

Ndumiso: There has to be something. I can't live like this. In fear of you attacking my woman in my absence. I know you and I know that you can be a bully but bare in mind one thing should it happen that you hurt her I'm going to come for you. And when I do you'll hate me forever.

Thembalami: (crying) You're breaking my heart with your words. Please stop...

She covered her mouth crying as her heart broke once again. He stood by watching her then sighed...

Ndumiso: You have to accept my decision because if you think of attacking her I'll act on my words and I'm serious.

Thembalami: (held his hands) Ndu it's me. Your Lami. You can't do this to us.

Ndumiso: (bored) Aaah awuzwa wena.

He pulled his hands from his grip and left.
She wiped her tears and shouted...

Thembalami: I won't allow her to break us
apart. You're not in your right mind and I'll
fix that.

He went back to her and held the back of her
neck...

Ndumiso: What was that?

Thembalami: I said I won't allow...

He tightened his grip around her neck and she flinched moving her neck as his nails dug deeper onto her skin.

Ndumiso: I said what was that?

Thembalami: ng..ng..ng...nothing

Ndumiso: Good!

He released her and walked away as she sat on the rock breaking out into a loud sob. Her shoulders shook as she cried painfully for her first love. Her heart was breaking and beating faster than normal. She didn't want anyone else she wanted him and only him. Was that too much to ask for?

Thembalami: (crying) God please make it stop.
I love him!!

At Ndumiso's home...

Later that day before his bedtime his father walked inside his house and sat on the chair next to the window and looked at him for sometime with his arms folded without saying anything.

He got up and sat on the edge looking at him quizzically.

Msindazwe: Are you sure it won't come back to you?

He swallowed and choked on his saliva then coughed uncontrollably hitting his chest as his father stared at him calmly waiting for his answer. How do you answer such question? He wasn't asking if he did it and that alone spoke volumes.

He wiped his tears and looked at him with reddish eyes.

Ndumiso: Baba?

Msindazwe: You look dumber when you do that so stop it.

Ndumiso: I don't know what are you talking about?

Msindazwe: I'm not going to get mad at you for doing the right thing but are you sure it won't come back to you? Did anyone else see you?

Ndumiso: I don't know what are you talking about father.

He scoffed and rubbed his chin before placing his palm on his cheek then raised his eyebrow leaning forward. This boy was good too good for his liking it made him uncomfortable.

Was he that experienced in murdering people to an extent that he could lie with a straight face. No hint of fear.

Msindazwe: Should I be worried boy?

Ndumiso: No.

Msindazwe: Aren't you the one who killed that boy?

Ndumiso: (calmly) No.

Msindazwe: I see. Tomorrow one of my friends I came with is fetching me early in the morning. We can leave together it might help you settle in first before going to work.

Ndumiso: Okay I understand.

He stood up and walked to the door then turned to him...

Msindazwe: Never leave evidence behind. If a second person knows drag him to the mess that will keep him in check. It always work. Goodnight.

Ndumiso: Goodnight.

He walked out and he dropped on his back sighing in relief. That was close.

Leaving the next day might work in his favor drag him to the mess that will keep him in check. It always work. Goodnight.

Ndumiso: Goodnight.

He walked out and he dropped on his back sighing in relief. That was close.

Leaving the next day might work in his favor nobody will suspect him after what he did a few hours back. Now his girl can leave freely without fear.

He reached for his phone and called her again and it still went straight to voicemail.

He got up and wore his pants and a hoodie then left...

At Nhlahla's house...

She looked at her blank screen again and sighed sadly. He was probably calling her but her phone was unreachable. Her clumsiness led to that and putting her phone on rice didn't work.

A soft knock sounded on her window and she got up and peeped on the window coming face to face with him. She giggled and quickly covered her mouth then stepped out.

He lifted her up and spun her around before kissing her.

Ndumiso: (whispered) Why aren't you picking up?

Nhlahla: My phone finally gave in after years of fainting and waking up and slipped to my bath water.

Ndumiso: Sorry. I'll see what I can do....can I ask you something?

Nhlahla: Okay.

Ndumiso: Please come with me. I promise you'll get back before anyone notice that you weren't here.

Nhlahla: Ndu.

Ndumiso: Please. I'm begging you right now. I really want to be with you but I can't stay here. My skin is very sensitive to mosquito bites.

Nhlahla: I can't.

Ndumiso: Please my love.... Okay you'll stay for a few minutes.

She sighed and looked at him as he pouted playfully under the moonlight.

Nhlahla: Few minutes only.

Ndumiso: Okay then let's go.

She went to lock the door and went with him to his house.

At Ndumiso's home...

They stayed for a while chatting then he propped his elbow on the pillow looking at her. She smiled shyly as he brushed her cheek and leaned over kissing her then got in between her legs. Her heartbeat accelerated when her mind registered what was about to happen.

What if he hurt her? Her friends usually told her about how painful the first time was going to be.

His hand went under her top and squeezed her breast as she moaned closing her eyes. He started dry humping her as his d*ck expanded in his briefs.

Ndumiso: You sure?

Nhlahla: (nodded)...

Ndumiso: If you don't want to...

Nhlahla: (eyes closed) I want to.

He removed her top and her pyjama pants then kicked off his boxers planting kisses on her jawline as she opened her legs wider.

He looked at her firm breasts with dark nipples and smiled softly twisting her nipples with his fingertips sending electrifying waves to her coochie.

He planted wet kisses until he reached her bellybutton then slowly lifted her leg then exhaled seeing her pinkish hole it was too tiny it almost made him feel guilty but nah. He was going to fuck that pussy!

He ran his fingertips on her folds then circled her clit with his thumb whilst inserting his middle and forefinger. She grabbed onto the sheets whimpering as a wave of pleasure hit her.

He took out his fingers whilst looking at her face and slowly rubbed himself on her. She threw her head back biting her lower lip as he slowly pushed it in blocking her entrance. She froze and pushed him back as he slowly went deeper stretching that tiny thing whilst biting his lower lip

Nhlahlala: Ndu it's painful.

Ndumiso: Relax your muscles it'll be over soon.

She nodded and he started moving in and out slowly whilst she whimpered in pain.

He leaned over and kissed her lips his other hand holding her neck. He pushed it further and he screamed as tears fell from her eyes. He gave her two strokes and pulled out...

Ndumiso: Should I stop?

She shook his head no and he kissed her lips and curved his back pushing himself in again. He moved slowly and gently for a while. Beads of sweat collected on her forehead he buried his face on the crook of her neck and kissed her whilst fucking her slowly enjoying the warmth of her pussy.

Ndumiso: Oh fuck!! I love you so much.

He gave her a deep kiss and got off bed pulling her to the edge and started fucking her. He moved his waist in circles rhythmically hitting the left and right corners of that pussy as she moaned in pleasure. He hang her leg on his shoulder and gave it to her hard and deep as she moaned louder feeling a lil bit of discomfort mixed with pleasure.

He hit all the right corners grunting as sweat dripped down his back. She dug his nails on his forearms moaning as he fucked her harder. Looking at her cute face whilst buried deep inside her made him feel like thee man! That pussy was so sweet and tight. Damn baby girl

was doing the things he never imagined himself as a person to enjoy sex with a virgin.

He rubbed his finger on her clit whilst giving it to her as she screamed in pleasure spasming on that black cock.

Her legs vibrated as air left her lungs whilst he fucked her through her orgasm filling up space in her tight pussy.

He pulled out and turned her around lying her on her stomach and inserted himself in.

Ndumiso: Mmhhh!!!

She grinned pulling away as he pulled her towards him pushing his legs on bed and pushed her upper body down.

He started off slowly whilst holding onto her waist.

He placed his foot on bed and went for the kill. She moved forward and he dragged her back again as she opened her mouth gasping for air whilst he pounded onto hard and fast.

Nhlahla: (whimpering rhythmically)
Ndu...oh..God.

He groaned and pounded faster as his dreadlocks fell on his face. He pushed them back and curved his back rubbing her clit as she screamed in unbearable pleasure

spasming. They bodies slapped one another creating that clapping sound as he groaned louder his veins erecting as sweat coated his arms.

Ndumiso: Oh yeah...aahhhh!!!

He laid on her and kissed her neck giving her a hickey as he slowed down and his dick twitched inside releasing those fertile seeds shooting straight to that uterus!!

He pulled out leaving a trail of his cum as she laid on her stomach catching her breath. He reached for a towel and wiped himself before wiping her.

He kissed her forehead and pulled her up taking off the sheet and put on a clean one then laid down placing her head on his arm facing the ceiling.

A while later his phone vibrated on the table. He reached for it and glanced at the screen as

Nhlahla caught the first line of the message
"You know how much I love you but you went
ahead..."

She got up and limped to the door angrily.

Nhlahla: Please take me home so that you'll
chat to your girlfriend in peace.

Ndumiso: You're doing it again. I won't talk
to you about one and the same thing over and
over again. Come back to sleep I'll take you
back.

Nhlahla: No. You've got what you wanted let me go.

He pressed the power button and flicked the light laying still on bed.

Ndumiso: You know I think this is the right time to confess since you keep on nagging me.

Nhlahla: I don't care about your confession...

Ndumiso: A few years ago I sold my soul to the devil. It seemed right at that time until they started asking for crazy sacrifices. Asking me to sacrifice my mother's sanity. I wanted to leave but I was told that I can't unless I did something for the dark world.

I never shared this with anyone you're the first one I told because you'll help me....

She placed her hand on the wall searching for the switch as Ndumiso narrated how she was going to help him. Her lips trembled as her teeth hit one another. The atmosphere changed as her body got covered in goosebumps.

Nhlahla: (crying) God please I know I've just sinned but please don't allow me to die.

Ndumiso: Which God my love? We have different Gods unless you meant ours. We've just had sex which means we're one and there's nothing you can do about that.

She slid down the wall crying as urine flew down her thighs...

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Insert 7

At Ndumiso's house...

Nhlahla's chest closed in on her as she gasped for air feeling suffocated. She wheezed as Ndumiso chanted scary words non-stop.

Nhlahla: (softly) God I don't want to die.

After a while he turned and glanced at her then flicked the switch turning the lights on.

He got off bed and prepared water for her to bath.

Ndumiso: Come and bath.

She remained still with her knees raised up rocking herself back and forth.

Ndumiso: Oh you're still stubborn?

She slowly got up and went to bath whilst crying as he cleaned the floor and switched the fan on for a few minutes then switched it off getting on bed.

She finished bathing and wiped her body then lotioned before getting on bed.

Ndumiso: I'm not going to go back and forth with you as if your head isn't functioning. This is the second time you're jumping into conclusions. I spoke to you about this just today and now you're doing it again. Next time I'll do worse trust me and you'll be scared for the whole month.

Nhlahla: (crying) I'm sorry I won't do it again. Please don't kill me. I'm all my grandmother has.. (sniffed) Please.

He chuckled and got on top of her kissing her then rested his arms on either sides of her.

Ndumiso: I won't kill you. I was joking babe please stop crying.

He wiped her tears and buried his face on her neck as her heartbeat went back to normal.

Ndumiso: I wanted you to stop undermining me and listen when I talk to you.

Still on her neck he reached for his phone and placed it on her chest.

Ndumiso: 0619 read that message.

She swallowed and wiped her tears unlocking the phone then clicked on the message from Thembalami pouring her heart out to

Ndumiso. She finished and placed it on the table.

Ndumiso: (looked at her) Am I allowed to get dramatic and pout like you do?

Nhlahla: I thought it was your girlfriend.

Ndumiso: Angzwani nomuntu ophaphayo Nhlahlenhle. This whole dramatic shit isn't cute. I can't spend an hour looking at you pouting and another one explaining myself and another one apologizing if it happens I'm wrong. Stop overreacting think before you act. Someone who act without thinking is annoying. I expect you to handle our matters

in a matured way what is gonna happen when we have kids? Are they gonna get kicked out every time they break one of your plates? Am I gonna sleep on the streets because I forgot to take out the chicken from the freezer? Stop this it's not cute.

Nhlahla: I'm sorry I admit I was wrong.

Ndumiso: (smiled) I forgive you a part of me understands that you're still young but unfortunately in this relationship there's no baby. If I'm wrong I expect you to tell me so that I can correct myself. Throwing tantrums is a set back. Are we gonna have this conversation again?

Nhlahla: No.

Ndumiso: Thank you...I'm also sorry for scaring you. I won't do it again if you don't force me too.

He kissed her lips parting her legs with his knee....

Nhlahla: I can't do it again. It hurts.

Ndumiso: I'll be gentle this time around I promise...Please or I'll put only the tip please.

Nhlahla: Ok.

He kissed her as she closed her eyes whilst he caressed her body...

At Nhlahla's house...

The next morning Ndumiso waited for to get inside and went back home.

She laid down and flinched then laid on her stomach with her legs spread apart.

She never knew guys had sex like that and never got tired. If it was up to him they would've went for it for the whole night. Her vagina was burning and her thighs had cramps.

She wrapped her arms on her pillow and stared at the darkness thinking about the previous night's events.

They weren't supposed to have sex after a few hours of dating. What if he left her after their sex? Tears filled her eyes as she thought of the possibility of him leaving her.

And he had to embarrass her like that by making her pee on herself. That guy didn't love her. Who scare someone they loved like that? She cried and begged him but he remained unaffected. Now that everything had passed she could think clearly and she realised a lot of things she should've done but didn't.

Her heart pounded as she remembered the important thing the condom. She was about to get impregnated by a city guy only because he was charming and knew how to play with words. How could she be so stupid!!

She buried her face on the pillow and cried till she eventually fell asleep.

At Ndumiso's home...

He blew air onto his hands and went to his house as a car flashed its lights in front of the gate.

His father stepped out and went to it smelling fresh and he frowned confused where was he going?

Msindazwe: Ndodana. We're leaving in a bit.

Ndumiso: Leaving to where?

Msindazwe: Ndumiso I told you last night.

Ndumiso: (remembered) Oh crap!!

He rushed inside the house and started preparing for his trip. He felt really bad for leaving. He still needed to get her a phone and emergency pills. He could just stay and leave some other day but leaving was going to be very beneficial to him.

He sat on bed and brushed his face as his head buzzed. Knowing how much he loved to overreact got her heart pounding. Maybe he should've done things differently the previous night but he couldn't not when she was that hot!!

Ndumiso: God this feels so wrong!!

He got up and started bathing before washing the sheet and went to hang it on the washing line.

He finished packing and placed his bag on his bed thinking of a way to communicate with her.

A letter? It was overrated but then it was either that or leaving without saying anything.

He wrote her a letter and put it into an envelope together with his second bank card then went to her house.

He knocked on the window but there was no answer he slipped it on the door and took off without looking back...

Hours later Mampanza walked out of her bedroom and went to wake up Nhlahla in the dining room...

She shook her and she murmured and turned to the side as she shook her harder.

She exhaled and lifted her head looking at her...

Nhlahla: Gogo?

MAMpanza: Wake up it's late.

Nhlahlala: I'm sorry. I overslept.

MAMpanza: No problem I saw that you were tired.

She got up and sat on her butt grinning...

MAMpanza: Is everything okay?

Nhlahla: (faked a smile) Yes everything is fine.

She stood up and went to open the windows and the door. An envelope caught her attention she bent and picked it up.

Mampanza: Are you okay? What happened to your legs

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she bent and picked it up.

Mampanza: Are you okay? What happened to your legs why are you limping?

Nhlahla: I...I...I twisted my ankle...yes I did I would be fine.

Mampanza: I see use MCO it helps.

Nhlahla: I will.

She folded her blankets then went to place them in her grandmother's room. She looked at the envelope with her heart pounding realizing who it was from. Nhlahlehle was well written at the back he was the only one who called her by her full name and oh boy she had a bad feeling about it.

She went out and cleaned then bathed before preparing breakfast for her grandmother after she had her morning bath.

When she was done with everything she went to take the envelope and opened it.

She placed the bank card on the side and started reading the letter.

The first few lines nearly sent her to ICU. So he left? Just like that? Immediately after sleeping with her he left!!

She started breathing heavily and swallowed as her bottom lip trembled. She gained strength and read it again. She finished and folded it wiping her tears as her heart shuttered. She really wanted to understand his reasons for leaving but her heart wasn't having it. He left her!! All she was left with was his bank card and the memories of the best few days she has ever had in her entire life.

"Sthandwa samí I'll come back for you I'm also not sure when..." That felt too cliché in a way. That not sure when might actually turn into years!!

At St Lucia...

Nkosinami walked out of Alpha Pharmacy on a call with his friend...

Ndumiso: Please don't sleep without giving them to her. I don't want to ruin her life like that. Please man.

Nkosinami: Relax I have them with me. If she's not in the river I'll go to her house and

make a plan on how to give them to her without her grandma suspecting anything.

Ndumiso: Thank God you have them. Call me when you reach her.

Nkosinami: Why did you leave so early again?

Ndumiso: It's complicated. Do this one thing for me give her those emergency pills.

Nkosinami: I heard you the first time.

Ndumiso: I had to make sure. Sharp chat later.

He hang up and he shook his head chuckling and continued walking. A thought crossed his mind what if Lami needed a little push to let him go? Maybe this was what she needed with a baby in the picture she might see that she doesn't stand a chance and eventually back off.

He took a deep breathe and walked to the trash bin nearby

Nkosinami: I'm sorry bro.

He dropped the emergency pills in the trash bin and left.

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3 MONTHS LATER Insert 8

At Nhlahla's house...

Nhlahla greeted her grandmother who was seated under the shade crocheting and went inside the house where she placed her bag on the chair then sat down removing her shoes. She flinched placing her swollen feet on the ground as they stung.

She walked to the bedroom where she changed to her summer dress and went to the kitchen to start cooking as her grandmother sadly watched her.

She was juggling work and school but she could tell her granddaughter wasn't happy. She was very sad and losing weight really fast.

Then there was the issue of her pregnancy she was still refusing to tell her about the father.

The neighbors were rejoicing at her misery everyone was waiting for her to fail in life and even though she wasn't bad considering the circumstances the pregnancy was a huge setback.

At Ndumiso's workplace...

The elevator dinged and opened as Ndumiso stepped out with his boss wearing overalls

carrying a file and a helmet with the other hand and walked to the CEO's office.

The CEO placed the helmet next to the leather couch and removed his suit jacket hanging it on his chair.

CEO: If I didn't know any better I would say you don't like your jobs.

Ndumiso: We do but we're not going to lie and pretend like being here is fun.

He poured water for himself and took a sip then walked towards the floor to ceiling window with his hands buried deep in his pockets as Ndumiso leaned back on the chair his hand rested on his lap looking at him.

CEO: I needed a clarification on the blueprints you presented to us the other day but looking at how busy you're we'll look at that when you get back.

Ndumiso: I never said I'm busy. If you need something ask.

CEO: I didn't mean it like that you know but I understand it has been months.

He chuckled as he looked back at him with a stoic expression unaffected by his meaningless chuckle.

CEO: (cleared his throat) We've been observing how you've been committed to your work and we would like to give you a promotion but everything will be finalized when you get back.

Ndumiso: That would be fantastic

Sponsored

ask.

CEO: I didn't mean it like that you know but I understand it has been months.

He chuckled as he looked back at him with a stoic expression unaffected by his meaningless chuckle.

CEO: (cleared his throat) We've been observing how you've been committed to your work and we would like to give you a promotion but everything will be finalized when you get back.

Ndumiso: That would be fantastic thank you.

CEO: Don't mention it you can leave the file there I'll look at it later.

He pushed it towards his laptop and stood up walking out as he looked at him with his heart pounding. He closed the door and he released a breath he wasn't aware he was holding feeling lighter than before. How can one person carry that kind of aura? He commanded respect and attention without even trying.

In the river...

Khanyisile closed the bucket and replied to a few messages on her phone. Nhlahla lifted the bucket and placed it over her head as the nike hoodie she was wearing lifted exposing the dark vertical line on her abdomen. Khanyisile quickly covered her mouth in shock.

She has heard rumours before but for some reason they never believed them or rather they were in denial.

Nhlahla pulled the hoodie and started walking as she grabbed her arm turning her around.

Nhlahla: (annoyed) What do you want?

Khanyisile: You're pregnant? Is it Ndumiso's?

She sucked her teeth and continued walking as Khanyisile pulled the hoodie from behind. She staggered back and dropped the bucket. She clenched her jaws looking at it as it broke and splashed water onto them.

She angrily slapped Khanyisile across the face.

Khanyisile: (shocked) Haa!!Wenzani?

She slapped her again and grabbed her afro as she punched her on the stomach. She bent over grinning as she kicked her abdomen. Nhlahla went to her in full speed and tripped her and she fell on the rock and screamed as her head ached. She grabbed her breast and twisted it whilst biting the other one as she kicked and screamed in pain.

She extended her hand and picked a rock.
Nhlahla saw her and banged her head on the
rock again and got up then ran away.

Khanyisile held her bitten breast crying
painfully with her eyes closed as the village
ladies approached singing and helped her...

At Ndumiso's rental house...

Later that day he passed a group of friends having a braai whilst drinking beer celebrating as the music played in the speakers. He chatted to a few guys and shoulder bumped with them and went to the car parked by the gate holding his bag and jumped inside bringing the engine to life. The crowd cheered whistling and he stepped on the accelerator as the engine roared louder.

The crowd went crazy and others stood up he chuckled and reversed out of the driveway as their favorite verse in Umsebenzi Wethu by Busta came on.

Minutes later he paid the petrol attendant and thanked him then drove off taking a sip on his energy drink.

Driving late at night especially somebody else's car wasn't ideal to him but he had no other option. He wasn't spending another day in Durban he missed his woman like crazy. Not being able to call her drove him crazy because she knew she was doing it on purpose. She used his card all the time but never bought a phone he needed to teach her a lesson because it was clear that she had to cry for him to be heard.

He took another sip on a drink and leaned back as the traffic light turned green then drove into the night...

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At Ndumiso's house...

The next morning his mother stepped out from her bedroom and smiled softly seeing him seated in the dining room having coffee. He placed down the cup and stood up hugging her as she smiled happily.

MaZikhali: Money loves you look at how fit you're.

Ndumiso: (chuckled) It feels safe and cared for around me. How are you feeling?

He pulled a chair for her and went to make a cup of tea for her.

MaZikhali: I'm fine it's just my ankle acting up but I'll be fine.

Ndumiso: I'll give you a rub later on. How are your sinuses?

MaZikhali: Worse since your people started with the renovations it has been bad.

Ndumiso: Dad told me they have complaints.

MaZikhali: Ayi suka they were trying to bully me because I'm a woman but your father sorted it out.

He placed the cup in front of her and sat down. He had missed these mornings with her mother just listening to her complaining about the neighbors and everything she saw worthy to complain about.

Even though there was a topic he wanted her to talk about he couldn't ask her straight up. He didn't want to make her suspicious.

Mazikhali: (sipped) I nearly forgot Mzobe and his wife got arrested.

Ndumiso: Serious?

Mazikhali: Yes apparently they were not allowed to sell alcohol since they had no licence.

He stood up and went to start on breakfast as she continued speaking.

Mazikhali: The police turned their backs on them since most of their colleagues died of alcohol poisoning shortly after you left.

Ndumiso: They died?

MaZíkhalí: More than 5 people died and most people suspect MAMpanza.

Ndumíso: What?!!

MaZíkhalí: Apparently it seemed as if the people who died were targeted.

Ndumíso: Why would she target certain people?

MaZíkhalí: I don't know I think there's something they aren't telling.

Ndumíso: Serves them right though ubaní one víp beer espotíní?

MaZíkhalí: (chuckled) They wanted them to feel special look where it got them.

Ndumiso: Aí asazí.

She placed the cup on the saucer and stood up.

MaZíkhalí: Let me go and bath No avocados for me please.

Ndumiso: (laughing) Oh you're being choosy?

Mazikhali: (laughing) Ai suka.

He laughed and rinsed the tomatoes on the sink as his phone rang...

Ndumiso: Hello.

Voice: Morning sir you're speaking to Bongwe from Elephant Lake Hotel.

Ndumiso: (wiped his hands) Yes.

Voice: Our call got disconnected and I've been trying to get hold of you for hours now. It's about your booking.

Ndumiso: Oh yes I'm sorry about that there was load shedding in the area so the network was acting up.

Voice: I understand.

Ndumiso: Yeah...as I said before please add a spa treatment if possible.

Voice: For two?

Ndumiso: No for one person.

Voice: Got it. Anything else?

Ndumiso: No that's all.

Voice: Okay Thanks

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there was load shedding in the area so the network was acting up.

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Voice: For two?

Ndumiso: No for one person.

Voice: Got it. Anything else?

Ndumiso: No that's all.

Voice: Okay Thanks Goodbye.

He hang up and placed the pan on the stove.

At Khanyisile's house...

She was laying on her back on bed sucking a lollipop with her bandaged head rested on a pillow whilst Thembalami sat on the bench by the door.

Khanyí grinned placing her hand on her face as the sun rays coming from the single window of her mud house blinded her vision sending a sharp pain on her already aching head.

Thembalamí: How do you allow a child to beat you up like that?

Khanyísile: She took me by surprise because I wasn't expecting her to go all psycho on me. I

mean she just attacked me out of nowhere...please pull the curtain down for me.

Thembalami got up and went to pull the old sheet acting as a curtain on her window and went to sit down still digesting what her friend was telling her.

Khanyisile: We can't let her get away with it. She's even pregnant if we let this go then she wins and you need to forget about whatever plans you had of getting out of here.

Thembalami: I've done everything and I can't do anything more to her Ndu threatened me.

Khanyisile: You need to think of something! We can't let her get away with this.

She sighed deeply brushing her face feeling defeated.

At Nhlahla's workplace...

Nhlahla appeared walking with the security guard and Ndumiso straightened stepping away from the car. He bit his lower lip raising his eyebrows looking at her wide hips stretching her skirt and went up to her shirt catching a glimpse of her cleavage. Goodness what was she eating the past few months? Her hair had been cut and oh boy she was flames! A champagne of looks with her funny looking full cheeks.

The security guard opened the gate with a smile leading Nhlahla out as she licked her lips trying to stabilize her breathing as her heart pounded.

The security guard smiled at him as he raised a thumb up then turned his eyes to Nhlahla.

He held her arms and embraced her taking a deep breath then held her tighter as she closed her eyes inhaling his intoxicating cologne. She rested her face on his left breast relaxing as her heartbeat went back to normal at least he didn't notice the changes in her body. She sniffed realising how much she missed his big arms around her his soft smile his authoritative voice his cologne but mostly his presence!

Ndumiso: (softly) Don't cry. I'm here now.

He broke the hug and wiped her tears smiling as more tears fell. He leaned over and kissed her then led her to the car.

Ndumiso: You good?

Nhlahla: Yes.

He nodded and she leaned back on her seat taking a deep breath then looked around not believing her eyes. She was convinced that she was not going to see him ever again and now he was there in flesh.

She looked at him as he started the car with his hand on the gear stick revealing his veined forearms reversing out and smiled impressed. Was this all hers?

Ndumiso: You look beautiful.

Nhlahla: (blushed) Thank you.

Ndumiso: Siyalíwe yini indoda ngahlukunyezwa kangaka?

Nhlahla: (blushed as butterflies filled her tummy)....

Ndumiso: Nhlahlenhle?

Nhlahla: (cleared her throat) Chabo.

Ndumiso: Kuhle ke makunjalo...Connect your phone on the Bluetooth and play some music.

Nhlahla: I..I..I don't have a phone.

Ndumiso: That's impossible cause I remember clearly telling you to buy it.

Nhlahla: (slowly) I didn't.

Ndumiso: (snorted looking ahead) I see.

He turned to her and chuckled in disbelief then bit his lower lip his hand rested on her thigh joining the tar road as she looked back confused.

Nhlahla: Where are we going? I can't leave...

Ndumiso: I'm still angry at you can you please keep quiet? Your grandmother is fine you're coming back tomorrow. Stop panicking.

Nhlahla: I don't have anything in my bag.

Ndumiso: I know relax I got you.

At Elephant Lake Hotel...

Hours later she got off the massage table as the masseuse packed everything.

Moments later Ndumiso stepped in and shifted away from the door allowing them to step out then looked at Nhlahla as she walked over hugging him.

Ndumiso: You liked it?

Nhlahla: Ofcourse I loved it even though it would've been fun if we both did it.

Ndumiso: My body is fine unless they massage dicks then I don't mind.

Nhlahla: (giggled shyly) Really now?

She broke the hug and looked up at him then dropped her eyes and buried her face on his chest. He smiled and cupped her face kissing her.

He untied her robe and picked her up directing her to bed then gently laid her down whilst kicking off his shoes. He removed his tshirt and arched his back unzipping his pants. He froze looking at her small pregnancy bump.

He looked up to her face as she stared back at him with her lower lip trembling...

He sighed and zipped his pants sitting at the corner of bed as his erection slowly died down...

Ndumiso: You're pregnant?

Nhlahla: (sat up) I'm sorry I didn't know I was pregnant until late. I thought maybe since it was my first time I won't fall pregnant. It was stupid of me and I'm sorry.

She sniffed wiping her tears with the back of her hand.

Ndumiso: You didn't take the morning after?

Nhlahla: No I didn't buy it. I was too stressed to think about buying them.

Ndumiso: You didn't talk to Namí?

Nhlahla: (offended) You think I slept with him?

Ndumiso: No I... (sighs) It's okay. Come here.

She crawled over towards him as he held her and placed his hand on her bump.

Ndumiso: You should've told me.

Nhlahla: I was scared I didn't want you to think I'm using a baby to trap you.

Ndumiso: Woman it's my sperm you can trap me with it anyday!....so I made a baby?

Nhlahla: I think so.

He pressed his lips together in disbelief why was he surprised though? That kind of sex was likely to result in a baby. Now that explained the wider hips and chubby cheeks.

Nhlahla: If you're still shocked...

Ndumiso: Shocked? We had sex and I made a baby nothing shocking about that...thank you for keeping her.

She chuckled tearfully and rubbed her eyes as he unzipped his pants kissing her. His manhood expanded as he kicked off his boxers whilst she opened her legs wider accommodating him...

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Insert 10

At Elephant Lake Hotel...

Ndumiso tipped the waiter and walked to the door with a towel wrapped around his waist. He closed the door behind him and dropped his wallet on bed walking to the bathroom where Nhlahla was brushing her teeth on the sink with a towel wrapped around her body.

He held her from behind as she rinsed her mouth and then wiped her lips looking at him in the mirror.

Ndumiso: (whispered against her ear) I love you.

Nhlahla: I love you too.

She said blushing catching a glimpse of his left breast where her name was tattooed in an italic font. She tilted her head to the side as he nibbled her ear breathing onto it as her whole body came alive.

He removed the towel and planted kisses on her back his hand squeezing her sensitive breast

as she closed her eyes. His other hand went to her swollen coochie and softly parted her folds inserting his finger as her breathing picked up.

He fingered her whilst rubbing her clit with his thumb as she softly moaned parting her legs. He removed his finger and brought it to her mouth and she slowly sucked on it as he bit his lower lip pressing his rock hard veined cock on her ass dry humping her. Her pussy throbbed feeling that hard dick on her ass. She released the finger and looked at him in the mirror with pleading eyes.

Nhlahla: Please.

Ndumiso: What?

Nhlahla: Please put it in.

His hand went up to her neck he held her neck and pulled her back whispering against her ear...

Ndumiso: I'm going to fuck this pussy and you're not going to stop me okay?

Nhlahla: (knod her head)...

Ndumiso: I don't hear you.

Nhlahla: (breathlessly) Ye...Yes...oh babe fuck it it's all yours.

He released her neck and curved his back lowering himself and rubbed the tip on her entrance before slowly pushing it in. She held onto the sink tighter sticking her butt out and he pulled out and smacked her opening as she whimpered her eyes half closed. He rammed inside her and she screamed out loud taken by suprised.

Her pussy walls expanded accommodating that big fat cock as he grunted softly feeling her warmth.

Ndumiso: Shit!!

He slowly moved his waist whilst holding her shoulder looking in the mirror then increased his pace after a while.

Nhlahla: Uh..uh..

Her walls clenched around his dick as her legs vibrated then she moaned louder. He bit his lower lip his ego skyrocketing looking at her sexy expression as she came around his cock. He held her hips and fucked her harder through her orgasm hitting all the right corners. Her breathing came out in gasps as they bodies clapped against one another whilst her boobs shook.

He looked down at his dick going in and out of her then clenched his jaws hammering that

pussy even harder moving his waist in circles his veins erecting on his arms sweat dripping on his back.

She licked her lips and gasped catching her breath as she drilled into her harder then she shut her eyes tilting her head up feeling her wave of pleasure approaching. He held her shoulder and pumped inside her. He groaned freezing inside her then stuffed that warm pussy with his thick cum.

He remained still then pulled out before turning her around and kissed her exhausted

sweaty forehead then picked her up directing his semi hard dick back in. He started moving as his dick hardened inside her whilst she wrapped her arms around his neck burying her face on his neck. He went to stand by the wall and bent his legs increasing his pace fucking that tight pussy for a while until he came and they both went to take a shower after catching their breaths...

Later they stepped out of the shower and went to the bedroom where they wiped their bodies and lotioned before getting dressed. He held her hand and led her to the balcony where they were gonna have their breakfast. He opened the chair for her and settled in front of her.

She squinted her eyes when the sun kissed her glowing skin as he uncovered their plates.

Nhlahla: This is beautiful.

Ndumiso: Like you.

She reached for a fork and started eating as he took a few pictures of her then began eating.

Nhlahla: The photographer of our relationship.

Ndumiso: (chuckled) It's my phone my rules.

Nhlahla: I can tell.

Ndumiso: So how long are you going to work?
You need to take a maternity leave.

Nhlahla: Yoooh weeh maternity leave at 3
months!

Ndumiso: Yes we can't risk your pregnancy.

Nhlahla: My pregnancy isn't risky and besides my contract was supposed to end next month.

Ndumiso: Was?

Nhlahla: Yep but since I've been assisting the Geography teacher with her work the principal saw it very beneficial to the school for me to come and assist her full time.

Ndumiso: They'll be exploiting you?

Nhlahla: No he'll pay me from his pocket and besides I could really use this money.

Ndumiso: I don't feel too good about this.
Teaching assistants don't teach.

Nhlahla: (sighs) They don't but he gave me a raise when I started. I was very good in Geography when I was in high school and the school has only one person teaching Geography so they need all the help they can get.

Ndumiso: There are a lot of unemployed graduates out there why my pregnant woman?

Nhlahla: (held his hand) That's because your pregnant woman is the best.

Ndumiso: (snorted) Cocky much?

Nhlahla: What can I say?

Ndumiso: (straight face) We can't deny that you aren't coping. You're unhappy in that school.

Nhlahla: It's nothing I was just stressed about how you would react to the news.

Ndumiso: I see but I'm still not comfortable with you working.

Nhlahla: So what are we going to do about that because I'm not quitting?

He looked at her with her arms folded and a little pout and laughed feeling challenged.

Ndumiso: I yes my dick now you're challenging me?

She rolled her eyes and continued eating...

At Khanyisile's house...

Later that day her sister Buyísile joined Khanyísile and Thembalamí as they sat on the reedmats chatting. She sat by their feet and sighed moving her shoulders sideways with her knees raised up.

Khanyísile: Everything okay?

Buyísile: Yes I'm just tired.

Thembalamí: Teachers don't get tired.

Khanyisile: These ones aren't teachers they clean after teachers only Nhlahlehle is teaching.

Buyisile: Khanyi stop spreading fake news she's just assisting Ms Ndlela.

Khanyisile: Same difference isn't she receiving special treatment in that school? I'm sure she slept with all the male teachers to secure that job.

Buyisile sighed annoyed her sister's bitterness was boring and exhausting.

Buyisile: You know if you both stopped fighting useless battles your lives would be better. Other kids are fighting useful battles fighting for financial freedoms bettering their lives. I'm talking about fights that will take them from one level to another. You're the only ones who are always on other people's business. You're the ones who know who slept with who to secure a job who is driving an expensive car he can't afford who's raising kids that aren't his who's pregnant who's cheating on who. What about your business? When are you attending your poverty? When are you attending this thing of you not working? When are you attending this thing of you of not having financial freedom? You're getting old but yet you both have no direction in life and you

don't have any problem with that. Wena Lami
you think Ndumiso will fall for you? Thee
Ndumiso fall for someone like you? Who bask
in the sun all day hating on people because
they're progressing in life and you're not?

Khanyisile: Heh Buyi...

Buyisile: (gave her a hand) Awume wena... If
the roles were reversed would you fall for
yourself? Not someone like you but You? Huh?

Thembalami: Yes.

Buyisile: Ngoba awsile ekhanda... (stood up)
Find hobbies and leave the poor girl
alone... (turned to Khanyisile) Eyakho
angifuni nokuy'khuluma ngoba angazi

uhlanganaphi no Ndumiso. Ezalukazi
eyndala ezibhoreka kabi!

(because you're stupid...I don't even want to
talk about you because I don't know what is
your business with Ndumiso.)

She walked away as they looked at each other
ashamed. Khanyisile sighed and reached for
her phone calling someone but the phone rang
unanswered...

Khanyisile: Look tell others to stop we've thought about it and it's not worth it anymore. Call me when you get this message.

At the mall...

Ndumiso cupped the gear knob with his hand ontop of Nhlahla's hand and gently moved the lever holding the steering wheel with the other hand leaning back and reversed out of the parking lot as Rude boy by Rihanna played in the background.

Nhlahla sang along whilst making a video as he moved his head slowly then shook his head pushing his dreadlocks back.

He glanced at her singing poorly and smiled feeling content. He didn't know what the future had for them but one thing he was sure about was that as long as they had each other then nothing could defeat them. He just had to be there for her and love her right. He didn't see himself failing to take care of her when he had such a great role model in his father.

He turned to her and pulled her for an intense kiss then pulled back smiling.

Ndumiso: (softly) I love you so much.

Nhlahla: I love you too.

She blushed dropping her eyes as he raised his eyebrows and chuckled licking his lips then looked ahead stepping on the accelerator hard increasing the speed.

Minutes later they parked a few meters away from her home.

Ndumiso: Please call me. For the first time in 12 months.

Nhlahla: (giggled) 3 months.

Ndumiso: Same difference.

Nhlahla: (laughing) I'm sorry I'll buy a PS written I'm sorry okay?

Ndumiso: (laughing) Mxm leave me alone.
That was the best I could do at that time.

Nhlahla: I saw it..

He scoffed and stepped out walking to the boot and took out her shopping bags. She got out holding her handbag and cellphone then he tilted his head to the side opening his arms. She hugged him and they kissed as he squeezed her ass then let go.

Ndumiso: Please call me.

Nhlahla: I will.

Ndumiso: Go I'll watch you.

She took the bags and left as he got in his car and drove off after she got inside their home.

At Nhlahla's house...

Her grandmother washed her hands and scoffed looking at her granddaughter walking towards her. She was glowing and crazy enough she wasn't thin anymore was it her eyes or her concerns about her led her to believe that she was losing weight?

Mampanza: I thought you weren't coming back.

Nhlahlala: I...I thought...

Mampanza: Please get me grandpa from the supermarkets if you're not tired.

Nhlahla: (placed her bags in the bedroom)
Grandpa only?

MAMpanza: Was that the father?

Nhlahla: Gogo.

MAMpanza: What?

Nhlahla: Yes.

MAMpanza: Ummh.

She took money from her bag and left.

Hours Later...

Mampanza put off the candle with her fingers and sat in the dark waiting for Nhlahla to come back. She didn't know what was holding her because the supermarkets were long closed. Maybe she was with her baby daddy.

At Ndumiso's house...

He tried Nhlahla's number again and it rang unanswered. He sighed and flicked the lamp laying down maybe she was already sleeping. He laid on his back looking at the ceiling with a smile on his face.

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Ndumiso

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At Nhlahla's house...

Mampanza woke up from her sleep and stretched herself yawning. She looked around the house and frowned realising that it was the next day and her granddaughter was still not back. She slowly stood up taking her walking stick as she began to worry.

Nhlahla wasn't someone who would leave without saying anything.

She opened the door and thoughtfully looked at the dark clouds her heartbeat dropping. Where was she?

She went back inside and started bathing before sitting on bed thinking of places she might've went to...

At Ndumiso's house...

He sent her a text message and pulled the blanket sleeping. His phone rang and he leaped up grabbing it from the table...

Ndumiso: Babe hey...

Nami: Huh?

Ndumiso: (annoyed) What do you want?

Nami: Is everything okay?

Ndumiso: Why are you calling me?

Nami: Ndu it's me.

Ndumiso: I know who you're. Nami why did you lie to me?

Nami: About what?

Ndumiso: (sat up) I asked you nicely to buy the emergency pills for me and even sent you money but you lied to me.

Nami: About that I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking... I just did it for you. I knew how much you loved her so...

Ndumiso: Whoah don't lie. I never confessed my feelings for Nhlahla to you. You know I'm actually shocked that you would lie to me like this after all the shit we did for each other. How do you expect me to trust you after this?

Nami: I didn't think it was a big deal. I mean it's not like you can't afford the baby...

Ndumiso: (snapped) It's not about that!!
Ofcourse I can afford a baby but she can't.
She's not ready to be a mother and we never discussed that hence I wanted to contain the situation but no you had to play God with our lives... (sighed) I'm sad that you would destroy her life like this. She has school and a whole bunch of shit to take care of before having a baby. You should've told me if you didn't want to buy them for her. I would've got someone else or asked her to but them herself. I

hate what you did and I don't see myself forgiving you.

Nami: Okay I can see that I messed up I'm sorry. We'll talk about this when I get there. I'm also coming home today.

Ndumiso: Aah suka!

He hang up and sat on the edge of bed his heart racing as sadness engulfed him. He looked at the time and brushed his face laying down.

His phone rang again and he closed his eyes ignoring it as it rang a couple of times before he received a text message...

Msindazwe: Call me.

He sighed and called him back...

Ndumiso: Msindazwe.

Msíndazwe: I've been calling you what is going on?

Ndumiso: Nothing my phone was on silent.

Msíndazwe: I can tell I've transferred my share of the payment to your account. Pay those people when they're done.

Ndumiso: I saw it but why contribute more than we agreed on?

Msíndazwe: That's my house you can't contribute more in your father's house. Enjoy your money....While we're still talking about that. Are you sure about the baby?

Ndumiso: Yes I'm sure. It's mine.

Msindazwe: The mother is that short girl?

Ndumiso: (chuckled softly) Father...

Msindazwe: What? You said she's from the neighborhood so I assumed it was her. Your 'plans'.

Ndumiso: Yes it's her.

Msindazwe: Ummmh. When are they reporting the pregnancy?

Ndumiso: I'll talk to her and let you know.

Msindazwe: I'll hear from you. Let me call you back I'm still busy with something.

Ndumiso: Okay bye.

He hang up and switched off his phone and switched on the fan laying down rubbing his heavy eyes. He was tired and he didn't even get a good sleep the day before because of nightmares. He couldn't remember what the nightmares were about but whatever they were about made his heart skip a bit.

At Thembalamí's house...

They both paced up and down waiting for a call...

Khanyísile: Can't we call them again?

Thembalamí: No

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bye.

He hang up and switched off his phone and switched on the fan laying down rubbing his heavy eyes. He was tired and he didn't even get a good sleep the day before because of nightmares. He couldn't remember what the nightmares were about but whatever they were about made his heart skip a bit.

At Thembalamí's house...

They both paced up and down waiting for a call...

Khanyísile: Can't we call them again?

Thembalamí: No we've been doing that all morning.

Eventually her phone rang and she went to stand by the window picking...

Thembalamí: Why weren't you calling us?

Voice: Relax I was still busy. What's up?

Thembalamí: Did you go through with it?

Voice: No we got the voice message on time.

Thembalamí: (relieved) Thank you so much.

Voice: When are you paying us?

Khanyisile: For what? You didn't do anything.

Voice: No you don't get to tell me that nonsense. I was going to do it had you not called everything off.

Khanyisile: He's right.

Voice: 7pm at our usual spot and dare try to act smart with me.

Thembalami: We won't. Bye.

The call got disconnected and she turned to Khanyisile smiling.

Thembalami: That went well.

Khanyisile: It did because honestly we wouldn't have been able to live with ourselves knowing we had a hand in someone else's death

Thembalami: You're right about that. I just have to find something else and leave her alone.

Khanyisile nodded leaning back on the chair.

At Nhlahla's house...

Mampanza locked the door and rubbed her eyes then went to look for Nhlahla.

She asked everyone she met on the way but nobody knew where she was.

After a while she sat on the big rock by the road and sighed sadly getting discouraged. What if her granddaughter was kidnapped and used for rituals?

She frowned rubbing her teary eyes failing to stomach the thought of something happening to her granddaughter. She couldn't afford to lose her not after her daughter trusted her with her only daughter.

She could've asked her father's family to take her but she trusted her because she believed she could do a better job in raising her.

She rested her forehead on her clenched fists at the top of her walking stick as the image of her daughter's empty eyes staring at her on her death bed filled her mind.

Her pregnancy was complicated and she was well aware that there was a possibility of her not waking up after surgery. Her wish was for her baby to at least be raised by someone who would love her and care for her.

When she chose her mother MAMpanza was grateful and she vowed to raise her with nothing but love and now she has lost her.

Nobody went missing for such a long time and turned up alive.

After a while Ndumiso appeared and pulled over next to her stepping out...

Mampanza: (sniffed) Nduduzo my boy is that you?

Ndumiso: Yes it's me. What are you doing here?

Mampanza: I'm looking for Nhlahla.

Ndumiso: On the road? Why would you look for her?

Mampanza: I sent her to buy grandpa yesterday and she never returned home.

Ndumiso: What? Are you sure?

Mampanza: Yes.

Ndumiso: Where did she buy it?

Mampanza: In the supermarket in these containers they only sell compral and panado.

Ndumiso: (panicking) Come and let's go look for her.

He held her hand and led her to the car then drove to the supermarket...

Upon their arrival he got off the car and went inside then showed the shopkeeper a picture of Nhlahla..

Shopkeeper: She did come here yesterday and bought bread...no tablets and stímorol.

Ndumiso: Then left?

Shopkeeper: Yeah.

A police van flashed its lights driving past the supermarket and shortly after that an ambulance followed.

Shopkeeper: These people don't get tired of killing each other. I swear this is the worst place ever.

Customer: Apparently a girl was found murdered in the river. When I finish here I'm going there to watch.

Ndumiso: Sorry when was she murdered?

Customer: I don't know she was found this morning by the herdboys. The ambulance was probably called hours back but as usual they took their time.

He slid his phone in his pocket and went to his car driving to the river forgetting about the tiles he was sent to buy...

In the river...

They parked behind the police cars and got off the car walking to the river where people were gathered whilst the police took a statement. The paramedics stepped back as the hearse slowly approached.

People allowed them to pass and they walked to the body covered in a body bag on top of the rock. The police held them back...

Ndumiso: We want to look maybe we know her.

The officer went to the body and unzipped the bag as he swallowed his heart pounding harder when he laid his eyes on the body. She covered her mouth in shock disturbed by the state the body was in...

Officer: Mam do you know her?

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Insert 12

In the river...

Officer: Mam do you know her?

MAMpanza: No it's not her.

Officer: Are you sure?

MAMPANZA: Yes I don't know this girl.

The officer zipped the bag as Ndumiso quietly held her hand and they left...

Atleast it wasn't her that gave him a little hope. He sighed relieved and got into the driver's side then reversed...

Ndumiso: I think we need to go to the police station maybe they might help us.

Mampanza: Those people don't take us serious. I won't waste my breath on them.

Ndumiso: We'll go together. They'll help us.

She sternly looked at him as he cleared his throat looking ahead.

MAMpanza: Why do you care so much about us?

Ndumiso: I care about everyone.

MAMpanza: If you say so.

His phone rang and he picked...

Ndumiso: Ma?

MaZíkhalí: How far are you?

Ndumíso: With what?

MaZíkhalí: Ayíbo Ndumíso!

Ndumíso: (remembered) Tíles ma look I'm still held up somewhere. I'll be there in 3 hours.

MaZíkhalí: Ayí Ndu.

Ndumíso: I'm sorry.

MaZíkhalí: Okay.

She hang up and he drove for a while then turned to the police station. He parked the car in the parking lot. They got off and went inside. They looked around the reception area and joined the que as the officers chatted and laughed whilst certifying some documents.

He tapped his foot anxiously on the floor glancing at his wristwatch from time to time. The que moved slowly until he got fed up and stood up then went to the front desk They stopped laughing and watched him.

Ndumiso: Can I get help around here?

Officer: Join the line you can't...

Ndumiso: You won't come at me with that nonsense. I've been here for some time now watching you chatting and laughing.

Officer 2: Okay...okay no need to get worked up...sir how can we help you?

Ndumiso: We're here to open a case for a missing person.

Officer 2: Has 24 hours passed?

Ndumiso: No.

Officer 2: How old is he?

Ndumiso: She's 20 years.

Officer 2: There's nothing we can do for you.
That person probably went to visit her
boyfriend.

Ndumiso: I'm the boyfriend.

Officer 2: Iyoooh and that's her mother?

Ndumiso: Grandmother.

Officer 2: We can't help you. Wait for 24 hours.

Ndumiso: Mr police officer...

Officer 2: Colonel...

Ndumiso: I don't care you want to tell me that with all the GBV cases getting reported everyday there are cases you take for granted? Huh?

Officer 2: That's not what I said.

Ndumiso: If it happens something happens to her I will hold you accountable. I'll personally

make sure that you get fired and never get hired anywhere after that.

Officer 2: Are you threatening me?

Ndumiso: Threats are for cowards.

He swallowed stepping back and pulled a file taking out the pen.

Officer 2: You said what happened again?

He called Mampanza and she walked over to them and narrated the whole story then moments later they walked out.

The police gathered discussing them...

Officer 1: He probably killed her.

Officer 2: My suspicion exactly

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now he's here ordering us around pretending to be a caring son in law.

Officer 1: I know his type don't allow him to get to you. He wanted to score points with us.

He shook his head and then called the next person on the que.

Meanwhile outside she rested her hand on the wall bending down as her back ached.

Ndumiso: Are you okay?

Mampanza: I'll be fine my back is aching. I never stand for this long.

Ndumiso: I see.

She held her hand and they walked slowly and he opened the back door for her then got inside driving out.

They went to buy the tiles and then went to pharmacy before he drove her home.

Ndumiso: (helped her sit on a chair) Are you sure you'll be fine? I can get someone to help you.

Mampanza: (shook her head) Are you the father?

Ndumiso: What?

Mampanza: That's the only sound explanation.

Ndumiso: I'm...I..

Mampanza: Yes or no. Come to think of it that was the car that dropped her off yesterday.

Ndumiso: (brushed his hands) I'm sorry.

Mampanza: So it's you?

Ndumiso:...

Mampanza: You can leave.

Ndumiso: Thank you.

He walked out as she grinned arching her back then stood up and went to lie down after praying for her granddaughter's safety.

She thought of her pregnancy and scoffed in disbelief. Why would Nhlahla hide him?

Yes she wasn't impressed with the pregnancy but the father was responsible and he respected

women. That alone was enough for her to accept him.

At Thembalami's house...

Later that day Nkosinami stood by the fence talking to Thembalami.

Nami: I can't help you if you don't tell me the problem.

Thembalami: We ordered a hit on Nhlahla and later called it off but now Khanyi is blackmailing me with that information.

Nami: You think I have got time to waste. Nobody orders a hit on someone and go around telling people.

Thembalami: I'm serious. I suggested something else but Khanyi insisted on getting a hitman.

Nami: A hitman all for a man who doesn't want you?

Thembalami: (crying) I know it was stupid off me but I'm desperate Ndu can't find out about what I tried to do especially since she's now missing.

Nami: She's missing?

Thembalami: I heard people talking about it.

Nami: Yoooh he's going to kill you.

Thembalami: I hope it doesn't come to that.

Nami: Believe me it'll. You don't know how protective he is over that girl. He kills for her literally.

Thembalami: Oh God!!

Nami: Call your hitman and confirm the cancellation.

Thembalami: I'm going to meet up with him right now. I need you to convince Ndumiso that I didn't do anything. You're the only person he trusts so please take advantage of that.

Nami: I'll try let's go...

Minutes later the hitman arrived in their usual spot...

Hitman: What is this?

Nami: I'm paying so I deserve to be here.

Hitman: Oh okay.

Nami: Are you sure you didn't kill her?

Hitman: Yes. I didn't touch her. I swear.

Nami: (looked at Lami) That's better.

She nodded and rubbed her arms looking around as the guys counted the money...

At Ndumiso's house...

Later that night Ndumiso stayed in the dark watching videos on his phone. Her videos brought tears to his eyes as he tilted his head up rubbing his eyes.

She can't leave him. It was impossible. They've been looking all over for her but she was nowhere to be found.

A knock spun on the door. He paused the video and flicked the lamp standing up...

Ndumiso: Yes.

Voice: Police open!!

He opened and stepped out looking at them under the moonlight as their cars flashed their lights in the middle of the yard.

Police: Are you Ndumiso Mdletshe?

Ndumiso: Yes.

Police: We would like you to come with us.

Ndumiso: Why?

Police: A body that matches Nhlahlenhle's description has been found in the bush by one of the drunkards.

Ndumiso: We're leaving now? The lady we saw earlier in the river also matched her description.

Police: I don't know about that...The old lady asked to come with you if you don't mind.

Ndumiso: No I don't I'm coming.

He went inside and put on a hoodie taking his phone with him. He put his hands together on his face praying for her safety. She was definitely not dead his Nhlahla was out there probably scared but definitely not dead!!

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Insert 13

At Ndumiso's house...

He saw her mother getting out of her house
and excused himself...

MaZikhali: What is going on? What are the police doing here?

Ndumiso: Nhlahla is missing and they might now something so we're going to confirm if it's really her.

MaZikhali: Oh! Do you want me to come with you?

Ndumiso: No you can go back to sleep.

MaZikhali: Let me know how it went. I'll wait for you.

Ndumiso: Okay mama.

He walked to the police car and found Mampanza seated at the back with her eyes closed. He greeted her and looked ahead then the police drove out as he swallowed non-stop wetting his dry throat.

Minutes later they parked at the entrance of the bush and walked inside lighting their torchs to where other officers and the forensic team were waiting for them.

They took a deep breath and leaned over looking inside the black body bag as the officer lit her face.

Mampanza quickly let go of his hand and fell on her knees crying touching her face all over. He clenched his jaws and brushed his face in disbelief.

Police: Is this her?

Mampanza: (crying) Oh my baby! Yoooh my God not my baby!

Ndumiso: Yes it's her.

There she was laying with her eyes opened and blood coming out from the corner of her mouth and a big scar on the left side of her face.

She pulled the zipper down and her hands shook as she stared at the stab wounds on her chest and tummy. Her chest rose and fell as her airway tightened her blood pressure

skyrocketing and then she placed her hands on her chest gasping for air.

The paramedics quickly attended to as the other one brought a stretcher and they took her to the ambulance whilst the police zipped up the body bag and held each sides walking away as he stared at where she was laying.

One officer tapped him on the arm and he turned...

Officer: Please step back this is a crime scene and we would also like to take your statement.

Ndumiso: I will come down to the station tomorrow.

Officer: We need it now.

Ndumiso: I said tomorrow Mr officer.

Officer: I hear you.

He walked out of the forest just as people gathered in their sleepwear.

Others whispered amongst themselves pointing at him as he walked to the ambulance...

Ndumiso: Will she be fine?

Paramedic: Her blood pressure is too high but she'll be fine.

Ndumiso: You won't admit her?

Paramedic: No she'll go back home. Will you be able to wait for her?

Ndumiso: (sighed) No.

The paramedic nodded and he slid his hands in his pockets and took the long journey back home.

In his arrival at home he stripped naked and left only his boxers then sat in the dark leaning against the wall until the next morning.

In his mother's house...

The next morning she placed down the bucket and then wiped her hands reaching for her ringing phone.

MaZikhalí: Baba unjaní? (how are you)

Msíndazwe: I'm fine how are you doing this morning?

MaZíkhalí: Not fine when I was fetching water I heard that your daughter in law has passed on.

Msíndazwe: When did that happen?

MaZíkhalí: They found her last night. Apparently they found another body the day before but luckily it wasn't her but a woman murdered by her abusive boyfriend.

Msíndazwe: Does he know?

MaZíkhalí: (sighed) Yes he saw her last night.
I went to his house today but he ignored me.

Msíndazwe: That's not good. (took a deep
breath) I'll talk to my boss and then come
back home.

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

Msíndazwe: It's worth a try I need to be there
I'm sure he needs me let me call you back.

MaZíkhalí: Ok.

She stepped out and looked at his house she couldn't imagine the pain he was going through. Losing the mother of your child and your child at the same time.

If only he could open the door so that she could confirm that he was alright. He loved her she saw it in his eyes a few days back. His endless smiles and beaming face. Her son was happy and content and now all of that was gone leaving him with nothing but sadness.

Moments later he stepped out and went to the gate but turned back when he saw her...

Ndumiso: Mama how are you?

MaZikhali: I'm fine you?

Ndumiso: (faked a smile) I'm good. Is everything okay?

MaZikhali: I heard about your girlfriend. How are you holding up?

Ndumiso: I'll be fine.

MaZikhali: Are you sure?

Ndumiso: (swallowed) I'm sure. We'll talk when I get back. I need to be somewhere.

She nodded and he left...

At Nhlahla house...

He knocked on the door and stepped back.
Being there felt weird he wasn't comfortable

especially since he has been sleeping with their daughter.

MAMpanza slowly opened the door and went back in after inviting him in.

Ndumiso: How are you doing gogo?

MAMpanza: Trying my best to calm down. I can't die without burying her.

Ndumiso: I understand is there anything I can do for you?

Mampanza: I need to inform her father's family and my son about her passing.

Ndumiso: I can call them for you.

She stood up and went to get her notebook where all the numbers were written.

Mampanza: Search Mbuzeni and Anti Phindile.

He found their numbers and called them putting the call on loud speaker.

Mbuzeni: Hello.

MAMpanza: Mbuzeni this is your mother.

Mbuzeni: Ma I don't have money I recently got demoted...

MAMpanza: Nhlahla has passed on.

Mbuzeni: Hawu that's bad. I'll come after work with my wife.

Mampanza: Oh.

Mbuzeni: Yebo and please inform her family they need to come and take their child.

Mampanza: I'll bury...

Mbuzeni: Ma stop being difficult

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I recently got demoted...

MAMpanza: Nhlahla has passed on.

Mbuzeni: Hawu that's bad. I'll come after work with my wife.

MAMpanza: Oh.

Mbuzeni: Yebo and please inform her family they need to come and take their child.

MAMpanza: I'll bury...

Mbuzeni: Ma stop being difficult you know you can't bury a Ndwandwe in my father's home Sindi was married to that man and Nhlahla was born in wedlock. We have no business burying her.

Mampanza: Why are you saying it like this wasn't her home?

Mbuzeni: That's because it wasn't. Nhlahla needs to go back home eHluhluwe. We can't waste our money burying her. I'll call you my wife is calling me.

He hang up and she sighed wiping her tears. Reality hit her she was alone with no one to

help with the burial. She knew the Ndwandwe family and knowing the kind of people they were a huge fight was about to break out.

Ndumiso: Should I call the other one?

Mampanza: (sniffed) Call her.

It rang for a while before she picked...

Phindile: Yebo.

Mampanza: Phindi it's me Nhlahla's granny.

Phindile: (shuffling) Awu ma is everything okay?

Mampanza: Nothing is okay. It's Nhlahlehle Nhlahla has passed on and I thought I should inform you.

Phindile: Nkos'yami when did this happen?

Mampanza: Last night.

She hang up and called them back after a few minutes.

Phindile: I'm sorry for hanging up on you. I was still shocked.

Mampanza: I understand.

Phindile: I'll let the family know and get back to you. I'm not home at the moment so I'll be there tomorrow.

Mampanza: It's okay.

Phindile: Don't worry I'll help wherever I can.
Are you with someone there?

Mampanza: Yes.

Phindile: Okay Please get her body transferred to Siphosethu funeral services today before they charge us more. I know how corrupt your police are so they obviously called private funeral services to remove her body from the crime scene.

Ndumiso: I'll do that.

Phindile: Yes...that'll be all. I'll have someone bring the necessary documents to you.

Mampanza: Thank you.

Phindile: You don't have to remind me this was my brother's child. Don't call anyone at home. They might blame you. I'll call them. If you need anything please let me know.

Mampanza: We will.

Phindile: Okay bye mama.

She hang up and she exhaled in relief.

Ndumiso: I need to go to the police station
don't you have any relatives I can call?

MAMpanza: It's only my son so I'll wait for
him. You can leave I will be fine.

Ndumiso: I see. I'm sorry for your loss. I'll
come and fetch you later.

MAMpanza: Okay I'll wait for you.

She sighed and rubbed her swollen eyes and he got up and left...

She looked around the room and bit her lower lip regrettably. If only she settled for the panado none of this would've happened. She probably screamed for help before taking her last breath. She shut her eyes thinking of the pain she went through when they stabbed her. They probably started with her stomach killing her soul first before finishing her off. Nhlahla was innocent she didn't deserve what happened to her. She was only 20 years!!

She threw her head back crying hysterically as a few women welcomed themselves in carrying their bibles with scarfs over their shoulders. They embraced her as she sobbed letting it all out. They started singing softly as their tears fell. It wasn't about Nhlahla anymore it was about the dark cloud hanging over their village. They were losing their daughters like flies and nobody was doing anything about it. If it wasn't a boyfriend killing her girlfriend it was a woman turning up dead floating in a dam or buried in a shallow grave in the fields.

Woman 1: (teary eyed) Ungabe usakhala
Thabekhulu awuwedwa sikhona sizwelana

nawe. (Don't cry you're not alone we're here for you and we feel your pain)

She shook her head as more tears fell.

At Ndumiso's house...

Hours later his phone vibrated indicating a message from an unsaved number. He glanced at the screen and sighed getting off bed.

He couldn't help but feel like she's the reason behind her death like he didn't protect them enough. He changed his tshirt and put on his white converse before taking the car keys. He looked for his watch and found it in the bathroom then looked at it for a while before putting it on. His watch of life stopped with her and losing her meant his watch has stopped moving and he had to adjust to this life thing without her.

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Insert 14

At Nhlahla's house...

The next day Mbuzeni stood by the door shouting at his mother. His wife finished preparing tea and placed it in front of her...

Mbuzeni: You can't stay alone we're not leaving you behind. I don't know why you're worrying yourself about dead people. Her family needs to come and fetch her you don't have money and you're not sane enough to handle funeral preparations.

Mampanza: I don't care I'm still burying my child. If you want to leave leave. I didn't ask anything from you. My neighbours and the councillor will assist me just like everyone else. The sun will not stop shining just because you're against everything that I believe in.

Mbuzeni: You can't burden these people...

Mampanza: (snapped) Hey Mbuzeni fuseg!! You want to leave? Leave we don't care. Running your mouth as if you've ever taken any responsibility in your life. You killed your father with your recklessness your sister died unhappy because of you and now you're trying to find a way to validate your wicked ways. Leave me alone I'm not going to turn into your doormat.

Mbuzeni: I didn't mean it in that way you don't have to bring my father...

Mampanza: (to his wife) Sisi wee? Take your husband and leave my house.

Wife: Ma?

Mampanza: Nyaa ini? Take this thing and leave my house.

She stopped packing the groceries and took her bag going out. Mbuzeni clicked his tongue and went to unpack then left with his

groceries. Mampanza scoffed in disbelief and went to dispose the tea in the basin.

Phindile knocked on the door and stepped inside taking off her shoes.

Mampanza: Don't take off your shoes.

Phindile: Okay how are you?

MAMpanza: I'm fine how was your trip? You didn't get lost right?

Phíndíle: No I asked around.

She placed the plastic bags on the floor and sat down.

Phíndíle: You're staying alone?

MAMpanza: Yes.

Phindile: (sadly) I'm sorry to hear that.

Mampanza: It's okay.

Phindile: I spoke to my brother and he said Nhlahla is supposed to get buried back home.

Mampanza: I know.

Phindile: (sighed) After finding out the cause of her death they don't want you there.

Mampanza: But I didn't kill her.

Phindile: I know but they don't want you to come. Forcing it might result in my uncles

hurting you. I really wish there was something I could do but there isn't.

MAMpanza: So I'm not going to pay my last respects?

Phindile: (shook her head) No.

She straightened her arms on the table dropping her eyes defeated. She had no money no family and no means to fight them. At least they were going to give her a dignified funeral.

At Ndumiso's house...

Nkosinami walked through the gate
MaZikhalí saw him and walked out calling
him...

MaZikhalí: Ndumiso is not in.

Nkosinami: The car is here.

MaZíkhalí: Your bags are in your house are you also there?

Nkosínamí: (softly) No.

MaZíkhalí: I will tell him you were looking for him.

Nkosínamí: Thank y...

She walked back inside and he mouthed wow and left. Msíndazwe chuckled looking at her as she clucked wiping the table.

MaZíkhalí: I don't feel that friendship it's a pity I can't choose friends for Ndu but I can't tolerate that boy any longer.

Msíndazwe: Let them be. Let me go and check up on him I'll be back.

MaZíkhalí: Okay.

He went to his house

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he pushed the door and got in. He found him leaning against the wall next to the window looking outside with his hands in his pockets. He took a deep breath his heart shattering and stepped towards him.

He pulled him into a hug as tears burned his eyes. His body shook as he held his father tighter burying his face in his shoulder...

Msindazwe: Qina ndodana ungabe usakhala usephumule.

He took a sharp breath and dropped a tear. He let go of him and held his arms looking at him.

Msindazwe: It'll be alright. This too shall pass.

Ndumiso: She died in pain. Those stab wounds and... (exhaled) my baby was stabbed before she could see the world...

His voice shook and he turned away from his father and wiped his tears as his heart raced.

Her grandmother was now alone with no one to take care of her and he also couldn't do anything about that. The sad part was that there was possibility of the killer getting away with it. Nobody cared the police didn't care this was going to turn to another cold case like the rest.

More tears fell when he thought of the love they shared so pure and innocent. She loved him and he loved her back with no limitations couldn't the universe grant them more time together?

He shook his head feeling light headed. He staggered back and missed a step falling on his back. He laid on his back with his eyes closed as his head ached. The room spun and he slowly opened his eyes. His father crouched next to him...

Msindazwe: Are you okay?

Ndumiso: I'm okay.

Msindazwe: When last did you sleep or had something to eat?

Ndumiso: I don't know.

Msindazwe: You need to rest. You're also human.

Ndumiso: (softly) I don't want to rest. I just want my family. Everything was coming together. Next week I'm getting promoted she was pregnant and happy to be with me. My life was content and at peace and now I'm stuck with an image of her laying in a body bag with disturbing stab wounds.... I don't want to rest I just want her.

Msindazwe: Son you can't talk like that you're breaking my heart. Allow us into your pain. We also lost a grandchild you're not alone in this.

Ndumiso: (shook his head) Can I be alone?

Msindazwe: (sighed) I will give you space but I'm taking the key with me.

He went out locking the door behind him. He bit his lower lip concealing his cries as his tears fell.

He let them flow until he eventually fell asleep...

At Nhlahla's house...

Phindile opened the metallic trunk and pulled an old flip file whilst Mampanza sat on bed telling her what to look for.

Mampanza: Nhlahla used to pay for the insurance every month without fail. The documents are there.

She searched through the file until she found them and she took them out and read for a while before nodding.

Phindile: I found them. I'll claim the money and give it to you.

MAMpanza: You don't have to do that. Use it for the funeral. My son will come and get me any day from now.

Phíndíle: I'm sorry again for their decision.

MAMpanza: It's okay.

She pulled an envelope at the corner and opened it taking out a melted PS inside and then saw the love letter. She opened it out of curiosity as her phone rang from her handbag.

She picked and spoke for a while before putting it back.

She read the first and the last paragraph then blushed and put it back whilst shaking her head. In this day people still pour their hearts out on a piece of paper?

Phindile: (to herself) Love like this still exist?...Mama do you know any Ndumiso around here?

Mampanza: He's the one who called you.

Phindile: Awu bakithi... anyway my brother just called me the family is burying her in two days.

MAMpanza: Will everything be set by then?

Phíndíle: I think so. I'll stay with you until your son comes back. It's not safe for an old woman like you to stay alone.

MAMpanza: You don't have to.

Phíndíle: I insist.

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At Nhlahla's house...

Mbuzeni's wife packed mampanza's things and went to place them in the car whilst she sat on the chair chatting with Phindile.

Phindile had called Mbuzeni the night before and asked him to come and get his mother.

Mbuzeni and his wife decided on renovating the house and then rent it to students seeking accommodation near the school. Mampanza was obviously unhappy with leaving her home she once shared with her husband but she had no other option. The house had good and bad memories but it was time to let it go.

She sadly looked at her daughter in law as she carried Nhlahla's bags to the car knowing that they were about to leave. She wanted to see Ndumiso for one last time and thank him for

his help. He might've not been aware of it but he was truly a blessing in their lives. He was the first guy to see them and look past their poverty but mostly to see an adult in her not a sex toy. She knew his family and they were one of the richest in the village but he wasn't proud.

He was humble and caring may God bless him abundantly.

Mbuzeni: We're done mama.

Phindile picked her bag and walked out as she stood up reaching for her walking stick and looked around the room before making her way out.

Mbuzeni locked the door and helped his mother to the car as fresh tears fell from her eyes.

He started the car and drove out...

Khanyisile's house...

She laid in her room thinking about Nhlahla. She wanted her dead and now that she was really gone she wasn't happy. She wasn't sure if the hitman was telling the truth about not killing her. Maybe he was scared of getting implicated should things turn south for them.

Now that she was thinking about it Nhlahla was innocent. The problem was with her and her early midlife crisis.

The younger girl than her was prospering in life and getting everything she ever dreamt off. Life was unfair on her!

Her passing hit a lot of people hard and shook a lot of young women in the village. Nobody was safe anymore with all the killings going on she too was scared for her life.

She badly wanted the police to find the killer and put her heart at ease. If they found that their hitman didn't kill her they were going to relax and change their ways of living. Having someone's blood on your hands isn't child's play hopefully they didn't have a hand in her death.

At Ndumiso's house...

He popped the pills in his mouth and drank four glasses of water then sat down feeling nauseated. He hated pills for a reason and her mother loved them more than she loved her fields so she forced him to drink them.

A while later he walked out putting a bucket hat over his head and met up with Nkosinami by the gate.

Nkosinami: Sup? Going somewhere?

Ndumiso: To check up on the old lady.

Nkosinami: I see. Look I'm sorry about the pills.

Ndumiso: No prob you were revealing your true colors.

Nkosinami: But still I was wrong.

Ndumiso: That's who you're don't try and excuse your behavior. I'm not going to waste my breath on you because I know something big is coming.

Nkosinami: Big?

Ndumiso: You know when people start showing who they're they become comfortable and do more. Not buying the pills is nothing trust me.

Nkosinami: It was a mistake I won't repeat.

Ndumiso: We don't know sizwa ngawe.

They walked through the gate and he frowned seeing the door locked. Nami notices the tyre tracks and showed him.

Ndumiso: They're still new meaning she finally left.

Nami: She was leaving?

Ndumiso: She said something like that.

He reached for his phone and called Phindile...

Phindile: Hello.

Ndumiso: Hey you're speaking to Ndumiso
I'm not sure if you know me but your mother
used my phone to call you the other day.

Phindile: Oh okay. How can I help you?

Ndumiso: Is the old lady with you?

Phindile: No I'm at home. She left with her
son.

Ndumiso: She's not going to the funeral?

Phindile: Yes she's not but you can come if
you want to. The funeral will be held at home
tomorrow.

Ndumiso: I'll come.

Phindile: Okay I'll send the location after the call.

Ndumiso: That would be great thank you.

Phindile: My pleasure.

He hang up and sadly looked at their house. A part of him was happy that she won't be alone anymore but another part of him was sad. He had to go back and pack his bags because after the funeral he was going back to Durban. This

time around he wasn't sure if he'll ever come back. He had no reason to.

Ndumiso: Let's go.

They went back home in silence.

At Ndumiso's house...

Later that day he laid on his back watching videos on his phone. He replayed a particular video taken in Elephant Lake hotel when she was swinging on the swing giggling happily with her head tilted up whilst he pushed her. He wasn't comfortable with her on the swing because he was scared that the chains might miraculously break and hurt her. Her contagious giggles had him chuckling she looked so happy in that video!

A knock sounded on the door he paused the video and went to open. Lami walked in leaving him on the door. He closed the door and turned to her ready to tell her off but

gasped when he saw her naked self standing in front of him.

Ndumiso: What are you doing here?

Lami: (walking towards him) Stop asking questions Ndu. I know you want this. One round won't hurt anyone.

Ndumiso: I can't do it it's wrong.

Lami: No it not. I know you're sad let me help you take your mind off things.

She knew people made stupid decisions in his state and she was about to take advantage of that. She rested her palms on his bare chest and stood on her toes kissing him as he kissed her back. She pulled down his briefs and held his neck deeping the kiss as he picked her up and threw her on bed kicking off his briefs.

She bit her lower lip as her pussy throbbed when she saw his black donkey dick with it shiny mushroom head which was licking of precum.

She spread her legs apart as he got in between her legs...

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Insert 16

At Ndumiso's house...

The next day he got off bed and shook
Thembalami waking her up.

She murmured turning to the side as he got
annoyed and shook her again.

Ndumiso: Wake up why are you ignoring me?

Thembalami: Give me five.

He clicked his tongue and walked to the window and shifted the curtain to the side at least it was still dark outside and his parents were still sleeping. He couldn't risk being seen with her.

He went back to her and peeled off the duvet throwing her dress at her.

He grabbed her arm pulling her off bed. She yawned standing up and put on her dress then zipped it in front.

Thembalami: Aren't you gonna walk me out?

He sighed and walked her to the gate then went back as she sighed sadly limping her way home her whole body aching. Nkosinami left one of his entanglements halfway and saw her. He swallowed a painful lump in his throat when a realisation hit him. No matter what she was never going to be his. She had countless chances to choose him but she always did the opposite.

From her walk he could tell that he probably took out all his frustrations on her and fucked that pussy with no mercy.

Knowing how unsafe the neighborhood was he followed her at a distance until she walked through the gate. She stood by the wall and leaned on it with her legs spread apart and wiped her tears then walked inside.

He heaved a sigh and went back home.

Few hours later Ndumiso placed his bags in the car and went to his mother's house.

His father opened and allowed him in.

Msindazwe: You're leaving already?

Ndumiso: Yes.

Msindazwe: I'm sorry you had to go alone I need to be in Pietermaritzburg today.

Ndumiso: I understand.

His mother walked in tying her gown and sat down feeling sleepy.

MaZikhali: You're leaving? Are you sure the funeral is today?

Ndumiso: That's what they said. I don't know if everything is in place I don't even know why are they in a rush to bury her.

MaZikhali: Don't worry yourself with that focus on paying your last respects to her then leave. When people are grieving they tend to say a lot of painful words and blame everyone. They might blame you and you don't want that so help yourself by distancing yourself from any dramatic situations you'll come across there.

Ndumiso: I hear you.

MaZíkhalí: (got up and hugged him) Safe journey I love you please take care of yourself.

Ndumíso: I will.

MaZíkhalí: Did you take the food I prepared for you?

Ndumíso: I did.

MaZíkhalí: Put it in a freezer and warm it when you're hungry. Don't starve yourself and don't throw my food away that would be throwing away my love for you.

Ndumíso: (chuckled softly) I'll eat it all of it. Do you want me to record myself eating?

MaZikhali: Mxmn leave my house because you have started with your madness.

He rolled his eyes and hugged her again before letting go and shook his father's hand.

Ndumiso: I'll call you.

Msindazwe: Please do. Goodbye.

He nodded and walked to the car as they stood by waving whilst he drove out.

At Thembalami's house...

She laid in bed whilst crying. She wasn't aware that the pain will be 10 times worse than breaking your virginity. He kept on going with no care in the world it was like a beast was unleashed inside him. Turning her around like he was turning braaipack in the fridge. He was too big but that didn't stop him

from going deeper and deeper filling up the space inside her until she couldn't go any further.

Her whole body was burning and filled with hickies. It was going to take a while before the pain eased up.

Her phone rang under the pillow as a knock sounded on the door. She sniffed and picked...

Nami: Lami hey.

Thembalamí: (cleared her throat) Huh?

Namí: You good? Come out I'm passing by the gate.

Thembalamí: I can't.

Namí: Please I've got something for you.
Something you need to hear.

Thembalamí: I'm coming.

She got off bed and staggered towards the door as her legs cramped then leaned against the wall regaining her balance then slowly walked

to the gate passing her younger cousins and sisters playing with a skipping rope in the middle of the yard.

She flinched grinning with every step she took until she finally reached him.

Namí: You good? What happened to your legs?

Thembalamí: I fell.

Namí: Really now?

Thembalamí: Yes.

They walked away from the gate and stopped then she sat on a log looking at him scrolling through his smartphone.

Nami: What I'm about to show you isn't gonna sit well with you believe me on that one so I don't want any impulsive decisions.

Thembalami: Now you're scaring me.

Namí: Don't be scared I met up with Ndu this morning and he told me about what happened last night.

Thembalamí: Told you what exactly?

Namí: How you threw yourself at him and how he fucked your loose pussy only because you were begging for it. Lamí you need to stay away from this guy. He doesn't love you I'm sure a lot of people knows about the night you had.

She swallowed feeling ashamed as he played one of the old recordings they recorded whilst drunk. She tearfully listened as he went on

and on about how loose her pussy was and how much he didn't enjoy sex with her. He went on to say that the only way he came was because he thought of his girlfriend.

Nami raised his eyebrows looking at her expression changing from being ashamed to extreme anger as her hands shook and her nose flared. That should be enough to keep her away from him.

He saw the recording saved in his phone what she didn't know was that the recording was from years ago when they were still doing matric and the girlfriend he was talking about was Lami herself but since they weren't mentioning any names it was easy to fool her.

She angrily stood up and marched back home ignoring the pain she was feeling. She was going to teach him a lesson he'll never forget. She loved him yes but that kind of disrespect was way too much it was easy to fool her.

She angrily stood up and marched back home ignoring the pain she was feeling. She was going to teach him a lesson he'll never forget. She loved him yes but that kind of disrespect was way too much she wasn't going to take it lying down.

At Nhlahla's home...

In the graveyard Ndumiso quietly stood by with the crowd listening as the priest finished praying whilst a few family members sat under the gazebo.

He took a chunk of soil and dropped it in the grave whilst holding his bible

Pastor: uthuli othulini umlotha emlotheni
inhlabathi enhlabathini.

The family members were called over to come and throw in the soil on her grave. They all did one by one as his heart broke into thousand pieces. He wished for one last chance to see her and say goodbye his heart didn't want to accept that she was gone. Things weren't meant to be like that. And looking at everyone crying those crocodile tears angered him. Her grandmother should've been there she was with Nhlahla through everything.

The crowd softly sung as the guys started filling her grave. He bit his lower lip as a lone tear dropped from his eye. He asked to pass and walked back to his car as Phindile furrowed her brows looking at him as he failed to open the door. Maybe it was him but then she wasn't sure so she sighed and looked ahead.

He got inside his car and rested his forehead on the steering wheel as tears burned his eyes. His throat cracked with pain as he breathed out through his mouth feeling suffocated. He brushed his face and covered his mouth with his hands.

He took a deep breath and looked at her picture in his wallet and smiled tearfully...

Ndumiso: Rest easy my love I'll always love you.

He kissed the picture and started the car then drove out without looking back...

At Ndumiso's home...

Later that day just after the sunset three police cars pulled over by the gate and officers stepped out walking through the gate as his mother stepped out confused.

Officer: Sawbona mama.

MaZikhalí: Yebo can I help you?

Officer: We're looking for Ndumiso Mdletshe where can we find him?

MaZíkhalí: He left what do you need him for?
Is this about Nhlahlenhle?

Officer: I don't know who that is mam We
need him. Call him right now.

She reached for her phone in her pinafore and
called him...

Ndumiso: Mama?

MaZíkhalí: Where are you? The police are
looking for you?

Ndumiso: Is it about Nhlahla?

MaZikhali: Apparently not but it seems urgent.

Ndumiso: I'm not that far yet so I'll turn back right now.

MaZikhali: Should they wait for you?

Ndumiso: Yes. I'll be there just now.

MaZikhali: Okay.

She hang up and turned to them...

MaZíkhalí: He's coming. What do you need him for again?

Officer: We didn't say.

They walked back to their cars...

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Insert 17

At Ndumiso's house...

Half an hour later he drove past the police cars as they woke up from their sleep and stepped out following the car. He parked the car as his mother stepped out and stretched himself meeting them halfway.

Ndumiso: What is this about?

The police he threatened a few days before chuckled recognizing him.

Police: Ndumiso we meet again.

Ndumiso: Do I know you?

Police: Mxm you're under arrest ke threatist.
Under arrest for rape and attempting to kill
Miss Thembalami Mhlongo.

Ndumiso: (frowned) What?

He pulled the handcuffs and held his hands cuffing them as he absent mindedly allowed him still confused.

Police: You have a right to remain silent everything you say can be and will be used against you in the court of law. You also have a right to an attorney if you don't have one the state will provide one for you.

Ndumiso: This is crazy.

Police: Heh you think we're playing.

Mazikhali: What is the meaning of this?

She went to them and held her son's arms pulling him to her crying.

Mazikhalí: My son is not a rapist this is a misunderstanding.

Police: Ey la let him go.

He clucked and pushed her back and she staggered backwards and fell on her butt hurting her hip. He swallowed in disbelief realising that they were actually serious.

They roughly pushed him to their cars and shoved him inside and closed the door then drove out.

His mother got up and walked inside the house to get her phone as the neighbors stood by their fences watching.

She drank water to calm her nerves then called her husband...

Msindazwe: Nkosikazi I'll call you back I'm still busy with something.

Mazikhali: (crying) My baby has been arrested.

Msindazwe: (shuffling) What? When?

Mazikhali: Now. I shouldn't have called him. It's all my fault.

Msindazwe: Calm down then tell me what happened?

Mazikhali: The police came here looking for him and I called him and told him to come back only to find out that they wanted to arrest him for rape. Rape and murder? My son? If I knew I wouldn't have called him.

Msindazwe: Don't cry it's not your fault. You did good by calling him they were probably gonna fetch him from his workplace and embarrass him in front of his colleagues. Let me think of something I'll see what I can do.

Mazikhali: (crying) My son is not a rapist
Msindazwe you know him.

Msindazwe: I know don't cry your blood pressure will act up and I won't be there to help you. Calm down we need to be calm so that we can come up with a solution.

MaZikhalí: Okay...okay...I'll try.

She hang up and rubbed her hip breathing heavily.

At the police station...

The detective stood by the wall watching Ndumiso as he leaned back on the chair with cuffs around his wrists.

Detective: You know I can do this the whole day and night.

Ndumiso:...

Detective: People like you disgust me. You think just because you're every woman's dream you have a right to go around violating woman and then try to kill them when they

want to report you. You're a disgrace to manhood. And for your own information I'll make sure that you rot in jail. You think you're above the law you make us look incompetent.

Ndumiso: Can I call my lawyer?

Detective: You don't get to demand anything here we don't work for you.

Ndumiso: Okay

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we don't work for you.

Ndumiso: Okay I'll speak when my lawyer arrive until then continue ranting all that nonsense. In a way you're keeping me company.

He clicked his tongue and went to take his notebook and then walked out.

Ndumiso leaned forward resting his hands on the table and brushed his face.

He was a bit rough on her but she didn't complain nor try to stop him. Why would she lie on him? If the case reached the ears of his bosses then he might as well kiss his job goodbye.

He worked around women everyday and no sane person could keep an alleged rapist around female workers.

Ndumiso: Wow!!

At Thembalami's house...

Her mother angrily looked at her seated on the reedmat in her panties.

Her: Why are you embarrassing this family?
Rape? Wasn't he your boyfriend?

Thembalamí: (crying) He was but I didn't want to have sex with him. He forced himself on me.

Her: Futeq!! That sounds even more stupid. How does your boyfriend rape you? What were you doing in his room? What were you expecting? You were dating he had every right to have sex with you especially since you were in his house. What are people going to say? My daughter has been raped? Now I'm the village gossip only because my daughter chose to announce to the world that she had sex with a guy?

Thembalamí: I'm sorry.

Her: Nyorry? Is your sorry going to fix anything? I'm disappointed in you. Very disappointed! My own daughter dragging the

Mhlongo name through the mud? The daughter I carried for nine months went out to look for a penis and then announced it for the whole world to know.

She shook her head and then started crying as she swallowed regretting her decision. She thought when she saw the bruises and hickies she would feel her pain but she was wrong.

She couldn't even drop the charges being a victim was better than being called a liar.

At the police station...

The phone rang for a while and his Joburg friend finally picked...

Voice: Sure.

Ndumiso: Yeah man it's Ndumiso.

Voice: Au why are you calling me with office numbers?

Ndumiso: I've been arrested. Can you please get me a lawyer?

Voice: Ehh iyoooh! Serious?

Ndumiso: Rape and attempted murder.

Voice: What's the plea?

Ndumiso: How can you even ask that? You know me.

Voice: Sorry. I'll speak to my lawyer friend in Durban. She'll probably see you tomorrow.

Ndumiso: Thanks man I owe you.

Voice: Get me another friend from the village.
Sharp.

He shook his head smiling and placed the phone back. The detective opened his mouth to say something...

Ndumiso: Awume ngescefe! Take me back to the cells.

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Insert 18

At Ndumiso's house...

Mazikhali finished cleaning the yard and went to take out the reed and laid it on the grass as one of her neighbors walked through the gate.

She scoffed recognizing her one of the gossip mongers was in her yard. She arranged the reed and straightened dusting her hands on her pinafore by sunset it would've dried up and by the following day she would start making her reedmats.

Neighbor: Kunjani ntombi?

Mazikhali: I'm fine.

Neighbor: I can tell you've always been a strong woman. I heard about what happened yesterday. I want you to know that you have my full support.

She rolled her eyes and went to empty the buckets on the drum as the workers washed their tools on the basin.

MaZíkhalí: Support for what?

Neighbor: We all know...

MaZíkhalí: I don't know hence I asked.

Neighbor: You don't have to pretend like you're okay...

MaZíkhalí: Support for what?

Neighbor: About the case.

MaZíkhalí: What case?

Neighbor: I thought your son was arrested.

MaZíkhalí: When was that?

Neighbor: You mean he's not?

The workers walked to her whilst drying their hands.

MaZíkhalí: Are you done?

Worker: Yes you can go and check. We cleaned the place your son told us about your sinuses so we cleaned all the dust.

MaZíkhalí: Thank you. Did he pay you for that?

Worker: Yes he did. Also I won't be coming in tomorrow but I'll send someone to renew the painting on the other side. He'll also change the backdoor tomorrow.

MaZíkhalí: I hear you. Thank you again.

Worker: The pleasure is all mine. Let us get going.

She nodded and watched them as they went to the car parked by the gate. They loaded their tools at the back and left.

MaZíkhalí: I have things to do it's still early in the morning.

Neighbor: Not even one cup of tea?

MaZíkhalí: You'll drink tea in your house.

Neighbor: Awu bantu.

MaZikhali: Yebo makhe.

She faked a chuckle and left slightly annoyed. It was unlike her to have wrong information.

MaZikhali walked inside the house through the back door and went to prepare to go to the police station.

Her husband was going to call her later and let her know if his loan application was approved by the bank.

They used all their savings in renovating their house so they weren't going to afford a lawyer unless they applied for a loan.

An hour later she stepped out of the house and locked then left after locking the gate.

Walking to the stop the neighbors kept on looking at her and gossiping. The news of her

son's arrest must've spread like wildfire across the village. She couldn't blame them after the recent activities in their village. Women were getting raped and killed like flies and one reported case of rape was enough to set the whole village on fire.

To many it was a huge milestone one rapist has been reported hopefully others were going to come out and report their rapists too.

She didn't know what went down between her son and that girl but she knew his son and after the way he was a few days before she was convinced that something else went down. A complete different version of events.

At the police station...

The police opened for him and locked the door behind him. He walked around the table and sat down facing the young lady who was focused on her iPad her long weave covering her face.

He cleared his throat and she quickly lifted her face and he smiled recognizing her. He raised his eyebrows and leaned back in awe.

She fixed her glasses and tucked her hair behind her pressing her lips together.

Ofcourse it was him he was a trouble maker back in varsity a part of her wasn't suprised he was arrested. Since he was in for rape she could already conclude that the person behind his arrest was a bitter baby mama or a crazy ex with attachment issues.

He had a kind of effect on ladies that made them crazy the if you're not with me then nobody will type of thing.

Ndumiso: We meet again Small.

Small: We do. Baby mama or ex?

Ndumiso: (scoffed) Ex.

Small: How bad is it?

Ndumiso: With the little knowledge I have
about law

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the if you're not with me then nobody will
type of thing.

Ndumiso: We meet again Small.

Small: We do. Baby mama or ex?

Ndumiso: (scoffed) Ex.

Small: How bad is it?

Ndumiso: With the little knowledge I have about law it's pretty bad.

Small: I'm glad you know that. Well I did look at your case a bit and you're right. It's bad but for now we need to focus on getting you bail.

Ndumiso: Okay.

Small: Yes I need you to detail everything. I don't want any surprises when we get to court.

He nodded and took a deep breath then narrated everything to her as she typed all the important details on her iPad.

He bit his lower lip and placed his fist over his mouth when he was done. She placed the iPad next to her and sighed feeling sorry for him.

He rested his elbows on the table masking his pain and confusion with a stoic expression.

She furrowed her brows a bit confused at his expression wasn't he supposed to be sad or angry at the turn of events?

He didn't take his eyes off her he had to maintain that stare he couldn't have his lawyer using feelings whilst dealing with his

case. He wanted her sober minded a person drunk on emotions always made mistakes useless mistakes and missed all the important details.

He also learnt that she was over sensitive weird since she one of his friend's entanglements.

She dropped her gaze her cheeks blazing with heat at his scrutiny. The room suddenly became hot probably at his power radiating charisma. She had to leave before she messed things up with her client.

Small: I'll contact one of my contacts then get back to you.

Ndumiso: What contacts?

Small: (shook her head) Forget it. It's already Friday so we'll appear before the magistrate on Monday. You'll have to spend the weekend in the holding cells.

Ndumiso: I see.

He got up at the same time as her and walked around the table. She dropped her file and he

bent over picking it up then placed it on the table dwarfing her with his height. Even in heels she was still that short girl they attended varsity with.

Ndumiso: You can't buy height I told you this before small.

He walked to the door leaving her as she exhaled okay this was it! Shit wasn't working for her no more!

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Insert 20

At the Magistrate's court...

Everyone who attended the case wasn't happy about the magistrate's decision of granting him bail. Looking at his lawyer everyone could tell that the chances of him losing the case were slim to none. Thembalami stood by with Khanyisile and her father as a couple of friends held her while she cried silently.

Ndumiso stepped out holding hands with his mother and went to stand by Unathi's car.

unathi shook hands with MaZikhalí and then she left them to talk...

unathi: Since you're going to Durban it'll be easier to meet and go through your case before the trial starts.

Ndumiso: I see. I'm not sure if I'm going to stay in Durban after this. I might be forced to come back.

Unathi: They're not allowed to fire you based on these accusations. You're innocent until proven otherwise.

Ndumiso: I work with women. What if they feel unsafe?

Unathi: That's on them. You can't be crucified for a crime you didn't commit. It's too bad because nobody knows the whole truth but that's life.

He reached for his business card in his bag and handed it to him.

unathi: Call me should you have any problems.

Ndumiso: Oh...about your payment...

unathi: Leave that to Thubelihle he's cashing in on the favour. The case is pro bono in a way.

Ndumiso: I don't understand.

unathi: (smiled) Oh you do see you around.

He stepped inside his car as Ndumiso scoffed walking towards his mother passing Thembalami and her friends.

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MaZikhali: Do you want us to pass somewhere before we go home?

Ndumiso: No we have to go home. I need to be in Durban. I'm sure Mdu is wondering where his car is.

MaZikhali: You're not spending the night?

Ndumiso: No it's too risky.

At Thembalami's house...

She dropped her bag on bed and removed her top then sank on her bed.

She heaved a sigh exhausted. Since the bail hearing had passed she wondered if she was going to stand the trial. That lawyer looked scary he knew his story and being interrogated by him on stand was going to be the worst nightmare ever.

A part of her wanted to drop everything and drop the charges but a lot of people were involved already. Dropping the charges and being labelled a liar was out of the question. Her father believed her and he was determined to help her a lot of people admired her for her bravery.

She heard voices of people shouting in their gate and went to peep through the window.

She saw two men and stepped out recognizing the other one.

Her father walked to the gate followed by her aunt. They spoke for a while and then her father walked straight to him fuming in anger.

Father: Yabo? Msebenzi wakho? Now we're being summoned by the chief because of men you bring in my yard. With you we can't focus on one thing. We have to be all over the place because you can't pick your battles.

Ntokazi you have to clear everything up are we focusing on the case or your countless men?

Thembalami: I'm sorry.

Father: Ofcourse you're

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that's the only thing you know. (sighed closing his eyes) Don't worry about this though. Apparently the boy is still alive even though he's breathing through the machines but he's alive. Focus on the case after all he's the one who came in here and insulted us.

She nodded and he walked to his house as her aunt looked at her...

Aunt: You know I know you more than your parents does. I hope it won't be too late when you come back to your senses. I arrived first I heard that boy and from where I was standing

he didn't look like someone who was drunk but
carry on.

Thembalami: Auntie...

Aunt: As I've said carry on.

At Ndumiso's house...

Hours later he stepped out of his house holding
his toiletry bag speaking on his phone.

Ndumiso: I'll be there as soon as I arrive in Durban...I understand...Thanks bye.

He hugged her mother and then stepped back smiling as she rubbed her eyes looking at him.

Mazikhali: Look at how thin you're.

Ndumiso: (chuckled) Hawu ma! I'll call you.

MaZíkhalí: Don't forget to call your father.

Ndumiso: (got inside the car) What for? He's your husband njena.

MaZíkhalí: (chuckled through her tears)
Mxm.

He started the car and drove out as she waved...

At Ndumiso's workplace...

After hours of driving he parked in the parking lot and took a last sip of his energy drink and then stepped out stretching himself as his back ached. He fixed his golf tshirt and his watch before he walked into the building.

A few workers stopped working and watched him some whispering amongst each other. He rubbed his chin and went to the elevator ignoring their stares.

Ofcourse they knew about his case and he still didn't care. They knew everything about everyone anyway minding them was a waste of time and energy.

The elevator dinged and slid open and his boss appeared standing next to the door. He saw and sucked in a breath walking inside as his heart raced.

Ndumiso closed the door behind him and pulled a chair sitting down after greeting him...

CEO: Mr Mdletshe I believe everything went well if you're here.

Ndumiso: I guess so.

CEO: Water?

Ndumiso: No thanks.

He shrugged and poured some for himself then took a sip looking at him facing ahead and then shook his head doing away with those crazy thoughts.

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CEO: You do have an idea of why you're here right?

Ndumiso: No.

CEO: We can't continue working with you.

Ndumiso: I'm innocent.

CEO: The workers don't know that and we don't want to make them uncomfortable.

Ndumiso: I also have rights.

CEO: I understand. Look there's a way around this I mean this is my company and I'm sure we can work something out.

Ndumiso: There is?

CEO: Yes.

He loosened his tie and licked his lips resting his hands on the table looking straight in his eyes. He leaned back folding his arms pressing his lips together.

Ndumiso: Which way is that?

CEO: You're clever why don't you work it out?
Once I know you're straight and I'm also
straight. I've always fantasized about you
so..?

He lifted his eyebrows and untied his
dreadlocks straightening them with his
fingers then quickly turned the chair around
getting up. He went to lock the door and slid
his hand in his pocket walking around the
table as he turned around to face him....

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Insert 21

At Ndumiso's workplace...

He stood in front of him as he slowly rested his hands on the edge licking his lips.

Ndumiso: So I need to sleep with you in order to keep my job?

CEO: Once we can find a hotel if you're uncomfortable with my office.

Ndumiso: Will that make your workers miraculously comfortable?

CEO: My word is law I can speak to them.

Ndumiso: I'm not doing it.

CEO: (frowned) What? What are you afraid of? Nobody is gonna know.

Ndumiso: They're gonna know believe me and besides that I'm not interested.

CEO: This is your career we're talking about here.

Ndumiso: And also your arse. You know mister If I were to fuck your arse your rectum will be damaged forever trust me on that one.

He exhaled as his palms became sweaty. The way he said those words made him want him even more. He has been living a double life for too long and for him he was prepared to come out of the closet without any worry of what were people gonna say.

He was calm but the authority in his voice gave him goosebumps.

There was something about him something that made every man out there a sissy compared to him Goodness he was such a macho man!

Ndumiso: I won't tell anyone about your sexuality so let pretend like this never happened.

CEO: I told you I'm straight so what sexuality are you talking about?

Ndumiso: Being straight is also a sexuality.

CEO: (took a deep breath) Can you at least kiss me?

Ndumiso: Aíke!

He wasn't winning with that guy. He walked away from him and he followed him and grabbed his arm smashing his lips on his.

He pushed him rubbing his lips disgusted.

Ndumiso: What are you doing? This isn't funny stay away from me!

He continued walking and he still followed him and pushed him to the wall kissing his lips with his eyes closed rubbing his zipper on his.

He pushed him and then punched him on the face. He clenched his jaws tasting blood in his mouth. He spat on the floor and chuckled...

CEO: You like it rough huh? That's the exact image I have of you in my mind. Giving it to me rough and fast whilst grunting in that

deep voice of yours. Come on I know how your type is. You crave anal sex and I'm here to feed your cravings.

Ndumiso: Now you're being crazy for real. You might as well keep your job I won't work for a mental case.

He went to the door and tried to unlock the door. He quickly pulled the key and threw it out of the open window. He angrily turned to him.

Ndumiso: What is your problem? Why are you acting crazy?

CEO: Stop acting fresh as if you have a gold dick

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It's just sex.

Ndumiso: One crazy shit from you I'm going to strangle the life out of your pathetic ass.

Try me and see.

He went to take the phone on his desk and dialed security as he gently massaged his jaw getting back to his senses.

Ndumiso popped his knuckles and rubbed his chin.

A while later the door opened and he walked out as the security guard curiously looked at the blood on the floor and his boss's bloody lips.

Security: Is everything okay?

He raised his hand up dismissing him and then closed the door behind him. He placed his hand on his forehead and shut his eyes in shame.

What if he exposed him? That was going to be bad for the company. A lot of workers were going to report him and he wasn't prepared to have his dirty laundry out there for the whole world to see. He had to take care of the problem before it took care of him.

He closed his laptop and grabbed his car and keys and jacket walking out.

At Hlabisa Hospital...

Nkosinami's parents stood by his bed looking at his body covered in bandages while connected to numerous pipes.

His mother brought her hands together and started praying for her son.

The doctor walked in and waited for them to finish before she walked further into the room and went to his file.

His mother: Will he make it doctor?

Doctor: He will.

His mother: He has too. We can't lose him. I have to fine Mhlongo for hurting my son like this. Which sane person keeps highly trained bulldogs in their home? I'm going to treat him a lesson.

His mother: Forget about him. He's too arrogant Let the chief deal with him. After all Namu went there willingly he could say it was self defense.

His father: Self defense against my son?

His mother: What was he...

His father: Are you condoning what they did to my son?

Nami slowly moved his hand as the doctor closed the file...

Doctor: Okay can you please keep quiet or leave the room if that fails?

She moved towards his face and helped him remove the oxygen mask.

Doctor: (smiled) Welcome back.

Namí: Wa..water.

The doctor poured water for him and put on a straw then helped him drink.

His mother: My son. Oh thank you father.

He blinked his eyes looking at the unfamiliar faces staring at him.

Nami: (softly) Who are you?

His mother: What? I'm your mother.

Doctor: Let us not panick. Everything will be fine. Sir do you remember what happened?

Nami: No. I don't.

He shut his eyes trying to remember but his mind was blank.

His mother: Doctor why is my son like this?

Doctor: We'll run some tests and let you know for now please be patient with him.

She abandoned her body on the chair defeated.

At Ndumiso's rental house...

He walked to his fridge and took out a can of beer taking a sip. He took a deep breath replaying the events of the day in his mind and shook his head chuckling.

He saw this a long time ago but never paid any attention to it. People were brave out there.

A knock sounded on the door and he went to open.

Thubelihle stood in front of him holding his bag. He smiled and shifted away from the door allowing him to pass.

Thubelihle: Ndu my man.

Ndumiso: I'm still angry at you.

Thubelihle: Awu kahle phuma lapho. Ugrand?

They shoulder bumped and he dropped his bag on the couch and walked to the fridge.

Ndumiso: Stay away from my fridge.

Thubelihle: Mxm so did Smindlo meet you?

Ndumiso: Nop why?

Thubelihle: He was in your village a few days ago. Work related.

Ndumiso: I didn't see him. What kind of work?

Thubelihle: (shrugged) Don't know....Forget about that one. So what's up? How did my girl treat you?

Ndumiso: Don't remind me about that short thing...Look for something to cook there I'll be back.

Thubelihle: I'm not staying.

Ndumiso: I didn't say you were. I said cook. Listening is a skill.

He placed his can on the counter and went to his bedroom leaving Thubelihle deep in thoughts. If their friend didn't meet up with Ndumiso just like he said then what were he doing there? Why did he lie about it?

He shook his head and opened the fridge...

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Insert 22

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At Ndumiso's house...

Ndumiso stretched his upper body and popped his knuckles then sipped his coffee before he bit his lower lip concentrating on the laptop.

His phone beeped and he looked at the long codes on the screen then quickly logged out and sighed in relief getting off the stool.

Thubelihle came from the guest room and he quickly closed the laptop then went to search in the cupboards.

Thubelihle: Morning.

Ndumiso: Mmhh.

Thubelihle: I hope you weren't doing shit that's gonna land you in the hot waters.

Ndumiso: (calmly) When are you leaving?

Thubelihle: When I feel like it.

Ndumiso: I hope that's sooner than the word soon. I can't stand annoying people.

Thubelihle: (rolled his eyes) When did you wake up?

He went to settle on the couch reaching for the remote as Ndumiso started preparing breakfast.

Ndumiso: Around 1AM.

Thubelihle: What's the plan since you're officially unemployed? You know I still can't believe that they fired you just like that. The

last time I spoke to that guy he was highly impressed with you.

Ndumiso: I have a rape case on my name it was expected.

Thubelihle: I see.

He rinsed his hands then rested his hands on the table looking at him.

Ndumiso: On a serious note what are you doing here?

Thubelihle: I need something around here.

Ndumiso: So where do I fit in?

Thubelihle: Who said you fit in?

Ndumiso: I know you.

Thubelihle: (sighed) Okay. We need you...

Ndumiso: Miss me on that. I told you I was done with that shit. I can't gamble with my life anymore.

Thubelihle: Look this one last time. We really need this. We could've asked anyone but there's noone else like you out there.

Ndumiso: No.

He pulled the drawer and reached for a knife then plugged the kettle as Thubelihle thoughtfully looked at him then turned to the screen.

He looked at him concentrating on the tv and sighed frustrated. That was his friend he came through for him when noone else did. If it wasn't for him he would've dropped out in varsity and went back home.

He knew that he wasn't gonna press the issue any longer but still he felt really bad.

Ndumiso: (stopped chopping) Everything is detailed to the T right?

Thubelihle: Yep.

Ndumiso: I'll do it.

Thubelihle: Sure I have your laptops with me...I'm meeting up with Small later

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I have your laptops with me...I'm meeting up with Small later wanna tag along?

Ndumiso: Bhek' ibhola lelo uyeke uksangana.

At Hlabisa Hospital...

Thembalami slowly walked closer to Nami's bed as he pretended to be asleep. She licked her lips as tears burned her eyes. Things weren't supposed to go that far. They were both wrong and it was unfair that he was the only one paying for something they both did.

She wasn't her favorite person but he didn't deserve what happened to him.

She looked at the bandage around his head and the bleeding wound on his arm.

It was a miracle that he survived those dogs were trained to kill by a cruel white man her father used to work for years back.

When he was relocating he gave them to him as a gift and they've been locked in their kennels ever since.

Thembalami: I'm sorry about what happened. I heard about your memory loss and I guess that's better. In a way that's the best news because you were going to expose me either way. I was wrong yes but I also didn't deserve

to be treated like that. (sighed) He used me it's crazy because I went there willingly but still I didn't deserve his treatment. He f*cked me like a prostitute the whole night and then went ahead and spread lies about me.

I'm the most respected girl around the village how is everyone supposed to look at me after all the things he said about me? You were right maybe I'm crazy but I won't allow him to use me.

At least after this you won't remember me and all the stupid love you have for me will be gone so we both get to benefit in all of this.

She got up and walked out. At least he was still alive!

He slowly opened his eyes and took a deep breath replaying her words. She was really crazy. Who rejoiced on somebody else's memory loss? He was also disappointed in himself for falling for someone like her. She was the worst woman to ever exist on Earth. A real definition of beauty with no brains.

His friendship was also ruined all because of her badluck followed her everywhere.

He shut his eyes slowly drifting to sleep he had to keep up with the memory loss story. He wasn't gonna be able to look at his friend in the eyes and lie to him anyway.

At the mall...

They concluded the meeting with his lawyer and shook hands as he stood up leaving the restaurant.

Moments later he settled the bill and walked out bumping into Small and his friend walking in with yet another short lady.

He greeted them and introduced himself to the lady as she smiled smitten.

Ndumiso: Ndumiso Mdletshe.

Lady: Nomvuzo Mthethwa.

Ndumiso: Beautiful name....

Another guy walked in to them holding hands and took a deep breath looking at their hands. Thubelihle cleared his throat and covered his mouth with his hand.

Ndumiso pulled back his hand and walked out without a word.

Nomvuzo: I'm sorry.

Thubelihle: For what? It was just a handshake.

The boyfriend clicked his tongue and pulled her arm walking out with her. Small shrugged looking at Thubelihle.

Thubelihle: That dude is crazy that one will be my boy's girlfriend.

Small: Babe don't be that guy.

Thubelihle: He's single and Nomvuzo needs a man so what's the problem?

He pulled a chair for her and called a waiter.

At Ndumiso's house...

Later that day Thubelihle looked at the plan of a particular house whilst Ndumiso connected the third laptop on the charger.

Ndumiso: This is not bad.

Thubelihle: Oh yeah?

Ndumiso: It'll take up to 5 minutes.

Thubelihle shifted closer and looked at the screen and shook his head going back to the plan holding a red marker.

Thubelihle: I don't understand those things.

Ndumiso: What were you hoping to see in the first place?

Thubelihle: (shrugged) Don't know.

A loud bang on the door interrupted them...

Voice: Police open up!

They both looked at each other and Thubelihle quickly folded the plan. Ndumiso closed the laptops and went to place them in the bedroom as the banging on the door continued...

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Insert 23

At Ndumiso's house...

He opened the door and stepped back as the police flooded the house.

They looked between them and turned to Ndumiso with a straight face.

Ndumiso: Can we help you?

Police 1: Ndumiso Mdletshe you're under arrest for assaulting Mr Biyela.

Ndumiso: You're joking right? Assault?

They walked up to him and roughly pushed him to the wall putting his hands behind him cuffing him.

Thubelihle: Come on now? Is that necessary?

The detective clicked his tongue annoyed.

Detective: This is not Joburg where you own the streets and have the entire police force on your payroll.

Thubelihle: So this is personal?

He pulled Ndumiso by the collar and pushed him out.

Thubelihle remained rooted in spot confused. Assault out of everything? Ndumiso wasn't someone who lost his cool anyhow. That was unlike him and was definitely stupid.

He went to take his phone from the charger and called unathi.

unathi: Thuba let me call you back. I'm still busy.

Thubelihle: Ndumiso has been arrested.

unathi: Give me a minute (he parked in his garage) I'm listening.

Thubelihle: He's been arrested.

unathi: Again? What for?

Thubelihle: Assaulting his boss. Well former boss.

unathi: He fired him?

Thubelihle: I don't know what happened he refused to tell me.

unathi: This is bad he's going to prison.

Thubelihle: Can't you do something?

unathi: He was out on bail. He wasn't supposed to get on the wrong side of the law.

unathi: What if I got the boss to drop the charges?

unathi: It's useless. He's accused of attempted murder and rape. An assault charge will prove

to the magistrate that he's not fit to be in public. Your boy messed up if you have shit like this going on You avoid unnecessary fights because they mess things up further for you.

Thubelihle: You have to try.

unathi: Hayibo ngenzeni Thuba. That guy doesn't listen. You don't know the Captain in charge in that station. He has zero tolerance for rapists and murders it's personal and believe me once he finds out that he has a rape charge in his name it's over for him. We can't pay him if that's what you think he's not corrupt.

Thubelihle: Everyone has a price.

unathi: Not that one. I know you care about this guy but it's over for him. We must focus on getting him protection once he's in jail for now wait. I'll go and see him in the morning.

Thubelihle: Can't you come now?

unathi: uzongbhora ke manje. Wafuna ukuphoqa izinto nje yini kanti?

He hang up and Thubelihle cursed kicking the couch then called another number.

Thubelihle: Assault what was that about?

voice: Thuba afternoon to you too. That bully you call a friend attacked me after trespassing in my building.

Thubelihle: What? He would never do that.

voice: But he did and if you think you're going to hurt me so that I can drop those charges then think again. I told the police that should anything to me he's responsible for it.

Thubelihle: You're going to pay for this. You don't know who you're messing with.

voice: But I know who that is. He's just a village boy with a mind full of cow dung. And don't ever call me again. I don't owe you anything right now. I employed your rapist boy now stay away from me.

He hang up on him. He removed his shirt and took off his vest feeling hot.

He wondered just how much he told the police because from his tone he could tell that he told

them more than he should. The way they looked at them and the remark about the Joburg police force being in his payroll.

To him that screamed personal. It wasn't about the assault anymore but then his friend was secretive.

Knowing that it may take up to years for him to retaliate to this kind of unfairness infuriated him even more. He was too premeditative it was annoying.

At The Police Station....

The next day the door opened and he got in with his wrists cuffed together. He sat in front of his lawyer as the police stepped back and stood next to the door.

Ndumiso: I'm going to jail right?

Unathi: Why did you do it?

Ndumiso: You're not going to understand. It was only one punch and that should tell you something.

Unathi: I'm not joking.

Ndumiso: I know. How long am I looking at?

He sighed when he got his question looking at his case he could tell that a lot of injustice was going to happen due to the police incompetency

Unathi: Months or years even.

Ndumiso: Just for trial?

Unathi: You have to understand one thing.
Police don't care

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they don't care about you. They only care about promotions and making arrests. They might even try to pin all these cases of those girls who went missing and turned up dead on you.

Ndumiso: That's crazy I don't even stay there.

Unathi: Where were you when your girlfriend went missing? Your woman was killed along with 2 other girls those cases might be pinned on you.

Ndumiso: You're there to defend me You know I didn't do it.

Unathi: I don't know I wasn't there. I just want you to be prepared. For now we need to worry about making your stay comfortable there we'll work on your case after that. Is there something else I need to know? I hate surprises so any physically abused ex? Frenemies? Anything?

He thought of Nami and the guy they killed. If that came out he was done for. But he wouldn't be that stupid and tell on him knowing that he was also going to be incriminated.

Unathi: I'm your lawyer and I deserve all the truth.

Ndumiso: There's nothing.

Unathi: That better be the truth.

He squinted his eyes at him trying to read his emotions but he kept a straight face. He was too cool for an innocent person. He might've not raped the girl but he sure did something sinister in the past.

He looked like someone who killed without any remorse and made sure to leave no evidence behind. Probably those type of deaths that end up being ruled out as coincidental.

He was more dangerous than electricity!

In prison...

Later that day Ndumiso walked along the corridor as two jail guards escorted him to his cell. He looked at the locked inmates howling banging the bars whistling loudly.

They passed several blocks until they stopped in front of a particular cell. The guards opened and roughly pushed him inside before locking him inside.

One of the guards looked at the intimidating inmate seated on his bed and nodded.

He turned around as everyone stared at him. One of them who was pressing on his phone looked up at him and scoffed "Lucky Dube."

He scanned everyone with his eyes and walked to the unoccupied bed.

He looked at the locked bars and sighed. That was his home a place that could either break or make him stronger.

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4 YEARS LATER

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