

The third book in the Pierce brothers series.

Reckless Behavior

A novel.

STEAMY

Matshidiso Bella

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Reckless Behavior

By:

MATSHIDISO BELLA

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

GREETINGS

Hello hi!!!

I am back with yet another story, the third installation in the Pierce brothers series. Well, it has now become a series I didn't initially plan on...

We started off with **The cleaner** featuring **Greyson Pierce & Lori Teffo** now **Lori Pierce**.

We then jumped onto **Breathe Again** featuring **Kyle Pierce & Tracy Phiri**

And now... For the third and final book in this series...

Reckless Behavior featuring **Mason Pierce & Lesedi Phiri**.

I don't know why this book has been requested this much, but seems like everyone has been praying & hoping for a Mason & Lesedi story because they are two hot headed beings and there seemed to be some little one-sided attraction...

And personally... I just knew what I was doing... I knew this book would exist some day and here we are. I hope I will be able to meet or over exceed expectations... I hope you will enjoy this story!!!

A special shout-out to my Facebook and Wattpad readers. You guys have been the core value of my writing path. I love and appreciate you all so much!!

I have nothing more to say except to say... Enjoy the ride!!!

MATSHIDISO BELLA

CHAPTER ONE

December 31st

Looking in the mirror, checking her outfit, making a scrunched face of disapproval, Lesedi shrugged the sexy top she had picked out from her pile of clothes that she brought to the hotel she was currently living in courtesy of her younger sister.

She and her family have been living in the hotel for over a week now, she, her sister and her sister's boyfriend had a mission of bringing her father to his knees. The man, a respected drug dealer in the city was nothing but a menace in their lives.

The amount of hurt and shame he brought to their family was disgusting and unacceptable. They had to take him out of commission, they had to hit him where it hurt him the most, his pockets.

A hundred million rands deep pockets... well it was a little over than that, but she and her sister were getting an equal share of the hundred million rand as they had to pay those who helped them see the deal through.

She searched her bag for something that could cover her a little, she didn't want to expose a lot of skin but at the same time she didn't want to look like a prude or wear jerseys in the hot south African December weather.

"Sedi..." her head turned sharply towards the voice calling her from the door. It was Sofia, their mother's caregiver.

Their mother couldn't function all by herself, she needed a fulltime nurse, a fulltime nanny after what their father did to her. Sofia was godsent, she was more family than their actual family could ever be.

"I don't know what to wear, I also don't understand why I need to go out to celebrate New Year's Eve with a bunch of people I do not know." Lesedi grumbled, dropping her ass on the bed.

Sofia chuckled and walked further in the room, "Your sister asked you to come, you and her are making amends not so?" the chubby lady with a warm face asked.

Lesedi wanted to object but Sofia was right, she spent so many years harboring hate towards her little sister, but they were working things out now, she didn't want to disappoint her or make her feel like she hasn't forgiven her.

Their father's doing. The man was poison, any and everything he touched turned to poison. For ten years, ten years Lesedi hated her sister because of their father... the father who was now detained in some man's basement waiting for them to act on how to get rid of him forever.

"So, what are you going to do with your father?" Sofia asked. The girls had succeeded in stealing the money, they stole the safe with the help of the Pierce brothers, one of which was her sister, Tracy's boyfriend.

"Uh I don't know; Tracy tells me that Kyle and Mason are planning to get him arrested." She responded.

Sofia nodded in understanding, "That's good right?"

"No, no it's not good, it's not good enough Sofia. What if he comes back? What if he bribes the police?" she fired those questions that have been clawing her mind ever since she heard what the grand plan with her father was.

The man has been a drug dealer for far too long, he was too rich it was sickening and he sure as hell had some corrupt officials in his pocket.

"Maybe these boys have a solid plan? Maybe they did think about this too. Trust them." Sofia sounded so hopeful.

Trust them... that's something she wasn't sure she could fully do.

"Will you and mom be fine by yourselves?" she asked, needing an excuse to not go to the party Mason Pierce was hosting.

"We are always okay Sedi, we already live alone, and the hotel has security. So go to the party, have some fun. You're young." Sofia patted her thigh and left the room.

She was young? She couldn't figure how a forty-year-old woman could be considered *young*; she was old. Maybe her heart was still young, but her age said otherwise.

She picked up a light sweatshirt, dropped off one shoulder, her skinny jeans were snug against her frame, and she finished off with converse shoes.

They were going to stay over at the lodge where the party was held, so she packed an overnight bag.

She hadn't braided her hair; it was relaxed so she tied it into a neat doughnut bun. She finished up getting ready and picked up her bag so she could go to the lobby and wait for her Uber. Something fell from her bed when she picked up the bag and she stopped to check what it could be...

Her protection in the streets of Jozi, something she had only used once in a scare tactic. She picked it up and looked at it. "Mhm..." sinister thoughts filled her head.

She should perhaps leave it behind...

Perhaps not.

She went with the latter. The damn knife was coming with to the party. Who knows, the sick world we live in could be very dangerous to women travelling alone at night.

She kissed her sleeping mother's hand and wished her and Sofia to have a great NYE.

"Hey... are you going to kiss Mason? That's what you youngsters do at these types of parties, right?" Sofia was a damn child sometimes. Lesedi was bewildered at the question and the glint in her mother's caregiver's eyes.

"No, bye Sofia." Lesedi swiftly left the room before Sofia could imagine any more ideas and try to plant them in her head.

Kiss Mason, hell would freeze over before she even thinks like that.

Sure, Mason Pierce was drop-dead gorgeous, but he wasn't the only good-looking man she knew. Besides, his brother Kyle the one who actually came up with the plan to steal from their father was dating Tracy. It would just be weird not to mention how they were white. She preferred black men, thank you very much.

She wondered how the party would be, she has never partied with any other race before and so far white people really were notorious for overdoing things, over drinking, over smoking, really going wild and she wasn't sure that was her scene, well at least not anymore, not for the past eight years.

Jumping into her Uber, she watched the trees blur past, she was really not in the mood but anything to make her sister believe and see that they were really mending their broken relationship. Damn her father for taking her best friend away from her.

She spent so many years hating Tracy because she thought she was siding with her father in the whole debacle.

Pulling up to the said party, she wasn't so shocked to see they were already in a swing. She noticed the Pierce brothers, all three of them at braai stand, grilling meat.

She had to admit, they were good looking as hell. They were well built, probably lived in the gym she knew Kyle woke and slept at the gym, but Mason seemed to be right next to him in that department.

She hauled her overnight bag over her shoulder and walked towards them, "Dumelang." She greeted them.

A bunch of 'hey's' and 'hi's' were offered in return.

"Where is Tracy?" she asked.

"She's in the main guest house." Greyson responded and she took off in that direction.

She found a whole crazy number of people in the house, going up and down, mingling, drinking, eating, laughing... she was glad that there a few black people too. But she couldn't care about any of them, she was here for her sister.

"Hey... you made it." Tracy welcomed her and pulled her to the couch where Tracy's friend was already sitting on, eating boerewors rolls with a side of potato salad. She was pregnant and it was beginning to show.

"I did say I was coming..." Lesedi rolled her eyes.

"I am glad you did, let me introduce you - Lesedi - Loraine, my friend and Greyson's wife - Loraine - Lesedi, my sister." Tracy got the introductions out of the way.

"Yeah I remember your sister, we met at the Christmas dinner."

Speaking of Christmas almost made Lesedi growl in anger. That day was a crazy day and if she could, she'd delete it from her memory. That was the day they stole from her father but in turn he kept their mother and Sofia hostage.

There was a time where she could have easily blended in with everyone else, but she couldn't. She no longer drank alcohol or even smoked cigarettes and weed. She was sober and she settled for a cold cranberry juice that night.

"Now I don't feel like a sore thumb for not being able to drink alcohol." Loraine said to her as she raised her apple juice glass up. She wished she could drink wine but no, she had to get knocked up.

Lesedi chuckled, she actually felt sorry for the girl. But she didn't say anything. She just focused on watching people dance, taking videos and pictures of those who asked, and it quite irked her. She wanted to be left alone to her thoughts.

The night indeed was very young more guests came over and everyone seemed to be in a good mood.

At some point they were all gobbling up the meat Mason brought to the house while some guests were out in the Lapa enjoying the loud music and the hot summer air. There were not a lot of people in the house but there wasn't a little either. Clearly these dudes knew quite a number of people.

Tracy disappeared with Kyle in the long run and Greyson came to get Loraine too who seemed to be fighting sleep. She couldn't understand why they even came to the party in her condition.

Just as she sat there, watching people have fun, she couldn't help but to think of her family problems. The thorn on their backside that was their father.

He was better off dead, not jailed, not detained in some basement, he needed to be wiped off the face of earth.

She watched as Mason walked in the room with some of his friends, they occupied the couch on the far end and entertained some girls. She wasn't at all phased or anything despite Sofia suggesting Mason might have an eye for her, she didn't, and she was really grateful for the time spent alone as it gave her space to think of a plan.

She saw Kyle walk in to talk to his brother, Mason, in the house and asked for the keys of the other guesthouse. Mason fished for the keys... but then retracted them and gave him another set of keys. "These are Ginger's keys, sorry." He gave Kyle the correct keys.

That's when it all clicked in her mind. Mason was drunk, her father was held up in Ginger's house, if she could get her hands on those keys...

She walked up to him, not backing down from her dirty thoughts, she had to set her plan in motion on the busiest night in the world. "Can I borrow your car?" the girl was sober as a judge; Mason had forgotten she disclosed how she didn't drink alcohol.

"Why?" he was startled by her sudden appearance and request. Lesedi was a loner, she kept to herself, and he wasn't going to complain about that because the girl had a lot of lip.

"I need to go for a drive." She told him, "I will be careful." He once let her drive his car, when they were running from her father's goons, she was a fantastic driver, he saw it with his own two eyes.

He took his car keys from his pocket, and Ginger's house keys fell and Lesedi picked them up and kept them on her. She took Mason's car keys and

walked out without saying another word. She was grateful she didn't have to find another way of securing Ginger's house keys; this was all so easy. It was as if the universe was helping her to plot.

She drove the Mustang out of the premises and entered the address she had memorized to head on the gps on her phone and off she drove.

She sped on the road and arrived at Ginger's place within no time. She unlocked the doors and went straight to the basement.

"Arg, it smells in here." She was disgusted. She turned the lights on, and her father came into view. He looked so dirty and smelled very bad. It had been a week of him being detained, he was bound to mess himself up, but he had only peed on himself.

"An old man, peeing on himself... how... sad." Lesedi walked over to him. She was disgusted but mostly at what he did to them.

"What do you want?" the man asked. He was running low on energy. He had thought by now he'd be out, but he was started to think otherwise.

"I just want to know why the fuck you did what you did. Why did you beat up mom like that? Did you not love her?" she asked.

"I did... but she's a whore." Morris answered. He was no longer in a fighting spirit, he was tired, his arms were tired from being tied up to the chains hanging from the ceiling and he was tired of standing.

"A whore? What did she do?"

"She didn't appreciate me. I made money, I was going to make us rich, but she wanted to get me arrested, how pathetic." The man snickered.

Lesedi was not surprised her father wouldn't even apologize or give her a valid reason why he did what he did.

"You're disgusting." She told him, "The world is better off without you."

Morris chuckled. "I know... but I heard them saying they were going to send me to jail." He laughed, "I will be out of jail soon. And you know what I am going to do? I am going to finish what I started. I made you all, I made all of you and I will break you, all of you." He sneered, eyes scotching with anger.

There was truth in his threat, Lesedi knew that, and she knew she had to do something to help her family. She was not going to let this man ruin what's left of their lives. Not by a longshot.

she pulled the knife from her back pocket and flipped it open, the blade looking shiny and sharp.

Her father looked at it and started to laugh, "Let's bet... you wouldn't kill me, you're a little pussy." Morris Phiri sneered. How she loathed this man.

"Shut up! I call the shots!" Lesedi screamed in his face. She expected her heart to race but she was in fact calm, very calm. "I thought you'd be remorseful... that you'd apologize for ruining our lives, for ruining my life!!!"

Morris rolled his already dull and aching eyes, "Kill me if you have the guts but don't fucking be pathetic. You are all little hussies that did not appreciate me."

"Why? Why did you give that man money after I told you what he did to me? Why?" she asked, her eyes burning with anger. She was far too gone in the anger-ville that nothing could hold her back.

"He brought in money, I mean it's not the end of the world, you're still alive. It's not like he killed you." He had no care in the world. Absolutely no regard for his daughters or his wife.

"You were supposed to protect me, but you chose to endorse the man who ruined my life. I hate you!" those words were accompanied by a blade into the man's neck, connecting with his precious veins. Blood spew everywhere and Lesedi did not care. The man's enlarged eyes did not stop her from retracting the blade and stabbing the other side of the neck, twisting it until she watched life slip from the man's eyes.

Then it all went quiet. That's when shock slammed into her body like bags of cement. She did it, she actually killed the piece of shit called her father.

She didn't hear anyone walk in, but she felt him before she saw him.

Mason Pierce.

He walked in and found her shaking with tears now streaming down her face. He took his phone out and called Ginger, "Sorry man, think you can come and help me drive one of the cars back to the guest house?" Mason asked. He had received a call from Ginger who noticed that someone entered his house and wondered if it was Mason only for Mason to realize that Lesedi asked for his car and stole keys from him to come here...

"Code?" Ginger asked.

"Six." Mason responded; code six was their code for murder (six feet under). In his area of work, Mason worked with deadly people, intelligent people, the government and they had made use of codes so no one could ever know exactly what's being spoken about.

"Shit, I am on my way." Ginger then hung up.

"Let's go back to the party okay Les?" Mason guided her out to his car. He knew she didn't take what her father did to them well. The man was a sociopath with no remorse. But what she did to the man, well he was not

expecting that at all. The girl did look like she'd snap your neck in your sleep, but he never thought that she'd literally kill.

Arriving back to the guesthouse after Ginger arrived at his house so he could help drive back Kyle's car that Mason drove to go after Lesedi, Mason unlocked the second guesthouse he had booked.

"Just wash up in there, get the blood off and let's go back to the others so they don't ask questions." He told her. Lesedi was still shaken, she could still smell and taste her father's blood.

She killed him.

She couldn't believe that she killed him.

Ginger dropped the car off, had some snacks and drinks as it was already after midnight, they welcomed the New Year. He then left.

Mason and Lesedi then walked back to the main guesthouse that everyone had access to, and as they walked in, Greyson who was the youngest brother of the Pierce brothers was walking out with his wife Loraine. They were going back home; Loraine was tired, and Greyson lived to do anything to make his wife happy and comfortable.

Mason helped Lesedi sit on the couch and offered her a stiff drink as she had been crying the entire time. As much as she had quit alcohol, she needed the drink. She needed to calm down, so she accepted the offered glass.

"Are you okay?" Tracy asked her sister, concern colouring her face. Lesedi nodded and gulped the whiskey down.

"Where did you two go?" Tracy asked as she and Kyle were looking for them earlier on.

"We went to get some hotdogs and just hid from y'all for a while." Mason winked at Tracy with his boyish grin. His hair fell into his eyes, and she couldn't deny, Mason was just as attractive.

Lesedi stood up, "I think I need to lie down a while." She told them.

"Is this ketchup up?" Tracy touched the red substance on Lesedi's chin. She was about to put it in her mouth when Mason roughly stopped her.

He wiped it off Tracy's finger, "That's just nasty... but you guys enjoy and take care of this place okay? Me and baby girl here are going to sleep." Mason told everyone, placing his hand on the small of Lesedi's back.

"Baby girl?" Tracy asked, looking at Lesedi. "Are you fucking my sister?" she asked.

"And you're fucking my brother, we squared." Mason grinned at his smart comeback and took Lesedi back to his guest house.

"Why did you make them think we are sleeping together?" Lesedi asked.

"You will find out why some day. Anyway, I am beat too I need some rest." Mason locked the door after them. The guest house was a two-bedroom house, he slept in one while she occupied the next one.

As they slept, Gina came knocking on the door. Mason had forgotten that his baby sister was to sleepover in the next room while Lesedi slept in the guesthouse Kyle and Tracy would be sleeping in.

"Fuck, you can take my room." Mason said to his baby sister who was followed by Loraine's little sister and her best friend.

Mason went to the room Lesedi was occupying and jumped on the couch.

"Is there any reason you're in my room?" Lesedi coldly asked. She couldn't sleep, she just lay in bed, thinking.

"My sister needed the bed, and you need an alibi dummy." He rolled his eyes in the dark.

"I am not a dummy, you're the dummy here. I kill a person and you clean it up? You're stupid." She mumbled. She was staring at the ceiling hands folded behind her head. Yeah, she did think he was stupid for that.

Mason couldn't help but to chuckle, he was not at all amused though. "Is that the thanks I get for saving your butt?"

"I did not ask you to."

"But you didn't stop me either."

"I was shocked."

"What would you rather I do? Call the cops and rat you out? So, I could implicate myself and my boys?"

It was Lesedi's turn to roll her eyes, but he couldn't see her from the small couch he was trying to sleep on. "Maybe."

Mason gave up the fight of trying to squish himself on the couch. "Whatever, fuck you and I am going to sleep on the couch in the lounge. This one is too small for me. If anyone asks why I crashed there, please be so kind to let them know that we didn't fuck each other, I lied so I could give you an alibi after you killed your father but clearly you are not appreciative of my gestures." He snapped.

Lesedi sighed. "Stay." She called out as soon as he reached the door.

"This couch is small and even if it wasn't, I have no reason to." He argued.

"You're right, I do need an alibi, we both might need alibis... the bed is big enough for us."

He was shocked that she actually offered him space on the bed. "If you so as hell touch me in anyway I do not like I will have your heart beating out of my hand, you hear me?" she threatened him as he approached the bed.

Something about that threat felt like a promise and he very much preferred his heart beating inside of him. "I hear you. Night Les." He jumped on the other side but kept to his end of the bed.

"Whatever."

The following morning Lesedi turned on her back after sleeping for a minimum of two hours in the night.

"I will never in my life share a bed with you, you're a terrible bed mate." Mason's groggy morning voice greeted her ears.

She didn't bother looking at him, she felt his presence the whole night on her side which was partly why she couldn't sleep. She wasn't used to sharing her bed at all. And she didn't exactly feel comfortable sharing one with a person who had a penis between their legs.

Albeit Mason kept to his side of the bed the entire night, snoring all the way into sunrise, she was still very much aware of him, and it irked her.

"You kept tossing and turning and disturbing my sleep." He jumped out of bed and that's when Lesedi noticed his sleeping attire.

"You slept naked in my bed?" she asked, bewildered. "How dare you!"

Mason stretched and ignored her. "I was not going to sleep in those fucking tight jeans man."

"Do you not own a pair of pyjamas?"

"No, hey I didn't touch you okay? If there is anyone who should complain here is me." He snapped, rubbing sleep off his eyes. This was not how he had imagined waking up on a new year. He thought he'd be lucky to score some nice girl who he'd bed into the new year and wake up on some more adult fun with.

"You?" she sat up in bed, her eyes filled with accusation.

"Yes me, I paid a lot of money for all these houses and yet I couldn't even sleep alone or get some pussy. No, I had to go get some crazy girl who went on a killing spree and then share a bed with her, and she tosses and turns the whole night. Fuck." He walked over to the couch and sat down.

"Says someone that was snoring all night."

"Doesn't mean I had a good night's rest."

"I can't sleep with other people okay? It's uncomfortable." She mumbled, her lips slightly pouting.

Before mason could even ask or say anything, a knock resounded on the door. "Mason?" it was Gina, his little sister, the last born in the family.

Mason walked to the door and opened it slightly and Gina passed him his cell phone that was currently ringing. She was in a sleepy state and looked like someone who won't be getting up for at least a couple more hours.

"G!" He answered the call immediately Gina placed the ringing and vibrating gadget in his hand. He had forgotten to take his phone last night as he had forgotten about the sleeping arrangements.

"Ay man, what do I do with the cargo?" Ginger asked. He sounded like he had been awake for a while. His voice was crisp and sharp.

"I just woke up and didn't even ask the queen what she would like us to do with it." Mason rolled his eyes as if Ginger could see him, but Lesedi was looking at him. She didn't miss the sarcastic remark and she knew they were talking about her father's body.

"Queen? You tapping that?" Ginger asked, his voice laced with amusement. "Damn bro, you move fast."

Groaning Mason pinched the bridge of his nose, "Not like that man, like ice queen. I will call you back." He hung up.

"Ice queen?" she asked with a brow arched.

"What do you want to do with the body? Should we make it disappear?" he asked.

Lesedi mauled over it, she has been thinking about that too for the most part of the night when she was not thinking of how uncomfortable it was to share a bed with someone. "No, do you think we can have a funeral? I want a funeral."

Mason looked at her like she was insane. "You want a funeral? An actual funeral? With just us or with your whole family?"

Lesedi looked at him like he was insane as well, "I mean I want his body found. I don't want to look over my shoulder wondering if someone will start looking for him... so I want his body found, I want to bury him, with my family... with his family too if they care." She got out of bed and Mason noticed her sleeping attire. She wore long pyjama pants that matched with a long-sleeved pyjama top.

"Right, that makes sense. I am sure G will think of something that could stick. The man has two stab wounds on his neck... questions will be asked."

"He has a lot of enemies, surely one must have gotten to him." She mumbled, opening the curtains and windows in the room. Out of habit, she started making the bed.

"Are you not... how do you feel?" Mason just had to ask. Sure, the woman was a fireball, had a spunk and too much heat behind her eyes, had a fucking mean streak, but murdering people? It couldn't be a habit right?

Lesedi looked at him, the fact that he was all muscle, and no clothes didn't really affect her much. sure, he had a great physique, those arms were ripped, the veins on his forearms... the abs... but whatever. He was just another man who at this minute was looking at her like she killed for a living.

She was good at reading people, assessing situations... and Mason right now, was looking at her like she had some disgusting skin disease.

"I have never killed before." She told him as she fluffed out the pillows and placed them back on the bed. "I can see the look in your eyes."

"What look is that?"

"You are wondering if this is what I do. No, it is not. But I will surely do it if pushed in a fucking corner or if someone fucking ruins my life." She was now slapping the damn pillows.

"I didn't... that's not what I was thinking."

"Yeah it was, but you don't understand Mason, I had to do it. What he did... fucking unforgivable. He had to go; did I know what the hell I was doing? No. Do I know what I am doing now? No... do I have any regrets? Yes, I should have killed him a long time ago. That's my only regret." She picked up her toiletry bag from the chair at the corner of the room and left the room without waiting for a response.

Mason looked at the spot she was standing on, then at the door she exited through, this woman was something else. He does not know what the hell he just got himself in, but the sooner he wraps up this job the better.

He called Ginger back and informed her what Lesedi wanted.

"Okay, I will do my best to wipe off any trace of us or hers on this guy and see what I can do. He's a drug dealer... I will have to make sure it looks like a rival killing." Ginger told his boss then they agreed on greater details then hung up.

"Mace?" Kyle walked inside their guesthouse. "Hey man."

Mason's eyes met his brothers at the door. Kyle walked inside and closed the door behind him. "When are we sending that bastard to jail? I have a killer hangover and just want to get everything out of my hair." he asked. The bastard being Lesedi and Tracy's father.

Kyle was the one who called him back to South Africa to help him out with stealing that man's money and to protect his girl from him. Tracy suffered severely in the hands of that man, and he wanted him in jail as soon as yesterday.

Mason hated lying to his brother but at this point he wasn't sure if he could tell anyone what happened. "Uhm later tonight? I need to set up reporters and a camera crew, social media butterflies to capture everything so he doesn't even see the sun." Mason informed him.

Kyle nodded in understanding. "Thank you bro, I owe you one."

"You owe me more than that but who's counting right?" Mason smirked. He loved his siblings to death, but a favour was a favour even though it wouldn't be a malicious one.

Kyle grinned and as he opened his mouth to respond, the door opened and in walked Lesedi wrapped in a white fluffy robe. "Oh!" Kyle exclaimed as if he just remembered seeing Lesedi and Mason walk out to go 'sleep' last night. He was drunk but he sure did remember.

"Lesedi." He greeted her with a smile which wasn't returned. Lesedi hated the glint in his eyes, the douche believed that she and Mason had slept together, well had sex with each other since they technically did sleep together.

"Hi... and bye." She kept the door open. Kyle didn't argue, he shot right out.

"Did you tell him?" she narrowed her eyes as Mason soon as Kyle closed the door.

"No, but I don't know how long I am going to keep it for, he needs to know."

"Needs to know? He doesn't need to know anything, next thing he tells his girlfriend a.k.a my sister and I lose her again. I don't think anyone would love to have a murderer for a sister... so you can never tell any of your brothers."

"Fine. Fuck, the sooner this is done, the sooner I can fucking leave." He snapped.

"And what are you still doing in my room? It's bad enough that now everyone thinks we fucked each other... you're still here. Get out, I want to change."

Mason looked at her and shook his head. Was this attitude only kept for him and his brothers or everyone else? He wondered because damn man, the girl was a dragon.

"I am leaving wanted to give Gina some few hours of sleep. People partied until late you know?"

"Not my problem, get out." she snapped, unzipping her bag to check her clothes.

"By the way... you need to get it into your thick head that we did sleep together... not only would people be jealous that you scored a gentleman like myself but if you don't get it through then you have a weak ass alibi and we might as well walk to the central station and hand ourselves over because trust me, one way or another... your whole family will be questioned." Then he walked out of the room.

Lesedi had a few words she wanted to pass, people would be jealous she scored him? Cocky much? like she'd ever give him the time of the day.

Just as she finished dressing up and combing her hair, her sister called her to come join her for breakfast in the Lapa. She was a little hungry, but she knew she wouldn't be able to stomach anything until she hears the news that her father's body was found, and nothing would link back to her or Mason and team.

She unplugged her phone and went to find her baby sister.

"Soo.. you and Mason?" Tracy cut to the chase as she filled her plate with left over meat that she warmed up.

"Oh God no, a huge mistake on my part I do not want to talk to about it." She nipped it in the bud. There was no way she was going to admit something that did not happen, but what did happen was that they shared a bed, and she will never do that to herself ever again.

"Please don't tell me he sucks in bed? He looks so gorgeous and confident..."

Lesedi had a choice, to bad mouth him or to make her sister believe she had an amazing night. "He was and I don't want to talk about it, please."

Tracy gasped. "Arg now you just ruined him for me."

"You're dating his brother."

"So? He's handsome and I just... I was just saying, okay fine... let's not talk about him. Let's talk about us."

"Us?"

"Dad is finally going to go to jail and if there is anything he did right was to create the businesses in my name, and I hold title deeds to both shops." Tracy was smiling. Hearing her talk about her father as if he was still alive unsettled her.

It made her more aware of the crime she had committed. "Mhm yeah?"

"Yeah, and since you are already working in a salon, I thought it would be great to transfer it into your name."

Lesedi was in for a shock, she couldn't believe her sister was freely giving away the salon she worked so hard for just like that.

"Mohau... I can't... I can't accept that, it's your baby." Lesedi felt uncomfortable. she was unsettled.

"You deserve it. And I won't argue with you, I will be meeting the lawyers during the week, and we will discuss this. But I have made my decision." Her baby sister deadpanned.

As the day progressed, Lesedi for a hot second forgot all about her dilemma. She was enjoying lunch with her sister and boyfriend, watching Kyle

complain and moan over hangover brought satisfaction to her body. She didn't know why...

Soon everyone started to leave one by one and only she and Mason remained. Mason told Tracy & Kyle that he'd drop Lesedi off at the hotel she stayed in, but she knew there was more to it, she could catch an uber like she did last night... but they had a pressing matter to resolve.

"It's done." Mason sat on the wooden table, joining the fierce woman.

"What is?"

"The whole thing, we made it look like a gang killing... left some weird signature on it, Ginger asked around and found some old gang that your father had some bad ins with, and we copied their signature kills. So, by the end of this day... your father's body will be found, and some crazy gang will take the heat for it." Mason shrugged.

"So, what, Ginger does all your dirty work and you just work from your nice computer and your nice phone?"

Mason looked at her, looked straight in her eyes and didn't even blink, "Do you know how to be grateful?"

That caught her off-guard, the look in his eyes, it was... he was irritated and somehow it irked her. She was the one often irritated by other people but to be on the receiving end of that made her antsy.

"Thank you." She mumbled and he sighed.

"Come on... I need to settle the bill because my guests broke some few things but hey... small price to pay for a great party, even though I didn't enjoy it."

"Hey, I said thank you, but if you think I will feel bad that you didn't enjoy your stupid party, barking up the wrong tree here."

So much for being grateful, Mason shook his head and walked to the reception, paid what he owed, left a nice tip for the receptionist and then drove out of the lodge.

Soon as she arrived at the hotel, she found her mother crying and Sofia comforting her. Panic set her body on fire, she threw her bag on the floor and rushed over to the two special women in her life.

"What's wrong? What happened?" she asked.

"Lucas called..." her heart started to beat wild. Lucas was their father's younger brother.

"What does he want?" she asked, "What did he say? Why is mama crying?"

Sofia looked at her but kept rubbing Daisy's back, "He said he was burned to death."

"Who was burned to death Sofia, nothing you're saying is making sense. What is going on man?" Lesedi worried a great deal about her mother. She vowed to protect her from the sick world with everything she had in him.

"Morris."

"Oh!" that was Lesedi's response. There she was, worried sick thinking Lucas called and threatened her mother, but no the man came bearing bad and good news depending on how you looked at it.

"Oh?" Sofia was bewildered at the girl's response. "Oh? You knew about this? Oh?"

Lesedi couldn't understand why her mother was crying over the news when she should be fucking rejoicing and kissing her damn feet, well if she knew it was her who killed the man. And she didn't understand why Sofia was looking at her like she stole sherbet from the sweetest girl in the streets.

"What?"

"Lesedi... did you know about this? Why are you so... so calm?"

Lesedi might as well scream at the top of her lungs that she was the one who killed the man. Why the hell didn't she practise how she'd have to react when she 'hears' the news? Damn it.

"I didn't know... but I mean I thought it was something serious, I just don't understand why mama is crying."

"He... was... my husband." Daisy answered, her speech was better, but she still took a while to speak each word. It was as if she had to think of them before she could say them. It broke Lesedi's fucking heart that it was because of that damned loser her mother was like this.

"He was a monster! He was a fucking monster damn it!" Lesedi snapped. "How can you cry for a man that almost killed you? How can you allow yourself to feel anything for the man who terrorized your kids and ruined their entire lives?"

"Lesedi calm down, you're scaring her." Sofia stood up to her full height and stepped into Lesedi's comfort zone. "Go to your room and calm down, you aren't helping her."

"Fuck! Fuck all of this!" she hauled her bag off the floor and walked inside her bedroom, slamming the door in the process.

Soon as she arrived in her bedroom her phone rang, it was Tracy, if her sister cried as well, she was going to lose her mind.

"Yeah, he's dead, just heard." Lesedi snapped into the phone before Tracy could even greet or even state why she had called.

"Oh."

"That's what I said, but no, I am the fucking villain."

"I am sorry, I am not quite following, what you said? Why are you a villain?" Tracy asked, Lesedi could tell her sister's mood wasn't as cheerful as how she last saw her.

"Nothing, never mind, what's up?"

"How do you feel about this? I mean when Mason told Kyle that he didn't do it, that someone else got to them while they tried to move him... it kind of made me happy. Does that make me a bad person?" Tracy asked. For a thirty years old woman, she sure sounded too innocent when she asked that. If anything, Tracy did have some spunk in her, Lesedi was the meanest, but Tracy could hold hers down too.

"No, no it doesn't. He deserved it for what he put you through."

"What he put us through." Tracy corrected. "We were all affected by him and... uhm.."

"What?" Lesedi probed.

"So, are we the ones burying him?" her younger sister asked. She didn't even think of this. But she sure knew she didn't want to plan that man's funeral.

"I mean, he put Lucas as his next of kin, probably wrote him down on policies if he had any, so let him bury the fucker. Why must we be in it?"

Lesedi slumped back on the bed, pressing her phone to her ear. She didn't want Sofia or her mom to eavesdrop and hear the whole conversation.

"Yeah but he is still legally married to mom."

"Le yena o busy o nnetse ho lla wena, yoh aowa ke bhoregile nna."

Lesedi rolled her eyes like Tracy could see her. (She keeps on crying and it's boring me.)

"Bathong, why is she crying? Is it shock maybe?"

"I better hope so, because we are not burying that asshole and I am not going to keep consoling her like we lost a goddamn hero."

The girls spoke for a while and then hung with Tracy promising to see them soon to talk things over.

Sofia after a while knocked on Lesedi's bedroom door and found the young lady cuddled in her bed. "Can I come in?" Sofia asked. If anything, she respected Lesedi's space.

"Yeah." Lesedi sat up to accommodate her mother's caregiver.

"She once loved that man you know? Then hated him, then became very afraid of him because of what she knew he could do to the two of you. So she was in shock, she doesn't miss him or wish he were alive... she was just caught off-guard cause she never thought that day would come. So, you don't have to shout and scream... you are making her draw back into her shell." Sofia was ever calm, and she spoke about Daisy so well with so much love.

"I am sorry." Lesedi felt like a bitch.

"It's okay, just don't do it again, I have worked so hard to get her where we are today." Sofia smiled softly. "Anyway, Lucas called again just now, but I haven't told sis'Daisy yet."

"How does he even have your number? I haven't seen that man in twelve years, twelve Sofia!"

Sofia shrugged answering the questions, she too had no idea where that man got her number from. "I wish I knew, but they said they will be driving here tomorrow... to help with funeral arrangements."

"Sorry what?"

"Yeah, we have to go back to Soweto. I am sure people are talking now and they will wonder where we are. We have to go back home."

"Yoh hai, that man made our lives hell, and we must bury him? No man, no."

The following Day, Tracy arrived at the hotel and helped her family pack up to leave. She helped her mother into her car, the security guard at the hotel had to help because Tracy's truck was a little high up for the fragile woman.

Lesedi drove shotgun as she didn't have a car of her own and off they went to Soweto. It was a good thing they had cleaned the place up after their father trashed it on Christmas day, so they arrived to a clean home.

"Right, we don't have any plates, glasses or cups." Lesedi clapped her hands and pursed her lips. She wanted to have a glass of water, but their father broke every single glass in the house. The cupboards housed only the plastic kitchenware.

Sofia took Daisy to her bedroom and that's when Tracy grabbed Lesedi's hand, and they walked outside.

"We need to go buy a few things for the house."

"Wasn't the plan to move mom into a hotel until you could buy her the house she wants? Why are we now buying things for this place?"

"We can't live in a house with no plates or cups Lesedi... bathong wena, we need them at least the duration of this week." Tracy argued.

"Buy paper plates and paper cups then. This house is temporary. I don't want to make this house feel like a home for the coming guests."

Tracy wanted to argue, she wanted to tell her sister that they couldn't waste money on paper cups and plates, they needed porcelain plates and cups. But she couldn't argue as a very nice car pulled up in the yard.

They hadn't closed the gate when Tracy drove in the yard, so the car drove through with no hassles and no one knowing who it belonged to.

The range rover pulled up right next to Tracy's car and they could make out the driver very well, Lucas Junior Phiri. But the man was not alone in the car, it had tinted windows so they couldn't tell who the other guests were.

"Bathong, they are already here?" Lesedi mumbled, her eyes not tearing off the car.

"He must have driven here yesterday." The Phiri family were from North West but hailing all the way from Malawi. Their lineage has been watered down from generation to generation until they called themselves Batswana from North West. Most of them were born this side anyway, like Lucas's mother, the girls' grandmother, she was born and bred here and so was her mother.

Lucas stepped out of the car, tall like their father, light skinned with sharp eyes. He looked at the girls and smiled.

"Banake..." he greeted them while rounding his car to open the back passenger door.

The other side opened, and it was their father's cousin who very much acted like his sister, Tapiwa. Tapiwa acted like she shitted gold, dressed to the nines and her nose was always hanging in the air, flaring.

"Is that your grandmother?" Lesedi watched as Lucas helped an elderly woman out of the car. Of course, it was their grandmother, they would recognize that woman anywhere.

Their grandmother was eighty years old of age, used a walking stick as she once dislocated her hip but otherwise, the woman was really aging gracefully.

"Lesedi, Tracy." Tapiwa greeted them with a smile, it did not reach her eyes at all.

"Tapiwa." Lesedi greeted back, not even fake smiling.

"I see you're still rude. It's auntie Tapiwa to you." Tapiwa rolled her eyes.

"You're five years older than me, Tapiwa it is."

"Okay now, let's play nice." Tracy interjected, Lesedi hated everyone from her father's side of the family and Tracy did not want fight brewing while they had a funeral to plan.

"Our bags are in the car, if you could please help us with them." Tapiwa said. "Is your mother inside?"

"My babies." They grandmother greeted them. She was using her walking stick as support. They exchanged pleasantries, well Tracy, Lucas and the grandmother exchanged pleasantries while Lesedi walked inside the house.

She hated how pretentious everyone was. They all smiled, hugged as if they were on good terms. They left them and never cared a damn about them. Did not even contact them even after their father beat their mother half to death.

Soon everyone except Sofia and Daisy settled around the kitchen table and Lucas got down to business. "Lesedi my girl, please sit down." Lucas said to his brother's first-born child. She was standing next to the fridge, arms folded looking hella pissed.

"I am good." She responded. Her mother's house suddenly felt like a match box. It was too small to house all these people.

"I know it's a hard time for all of us. I know you loved your father and must miss him terribly, it's okay." Lucas spoke softly and Lesedi snickered and rolled her eyes.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Tapiwa asked, catching Lesedi in the act.

"What's what supposed to mean?" Lesedi asked.

Tapiwa mimicked her actions, snickered and rolled her eyes. "Your father died, your uncle is trying to comfort you and you roll your eyes? I don't think anyone here needs to deal with your attitude Lesedi, it's tiring now."

Those words, those damned words should have stayed where they were, deep inside Tapiwa because the minute she finished, Lesedi unleashed the disgust and anger she was reigning in.

"You have some nerve, all of you. You have some bloody nerves to show up here twelve years later, no phone, no SMSs, no bloody please call me,

and you want to tell me you're here to comfort me? That I must check my attitude? Bloody hell maan."

Tracy knew that she couldn't say anything to calm her sister down and she knew Tapiwa was also a mean fuck. So, she kept quiet and played with her finger nails, occasionally stealing glances from her grandmother to her uncle.

"Lesedi, this is not the time my child to be pointing fingers. It's a difficult time for all of us. We lost someone; I know it hurts... but you can't take it out on us." Her grandmother spoke. Eighty years old and she spoke so well, calmly but every word was pronounced well... and yet her fifty-nine years old mother was struggling with her speech.

"It hurts? It's a difficult time? You know what hurt koko? You know what was a difficult time? When your goddamn monster of a son beat my mother half to death and none of you came to see her or to talk to him, or to even make sure Mohau and I were okay. That hurt, that was a difficult time." Lesedi snapped.

"Please Lesedi, now is not the time to be talking about old matters, we are here now." Tapiwa added her piece. "Where is your mom and Sofia?"

"Where is your mom, where is Sofia, you even know about Sofia, keeping al tabs on us but couldn't dare face us. What? You were ashamed of what that monster did, or you just did not care?"

"Damn it Lesedi, will you stop?" Lucas yelled. "This is not about you; this is not about the past. My brother was burned to death, burned to death and we just came here to bury him in peace damn it."

"Bury him in peace? In peace? Well, I hope you have the money, I really hope you have the money to bury him rangwane because we don't. His

death is the best gift anyone could ever give us and seeing you lot here, makes my blood boil."

Her grandmother gasped, tears stinging her eyes while Tapiwa's jaw dropped. Lucas, Lucas was seething with anger. "That's my brother you're talking about little girl."

"And he was my useless father, now what?" Lesedi challenged him.

Just then two tall men with green and blue eyes walked in through the opened kitchen door, having heard the commotion as they entered through the gate.

All eyes turned to them, and Tracy was the first to jump from her seat to welcome Kyle and Mason.

"Jaanong ke bo mang ba?" Tapiwa asked, curiosity filling her body.

"Let's go outside, Lesedi come!" Tracy held Kyle's hand and shooped them outside. Lesedi reluctantly followed.

"Please note that this house only has two bedrooms and already four people will be sleeping here, we don't have space for any extra people. I hope you made sleeping arrangements elsewhere." Lesedi said to her relatives before dragging herself out of the kitchen following her sister and the two Pierce brothers.

"Lesedi here thinks it's a great idea to unleash war with dad's family. This week is going to be ridiculously long." Tracy answered the two men's curious expressions.

"Go on and make me the bad guy." Lesedi joined the small group.

"I am not making you the bad guy sis; I am just saying it how I see it. It's only Sunday and Saturday is so far away. Can't we just pretend and ignore

them?" Tracy was all for a peaceful year, she was done fighting, she was done being angry.

"I have time and I have the energy. I will fight by myself if I have to. But no one, not a single person will come in my home and tell me that I need to check my attitude. In my home? That will never happen."

"What are the police doing here?" Tracy ignored her sister's last statement as the white police van with blue words on it stopped outside the yard and two officers in blue walked in the yard.

Lesedi felt bubbles brew in the pit of her belly. She cast a glance at Mason who also looked at her, wondering the same damn thing,

Were the police there to investigate the murder or they came for something else.

"Afternoon ladies and gents." One of the officers greeted. They passed their condolences to Morris' daughters, told them to be strong in this difficult time and proceeded to drop a bomb on them.

"We would like to see Mrs Daisy Phiri please; we have a couple of questions to ask her about her husband's death."

"You must be freaking kidding me!"

"What the hell for?" Tracy asked. "What do you want from my mother?"

"Yeah officers, what's going on?" Mason asked. He was hella curious. He did not think the police officers would be conducting their investigations this soon. The man's body was probably still being checked and no ruling made yet.

"Well, we are running an investigation on the death of your father and we believe he has been killed by some rival gang here in Soweto, so we just need to ask Mrs Phiri if she knew anything about that." One of the officers answered, he was fair skinned, spotted a beer belly and looked nice enough. Untrustworthy but nice.

Lesedi kissed her teeth and moved forward, eye-leveling the officer as she was almost as tall as he was. Tracy and Lesedi were not regarded short but compared to Mason and Kyle, they were shorter.

"What's your name?" Lesedi asked. Her hair was tied into a neat bun, she looked so neat and mean. She looked like someone who feared nothing and no one.

"Detective Marumo ma'am." He answered, gulping. Somehow Lesedi being that close to him, her eyes emotionless made him uneasy.

"Well detective Marumo, my mother doesn't speak, she hasn't said a word since about ten years ago when my father took a baseball bat that was meant to scare some criminals that would dare enter our house while we are asleep and beat the shit out of her with it.

"She was hospitalized for months and when she came home, her jaw had locked, every part of her body dislocated and she had to attend physical therapy sessions as well as speech therapy, even today, she is still attending those, and we are here hoping she will get better. Now you want to come here to question her about her good for nothing husband that almost killed her? Why?" she asked.

The detectives shared an uneasy look and Marumo cleared his throat, not knowing what to say as he did not at all expect to hear such. In fact, he was

hoping that they'd make progress into finding the gang that's been terrorizing the township and put a stop to it. They had hoped that now this man was dead, Daisy might know and want to say something.

According to them, the wives always knew something.

"I'm sorry to hear that." Marumo stated.

"Mhm, you don't have to be." Lesedi was intimidating as hell. The fact that she was a woman and stood dangerously close to the detective told him that she was not the one to be messed with.

"But we thought she could help us put the bad guys in jail. The wives of these men always know something."

"My father left this house eight years ago and he lived to terrorize the hell out of us. If anything, those people deserve a fucking price for getting us out of hell. If my mother could talk, I wouldn't even let you anywhere near her, now unless detective Marumo you have anything else I suggest you leave and don't come back ever again."

Tracy, Kyle and Mason kept quiet as the scene unfolded. Mason was damn proud of this little minx. She stood her ground and if it wasn't clear already, Lesedi hated her father's guts and didn't care who knew.

The officers didn't even spend any minute longer, they left but did tell the ladies that they were going to find the people who killed their father because it was their job anyway.

Tracy and Kyle walked towards Kyle's car which was parked outside, leaving Mason and Lesedi alone.

"You need to be careful of what you say, you don't want to make people think you hated your father to a point of getting him killed." Mason spoke in a very low tone.

Lesedi folded her arms and arched an eyebrow in his direction, "Oh pray tell Mason, do you want me to fake mourn? I am sorry but I can't and won't do that."

"Just don't talk too much alright?" Mason was a little ticked off. He didn't want to be caught in the crossfire.

"Anyway, what are you doing here? I know Kyle is here for Mohau, but wena?" she corked her eyebrow questioningly.

Mason flicked his nose, this girl was not your magazine cover gorgeous, but she was gorgeous. Her chocolate skin, her dimpled chin, her thick brows, the fire in her eyes, the scowl on her lips, the flaring of her nose, her intimidating no-nonsense posture, she was a goddess. But she was too crazy for him to even let the thought of her beauty run wild.

"I have a hundred million rands with me and it needs to go into someone's bank account." He spoke in a very low tone. Lesedi had forgotten about that. "And I just had Tracy's account activated again, if you will need money for the funeral."

"Thanks, uhm I don't think we can move such a lot of money into our personal bank accounts right?"

"No, it will raise alarms, the little I can get away with is five million per account."

"What are you?" Lesedi asked, she knew damn well that the things this man was capable of doing were borderline illegal yet genius.

Mason smiled, oh he loved it when people noticed the genius mind and skills he possessed. Boosted his fucking ego.

"You let me worry about that." Mason wiggled his brows and Lesedi rolled her eyes in return.

A groan nudged its way out of Lesedi's throat when she saw two elderly women walk through the gate carrying buckets of scones with. "The man died yesterday and already we are getting visitors with scones? I am sorry Mason but you requesting that I be nice during this time won't work."

Mason couldn't even say anything before Lesedi walked away in a speed, stopping the women dead in their tracks. "Dumelang." Lesedi folded her arms, anger marring her face.

"Dumela hle ngwanaka." One of the women greeted and the other followed suit. "Please accept our condolences." They were speaking in very calm tones. "We heard the terrible news. Phiri was a respectable man in the community."

"Respectable man in the community?? Since when?" Lesedi asked one in particular who lived right across the street. Mma Sethosa. "Mma Sethosa please okay? you know very well that man was not a good man so please spare us the bullshit."

"Okay, Dumelang." Tracy had left her boyfriend and quickly rushed to save the two women from her sister's wrath. "Thank you for the scones Mma Sethosa, but we are still talking as a family and we don't even have chairs for visitors, please come tomorrow?" Tracy politely informed the two women and they left in understanding.

"Yoh wena. At the rate you're going, no one will come here and help us bury the man. Can you just please... just please be nice." Tracy picked up the buckets and walked inside the house.

Mason chuckled at Lesedi. The woman was a fireball. She didn't beat around the bush and didn't buy face, what you see is what you truly get.

"Dude, do you want people to come and pass their condolences or not?" Mason asked, his chest vibrating from his low chuckles. Kyle had walked back in the yard, and he too was amused.

"Do you know that none of these people ever stopped by to check on my mom after he beat her up? No one wanted to come here, maybe they were scared but he left, he left for a long time, and no one still came. Today he's dead and they are coming with buckets of scones? Fuck them man." Lesedi retreated to the house.

"Tell me again what you saw in her when you fucked her Mason? That girl is insane. She's a ticking time bomb." Kyle was astonished. Flabbergasted to say the least.

"Fucked her?" Mason was confused then remembered the alibi story... "I don't wanna talk about that. Clearly I was drunk. Can we go home? I don't wanna be here."

"Yeah, let's go tell buttercup we are leaving. She said something about getting chairs and a tent, so I wanna confirm if she will do it, or I should. Did you activate her account again?"

"Yeah, she can use her accounts again." The two tall men walked around the house and Kyle walked inside the house, Tracy had pulled him into their bedroom to talk to him and her sister.

Mason remained outside and caught a conversation that had his heart skipping a beat.

The girls' uncle was hidden by Tracy's car, and he was in a heated conversation with someone over the phone, someone of importance and someone who scared him.

"I will get to the bottom of this Mateo I promise. His house burned down, and I can't find his boys because I was trying to sort out the mortuary stuff." That was Lucas talking on the phone, Mason could only hear the one-sided conversation.

"I know, I know that someone stole the money from him, it did not burn in that house. I will get to the bottom of this. I am keeping an eye on the family in case they know or heard something. Yes, yes I will keep in touch." Just then Lucas rounded the car and found Mason leaning against the wall, one leg propped up.

He looked like some bad boy needing some time alone.

"Hello there, I don't believe we have met." Lucas approached the lone man.

Mason peered his eyes at the man, he was tall, a little scrawny compared to Mason's big and muscled frame. "Mason, Mason Pierce." Mason passed his hand for a firm handshake.

"Don't know any Pierces. I am Lucas, Lucas Phiri, Morris's brother."

"Ahh, right. Nice to meet you I guess."

"Yeah under these circumstances. Tell me, how do you know my girls?"

"Your girls? Oh, you mean Tee and Lesedi? We are friends." Mason responded. He had no idea why this man was talking to him, but he knew he was entertaining the man because he wanted to know more about him.

"Friends, mhm okay. Anyway, have the girls ever said anything about their father? When last did they see him?"

Mason was startled that this man would ask him such questions, but he was not complaining. "They didn't see him often, they did say a couple of things about him, why?"

"No, just need to understand what happened because now I just received a call that my brother's house was burned down, and some things were missing... so I just wanted to know if he ever reached out to his family you know, maybe someone was gunning for him."

"Mhm, wait why would anyone gun for your brother? Was he a rich man? A gangster?" Mason faked nonchalance. There was no way he was going to admit he knew Morris was a dodgy character. Or even make it seem like he knew what happened to the said house that was burned down. That was his and Kyle's handiwork.

Lucas shook his head as if realizing he might just be talking to the wrong person. "Hai it's fine my boy, come inside." Lucas walked into the house, but Mason remained put.

There was no way he was walking into that kitchen to be scrutinized by Lesedi's family. He decided then to go wait in the car and avoid anymore confrontations.

Just then Ginger called him. "G." he answered.

"Yo man, we have a problem." Ginger cut to the chase. "That boy we got in jail? I think they called him Punch or something, Morris's right hand? Yeah, well he wants to talk."

Mason sat up right on his seat, "What do you mean?"

"Our cop guy tells me that someone from the outside wants him out of that jail and home boy is willing to talk. He wasn't talking before because he hadn't heard from Morris in a while but now that he knows someone who could get him out of jail... he wants to talk."

"Okay but how does that concern us?"

"You forgot he's the one that made out Lesedi on the day of the heist?"

"Fuck!!"

"Yeah, fuck. If this person reaches him, and he talks... Lesedi will be in trouble, ultimately us."

Mason couldn't believe this. The heist happened a fucking while ago, Morris been missing for a week, comes out dead, and someone is looking for him... and that someone wanted the money that Morris had. He remembered the conversation Lucas had on the phone... and something told him the money they stole from Morris, was not all his.

Double fuck.

CHAPTER TWO

“Okay, so we need to start planning for the unexpected visitors now, we need to get chairs, a tent, some urns for tea... if Tapiwa and them are here...”

"I hear my name, and I enter." Tapiwa walked inside the girls' room after Kyle had left. He couldn't help Tracy much except to give her his card to buy whatever they needed, but he made sure she knew that no way in hell was he going to pay for that man's funeral. She was only to get a few necessities for the immediate family in the meantime.

But Tracy, the one with money between the two sisters had no plans of using Kyle's money. Her father didn't deserve it. Not after the hell he put her through.

"Ey Tapiwa, mekgwa e kae?" Lesedi clicked her tongue in annoyance. (Tapiwa, where are your manners?)

"Don't tell me about manners, we have been here for a while, you haven't offered rakgadi anything to eat or drink, you left us in the kitchen, we haven't seen sis'Daisy or Sofia since we arrived. You two are whispering by yourselves in here, what's going on?"

"You want to be included? Fine, we need to get a tent and a couple of chairs for visitors that will be coming during the week, will you and rangwane handle that?" Lesedi asked. Tracy was more than prepared to handle the hiring of chairs and the tent, but she wanted to hear what Tapiwa would say.

"Aowa, maybe Lucas can, I don't have money."

"Then why do you want to know every little thing if you don't have money? And if your aunt is hungry, tsamo mo rekela Kota." (Go and buy her a kota)

Tracy couldn't hold her laughter anymore, she downright burst out and fell on one of the twin beds she used to share with Lesedi. Her belly hurt as she couldn't stop from laughing. Now she knew her sister was absolutely insane, but she kept levelling up.

"You think she's funny? That's your grandmother. Show some respect at least. Bathong!" Tapiwa exited the room in a huff.

"Lesedi... you are something else you know? Yeses." Tracy has been trying to keep it together since they arrived, but Lesedi wasn't making things any easier.

"Let's go talk to mom and Sofia, we need a plan." Lesedi didn't even crack a smile. She wasn't trying to be funny. She was just irritated.

She should have asked Mason to dig up a shallow grave for the man instead.

"Watseba, I wonder... did these people come here to bury their child, or they came here to watch us do it? Dude, I don't have money...besides that other money, I don't have money, I don't have policies, I have nothing." Lesedi sat down on her bed.

She wasn't lying, she worked at a salon in Joburg CBD and only made enough to pay for rent, buy some few necessities and call it a day. She couldn't spare a grand to even assist with the funeral.

Her father made sure that if she wasn't working for him then no one else should touch her. And besides, she didn't have any formal education

besides her matric certificate. They didn't have enough money to take them to school, when her father started dealing in drugs and bringing money home, she took some of that and attended a few beauty classes where her hair braiding skills were advanced. Only that.

"I don't want you worrying about that, I will give you my card to get whatever you need, whatever we will need. And as for anything else, you're right, let's hear what rangwane has to say. We can't be expected to foot the bill." Tracy also agreed with her sister. They had to put their feet down on this one.

"Where is your mother? I want to see her." The two girls were greeted by their grandmother's calm voice as they returned back to the kitchen after having a chat with Sofia and their mother who have locked themselves in Daisy's bedroom.

"Can we not stress the poor woman already? She needs some time to wrap her head around the fact that her good for nothing husband is dead." Lesedi pulled a chair and sat down. From the corner of her eyes, she could see Tapiwa seething, the horns on her forehead protruding.

"We don't have any policies that cover this man, so how are we going to bury him? I work at a salon, Mohau lost her job, mama... well mama has been depending on us..." Lesedi asked her uncle specifically.

"Heban, what about the money from the restaurant?" Lucas asked, he knew about the restaurant and the salon. He was always in the loop of all his brother's affairs.

"The accounts were frozen because of my father and now that he's dead, there is more investigations." Tracy lied. Her father caused two of her

miscarriages, she was not going to roll a red carpet for his funeral or his family that neglected them for years.

Lucas scratched his brow out of sheer irritation, he had the money, well he could get the money, but he didn't want to. His brother was the one who gave him money all the time, well his brother maintained his lifestyle, now that the man was dead, he was trying to save every penny he could.

"Eish, we will need to talk to someone about that. Those accounts should not be touched, we need the money." The gears in his head turned, as he thought of who to ask help from.

"Rangwane, you didn't add your brother on any of your policies? Nothing at all? At this point we are just going to have to wrap him up in some old blanket and bury him like that and offer people French polony sandwiches at the funeral and call it a day." Lesedi spoke in a bored tone. She loved riling her uncle and Tapiwa up. She got a kick out of doing that.

"Okay, that's enough now. This is a serious issue. My brother is lying there in a cold morgue, he needs to be buried with dignity. He started two businesses for you two spoilt brats and now you don't want to bury him? Are you two normal?" Lucas was seething with anger.

"Where is Daisy? I know she won't stand for this nonsense. This is not the time to be a bitch about anything. We came here as a family to come and bury one of our own."

"Exactly." Tapiwa added her two cents.

"I have a better suggestion, how's about you sell your lavish car that your brother probably bought you and use the money to bury that dude? Huh?"

Why do we have to bury him after all the heartaches and the torture he put us through?"

"Daisy? Daisy?" Lucas stood up and started calling Daisy around the house, searching the rooms to find the woman.

Lesedi let him do as he wished. She knew Sofia would handle him.

"Why do you hate your father so much? Yes, what he did to your mother was wrong, but he fixed it didn't he? He started businesses for you two girls to make up for that." Their grandmother asked, there was so much sadness in her eyes and in her voice. That, that irked Lesedi to the core.

"He used those business to clean his drug money, if I didn't want to do it, he'd beat me. He beat me almost to death because I was pregnant and thought that could jeopardise his business. I lost two children because of him koko. Two! Now why would you want us to bury him? Why would you expect us to bury him with our money?" Tracy asked, her voice thick with sorrow.

"You're lying, you just want to eat my brother's money by yourselves." Tapiwa dismissed Tracy with a wave of a hand and a roll of eyes.

"Tapiwa, Tapiwa don't fucking try me. This brother you speak so highly of was a fucking monster to us. He was a fucking monster man. And listen... even if we do bury him with this money you claim we have, we will do that and not even give you a cent of it. So really, whether we want to 'eat' it by ourselves or not... you won't get anything." Lesedi then stood up from her chair.

"Let's go, we need to get some stuff." Lesedi said to Tracy. She couldn't believe these people.

Tracy didn't have to be told twice; she had left her purse in the car so there wasn't anything else she needed in the house. They walked to Tracy's car.

"Don't mind Tapiwa, she's just a bitter old hag that has no life of her own."

"It's okay... I mean that hurt, the fact that she didn't believe me? Yoh but whatever, I am okay now." Tracy asked her sister to drive. Suddenly she wasn't in the mood to do anything really. She was upset.

"So where are we going?" Lesedi asked her sister as she pulled out of the driveway.

"To get mom and Sofia food, and then organise some chairs and a tent to be set up inside the yard for visitors. You know how Africans do it, they will be coming in and out the whole week." Tracy responded. "I don't even know where they kept his body or what's happening with it."

"Mhm, I guess rangwane Lucas will inform us when he wants to. I have never planned a funeral before. I don't even know what it is we are supposed to do." Lesedi confessed. "I don't even know how the morgue business works, what are we supposed to do, how to get coffins and whatnot. Who's going to dig his grave, how much food to buy, what to expect. Fuck man."

They discussed details as they drove to Maponya mall, there they bought food, some plates, cups and glasses for the family. Then went to hire out a small tent and twenty chairs which will be delivered the following day. Then they went to order scones from some well-known bakery which will also be delivered tomorrow.

The sun had just set when Sofia called them to hurry back home. They had just finished eating their dinner and trying to see how much money they were willing to spare and just actually have some light conversations.

"It's only starting isn't it? I mean the drama." Tracy asked her sister as they loaded the groceries in Tracy's car. This time, she was happy to drive back home.

"I am afraid so." Their father really was a piece of work even when he was dead. How fucking annoying.

Arriving home, there was a car parked out front the girls drove in and Lesedi went to close the gate after Tracy's car as it was already night time and this was Soweto, couldn't take any chances.

"Here they are." Tapiwa was alone in the kitchen, now wearing morning sleepers on her feet than her heels. She was boiling water, probably to make tea or cook.

Sofia appeared from the hallway, poked her head into the kitchen and called the girls over. They walked to Daisy's room where Sofia locked behind her.

"What's wrong?" Lesedi asked. Ever ready to fight.

"A man came here, named Mateo Molao, he says he's an associate of your father. He left with Lucas now, I don't know why." Sofia was whispering while the girls' mother was knitting. Something she started doing as a form of therapy since the incident.

"Mateo Molao? Okay what is wrong? What happened?" Tracy asked.

"Well, he claims that your father was running some businesses for him and now that the man is dead, his money is gone, he's asking if we know anything about the money." Sofia informed them.

"Wait, how would we know what that man did? We are just family on paper man. I hope you told him that." Lesedi said.

"I did, but he said that he wants his money back, that he understands that the man had a salon and a restaurant, so either he gets those or you two make a way to get him his money."

Lesedi and Tracy looked at each other, wondering who the hell this man was and why he had such guts to come and claim their businesses.

"How much money did papa owe him? Did he say?" Tracy asked.

Sofia heaved a heavy sigh before she opened her mouth, "Hundred million rand."

It went all quiet. That amount was just too specific they knew, they knew they had fucked up. If this Mateo guy was being honest and is serious, then are were screwed should anyone get a hint that they were somehow involved.

"Re rekile Nando's, did you cook pap Sofia?" Lesedi asked. (We bought Nando's...)

"We bought chicken and salad and some fries." She unlocked the bedroom door and found Tapiwa just about to walk away from the door.

"Have some shame Tapiwa." Lesedi scolded her father's cousin's eavesdropping ways. She walked outside to get some of the things they bought. Her mind racing wild with thoughts of who this Mateo person was. She couldn't say she's ever heard of him.

She knew most gangsters in Soweto especially ones who flaunted their money and drove lavish cars and pretended to be legit businessmen. She knew those but a Mateo Molao... that was a new name.

She took out the Nando's bags and some plates and cups from the boot of Tracy's car.

"Why are there no glasses and plates in this house? What happened?" Tapiwa asked. "Rakgadi wants tea."

"Your lunatic cousin broke every plate and every glass and all the cups in this house out of rage. If you must know." Lesedi responded while placing the shopping bags on the table.

"Hai wena, when? Why?" Tapiwa asked.

"Does it matter?" Lesedi asked, looking Tapiwa in the eye. They were once close, once and it all went down the drain when Tapiwa showed her true colours to her. Now they hated each other's guts.

"We bought chicken, I mean I didn't want to bring you and your aunt anything, but I am not that heartless."

Tapiwa scoffed and folded her arms, "Could have fooled me."

"I mean we know who the heartless one is between the two of us."

Lesedi cut up the chicken and dished up for her mother and Sofia then put some meat in the containers for her and Tracy to eat tomorrow, then dished up three plates of chicken for the visitors and told Tapiwa to dish up pap as she already dished up for her mom and Sofia.

She walked to the bedroom and placed the food on the table in the room, went back to get a bowl of warm water and a dish cloth to wipe hands after washing.

"Are we not going to talk about the cow in the room?" Sofia asked, helping Daisy to sit on her chair so she would be able to eat from the table.

"The elephant, the elephant in the room and no." Lesedi deadpanned. "And don't talk about it either when I am not here. We don't know who is

listening. I will... I will find out what I can." Lesedi walked out of the room then walked outside,

She wanted to make a call but caught her uncle waving the driver of the car that was parked in their yard off.

"Lesedi." Lucas approached her. "What are you doing outside alone? At night?" he asked, his voice low, sounding energy less.

Lesedi shrugged. "Who was that?" she asked.

"Mateo." Lucas responded. "I assume Sofia filled you in about his visit?"

"Yeah, but I don't understand what that has to do with us."

"Well, you see my child, if you get involved with dangerous people, and you show them how you make money and promise to make them more money and fail to keep your promise, they attack your family. You two are lucky he didn't send bullets flying through these walls." Lucas then walked inside the house leaving her alone.

Lesedi was irritated but at the same time scared for her mother, Sofia and Mohau. Her family has gone through enough already.

Her phone rang as she looked into nothing, thinking of what could happen, what she should do because no way in hell were they going to give up the money they stole from her father.

"Hello?" she answered not recognizing the number on the screen.

"Hey, it's Mason. Can you talk?" he asked.

"Uhm... not sure, my cousin has turned into an eavesdropping mosquito, so I don't know." Lesedi responded truthfully. She didn't want to say aunt, Tapiwa was rightfully her aunt but they were almost the same age so cousin it was.

"I am down the road, next to this grey house. I didn't want to pull up there... can you come?"

Lesedi found Mason strange but nonetheless, she walked outside the gate and spotted his Mustang not so far from their house.

She walked the short distance in long, quick strides and jumped into the man's car. "You are acting like a shady boyfriend." She commented.

He couldn't help but smile, this woman was just something else. "No, I am acting like a boyfriend that's afraid of his girlfriend's family."

"So... shady?"

"It's not shady, I could be respecting her family."

"Or you could just be shady."

"Whatever. Listen, we have a problem." Mason turned in his seat to look at her, she did the same. Now Lesedi never ever liked to be in such small spaces with men but with Mason, she was... she felt like she could trust him. Her guard was slightly down, slightly because she already thought of ways she could get out of the car should things turn south on her way to the car. By the time she entered the car, she was a lot calmer.

"I know."

"You know? Then why the fuck didn't you tell me?"

"Hey! Don't get angry at me." Lesedi scowled, "firstly, I don't have your number can't call you, can't ask Tracy cause I don't want her asking questions, secondly I was going to call you and say what?"

"Give me a heads up that fucking Punch is ready to reveal all that happened on Christmas day to some fucking dude that's promising to get him out jail!" Mason almost yelled in frustration.

"Wait what? What do you mean Punch wants to talk, talk to who?"

"Wait... what do you know then?"

"Some guy came to our house and told Sofia that dad owes him a hundred million, so I thought you somehow found out?" The more she explained the more she realized that Mason wouldn't have known about the visit. It had just happened, and she didn't think Tracy has told Kyle yet.

"What the fuck?"

"No, this I don't care about, I care about Punch. On Christmas day my father told Sofia that Punch was the one who saw me, Punch knows it was us who pulled that heist. Mason... I will not go to jail or get entangled with some criminals I have never heard of."

Mason slapped his hands on the steering wheel, this was not how things were supposed to go, the mission was so simple for him to pull off successfully and he did. Find out where Morris Phiri kept his money, check his security measures, tap tracking devices and listening devices on him and his men, threaten Morris's security, force his hand to move the safe, intercept the safe enroute and steal it...

That was a success... until Lesedi, the driver of the safe got stuck in a river and Punch saw her. Even though they had succeeded with escaping Morris's men with safe guarding a whooping hundred and twenty million of rands, there were some hiccups on the way.

But the only hiccup they had anticipated was Morris, and the man was dead now.

"Who are these motherfuckers man?" Mason asked.

"I don't know, but I plan to find out. I need to find out. When are you supposed to be returning back to New York?" Lesedi asked. Her mind was racing wild, wondering who the hell these people were.

"I was supposed to be leaving next week but looks like I will have to extend my stay."

"Why?"

"You need my help, I am the master mind of the heist, I won't leave you and your sister in a mess, that's not how I work."

"Okay, so what I know so far is the man's name, Mateo Molao. I have never heard of him."

Mason took out his laptop and started working on it, "Mhm I saw the car that just left your house now, was that him?"

"Yeah."

"Okay, I got his car registration... I got a name; I think I can work with that."

Lesedi was confused, "You got his car registration? Do you go around memorizing people's car registrations?" she looked at him like he was the weirdest thing on mother earth.

"I just... I am not a weirdo okay, don't look at me like that, I just have a photographic memory, it's annoying but it is what it is." He mumbled, feeling a little uncomfortable at how Lesedi was looking at him. A lot of people found him strange at times with the things he's able to do or some talents he has.

"That's impressive though." Lesedi had to compliment that. Such things could come in handy and if he photographs everything to memory then, she was not going to complain at all.

Mason looked at her for a quick second and then focused on the work on hand. That damned dimple on that girl's chin was freaking cute and it wasn't everyday she dished out compliments, so he was taken by that.

"There we go... Mateo Molao... mhm, what do you know, he's ward councillor right here in Soweto. Owns the largest hotel in Pimville and seems like he has friends in high places."

Largest hotel in Pimville, ward councillor... bells rang loud in Lesedi's head, she snatched the laptop from Mason's lap so fast the man almost had a whiplash.

Her eyes enlarged to the size of saucers at what she saw on screen. Her blood ran cold the very same time, her heart beating out of control.

"That's..." she couldn't find her words, her vocal cords were not functioning, her mouth felt like she swallowed a handful of ash.

"Lesedi?" Mason called her out, the way he pronounced her name was cute. It had a little accent to it. The man was white, of course he'd pronounce it in a certain way.

"Lesedi? What's wrong? Why do you look like you have seen a ghost?" the green-eyed man asked, wondering what was going on and why was the girl looking murderous.

"Okay dude, you are starting to scare me, what the hell is going on?" Mason tried to take his laptop back, but Lesedi had a death grip on it.

After a long silent moment in the car, Lesedi closed her eyes and pushed the black device back to its owner.

"I need to go." She tried to open the car door, but Mason locked it from his side.

"Not until you tell -"

Lesedi jumped over the console and pressed a knife on Mason's throat, catching him by surprise. He couldn't tell or figure out where she had kept that knife, how she moved so fast and why was his heart beating so fast.

Their eyes locked, brown angry eyes to shocked green eyes.

"If you don't fucking unlock this damn car, I will slit your throat open."

Mason read her eyes, she meant what she said. His hand slid over the buttons on the side of his door and clicked on the locking button before sliding over to the correct one and the unlocking of doors sound greeted their ears, granting the lady her freedom.

"Don't ever in your life do that." She then slid back to her seat before exiting the car leaving Mason stunned.

What the fuck just happened... Mason wondered. Shit went south really quick, and his mind couldn't process what happened fast enough.

* *

The living arrangements in the Phiri household were giving everyone a headache. The house was a two-bedroom house with Lesedi and Tracy's room only having twin beds they've had for years and beyond.

Sofia was going to sleep with Daisy, Tracy and Lesedi had their beds, but where was Lucas, Koko Phiri and Tapiwa going to sleep. That was the biggest question of the night.

"I can go home, I mean we haven't really started much with preparation, I can drive here in the morning to go to the funeral home..." Tracy suggested with a shrug. She really felt bad for her old grandmother.

"I know we are totally mad at them sesi, but she's our grandmother and she's old. She deserves the bed." Tracy was trying hard to bargain with her angry sister.

"You can come with me, let Tapiwa and koko have the beds, rangwane will sleep on the couch."

Lesedi who was lying on her bed, facing the ceiling heaved a sigh. Ever since she's returned from Mason's car, she's been awfully quiet. One would assume she was thinking about how she threatened Mason with a knife, but her mind was coloured with the picture of that man she saw on Mason's laptop. Mateo Molao, as the profile suggested. But she didn't know him as that.

"You are crazy if you think I am going to leave my mother all night with these monsters." Lesedi deadpanned.

"And then? O jewa ke eng?" Tracy asked her sister. (What's eating you?)

"There is a lot going on that I can't wrap my head around okay? It frustrates me when I can't get answers as soon as I want them." Lesedi sniffed and sat up on the bed. "We have a sponge in the garage, I will go and get it. I will sleep in mom's room on it."

Tracy let her sister go, it killed her that even when they were trying to mend their relationship, her sister still kept to herself. She knew something was bugging Lesedi, but the woman wasn't willing to talk.

"You can sleep in our room, Lesedi and I will sleep on the sponge in mom's room." Tracy went to the lounge and found her other family watching the news in silence.

Her grandmother looked up at her, the woman may have been old, but she still had life in her eyes and in her body. "Thank you my baby, I am tired. Are you sure your sister doesn't mind?" her grandmother asked.

"Eya koko, she's... she's the one who suggested this. She may be angry, but she's not heartless." Tracy defended her older sister.

Tapiwa helped the old woman to the said room, and she was surprised that Tracy offered her one of the beds. They gave the uncle a blanket and a pillow then went to set up in their mother's room.

"I thought you wanted to snuggle with Tapiwa and catch up." Lesedi teased her baby sister as they settled on the sponge on a mountain of blankets.

"Ska ngafela." Tracy mumbled feeling sleepy. "Did you find out anything about the visitor we had? Mateo guy?"

At the mention of the man's name, Lesedi's blood boiled. She tensed, didn't know what to say. She kept quiet for a while until she felt Tracy touch her shoulder and she turned to look at her in the dark. Daisy and Sofia were snoring on the queen bed a couple of feet away.

"What happened? What's stressing you?"

"You mean besides what's happening?" Lesedi feigned ignorance. She didn't want to involve her baby sister in any of her problems, Tracy has been through a lot.

"Yeah... besides what's already happening." Tracy whispered back. They didn't want anyone to hear them converse.

"I don't know where to look for this Mateo guy, and rangwane says that he knows about the salon and the restaurant, and he wants them, or we are

going to work for him to repay the money pap owes. I don't want to give up that money... I feel like we deserve it... but at the same time, at what cost?"

They went to bed, asking themselves that. *At what cost* will they get to keep the hundred million they stole from their father.

The following day the girls woke up early, folded their blankets, took a bath and got ready to start planning for the man's funeral.

They had just finished eating last night's leftovers when their uncle came into the room, yawning and stretching by the door way, wiping sleep off his face and snapping a wedgie from his butt.

"Dumelang." He greeted them and then sat down. Damn if the man did not look like their father. It unnerved the girls to a whole new level. They hated their father with all they had and all they were.

"Rangwane..." Lesedi responded first then Tracy followed suit. "Where is... papa's body? What's next? We have never planned a funeral before, and we would like to start planning before people come here."

"Mateo has decided to help push the investigation on his body so we can find out if really the Tiger six gang did this."

Two things that rocked Lesedi's heart, turning it into a hamster wheel, pumping too fast for her liking. Mateo and that they wanted to be sure some gang killed him. She couldn't afford for anymore investigations where her father was concerned.

"What does that mean? The police said they suspected them, he had problems with them... I don't understand." Tracy asked.

"That gang... they burn people yes, they do other things too, they leave a mark on the person. So, we need to make sure we have the right people so they

could pay back the money they stole from my brother. Because it belongs to some really dangerous people."

"I can't believe while people are happy about the new year, we are here planning a funeral, talking about gangsters and how they actually murder people. Can we just go and find out what's happening?" Tracy was rather upset by the event of things.

She wanted to focus on growing her business, focus on building a relationship with her boyfriend after her father threatened to kill everyone she's ever tried to smile at. She didn't need the stress that his funeral was threatening to bring.

"Rangwane, why is Mateo getting involved?" Lesedi just had to ask why the man was involved with trying to nail her father's killers.

"Because he wants his money, if its those thugs, he will deal with them, if not... then you two will have to pay him. You are what he reckons 'collateral damage.'"

Tracy and Lesedi looked at each other. They didn't know how to respond to that.

Their uncle took a quick bath and they all left to the police station to try and find out what was happening with their father's body.

* *

Mason had just finished working out in their home gym, sweat covering his vest that he quickly took it off and wiped the sweat on his abdomen with it. He enjoyed his time in the gym, but nothing gave him the thrill like hacking into systems, going out in the field with the best of the best and living wild.

He ran up the stairs as the home gym was in David's basement, the old man had to keep fit for his own good health and he wanted to set a good example to his children. Good health was wealth.

"Hey baby." He greeted Gina who was in the lounge, drinking wine and watching some old TV series about unruly vampires and witches. "Are you not too old now for that show? How many times have you watched it?"

Gina couldn't help but to smile, as the baby of the family, she used to beg everyone of her brother to watch the damn witches and vampires with her and Mason was always the willing companion. He'd do anything for her.

"You can never ever get enough of watching Dimitri Zen, okay?" Gina grinned. "Done working out?"

"Yeah, starving. Want lunch?"

"I will make it for us." She paused her show and jumped off the couch almost knocking her glass of wine off the coffee table.

Mason looked at her sceptically. He always cooked for them; he took care of his siblings when they lost their mother. They were not too young well Gina was a little younger, but the boys were old enough to take care of themselves, but Mason took it upon himself to take care of everyone.

"Since when does Gina cook? Look I don't mind, I can just whip something real fast for us."

"Oh hush, I don't get to see you as often as I want to, allow me to spoil you while you're still around." They walked to the kitchen and Mason dropped on the bar stool and watched his sister make them some lunch. They had a chef, but the man was away for some family time.

They had a very light conversation, touching base. Reminiscing, catching up, wondering who the other sibling was dating.

"Mason, are you not planning to settle down at all?" Gina asked, finding her brother's dating life a bit hectic.

"No, I don't baby. I'm riding solo till death."

"Are you telling me that you're perfectly fine just sleeping around? What about the women you date? How long till they realize they are not getting the ring?"

Mason shrugged stuffing himself with Gina's spicy chicken stir-fry. "From the get-go. I mean, dating really is just sleeping with the same woman for a little longer and then when they start to forget the initial agreement, you dip."

"And you have never fallen in love with any of those?"

"Fortunately no, it never got there."

Gina was lost for words, she didn't ask anything else about the man's dating sphere, she changed the subject rather to when he was planning to leave and what can they do together before he leaves.

"I can finally take you to the shooting range." Mason suggested.

"Mason I am almost thirty... I have gone to a shooting range."

"Twenty five is not almost thirty you are a fucking baby and who the fuck took you to a shooting range?" Mason was slightly overprotective of Gina, even more so than their father.

Before Gina could argue that she was twenty seven, Kyle's voice boomed in the hallway. "Mason!!" he yelled.

Mason looked at Gina and shrugged. "We are in here." Gina answered the man.

His heavy footsteps sounded close until they could see the man. It was Saturday and he was wearing casual clothes. "Gina excuse us please."

"What? No, I am still eating. And I live here." Gina pouted.

"Gina not now okay? Leave." The younger sibling knew better than to argue with testosterone filled in the kitchen. She placed her dirty bowl in the sink and left in a huff.

"What's gotten into you Ky?" Mason asked, "Don't speak to her like that, she's not your little wife."

"I will apologize later but Mason, you said to me that you didn't kill Tracy's father, that you didn't have anyone kill him..."

Mason almost groaned, not this again. "And?"

"Well, it was discovered that the man has not one but two stab wounds on his fucking neck. That he was dead long before he was burned to crisp! So, who the fuck did it Mason? When did he die? Where did he die?" Kyle was raging.

When Tracy called him with what they discovered from the police, he had to track Mason down and ask him again, what the fuck happened. Something was not right.

"I don't understand why you angry at me. I told you what happened from my side, anything else... I have no fucking idea of."

"They claim he has been dead for a couple of hours before he was burned. That couple of hours...before he was in your care."

"Kyle, I was fucking with you the whole night on Thursday... the whole time you knew where I was. Friday I was with you, today I am here with you, been with Gina."

"We both know you fucking can run an OP from your bed. You don't have to go anywhere to order a hit on someone." Kyle argued. Suspecting that Mason knew more than he was letting on.

"Order hits... what am I? Who the fuck do you think I am Kyle?" Mason's green eyes turned dark. Kyle knew his big brother was getting pissed.

Kyle's tone change, he didn't want to get into it with Mason. The man was a fighter for a living, he dodged bullets and fell from planes for a fucking living, so he had to choose his battles wisely. "If you knew something would you tell me?"

Mason walked over to his brother, their eyes meeting at the same level. "I didn't kill that man, I don't know who fucking did, and I didn't order my men to do it. I had no fucking reason to, his death is a fucking thorn on my side, it has messed up my plans... why would I fucking do that on purpose?" he asked, his voice low and menacing.

Mason appeared chilled all the damn time, until he got pissed. He was nonchalant a lot of times, feigned innocence and cluelessness while knowing very well what he was capable of.

"Okay, I hear you."

"Next time, don't fucking scream my business out like that with the Gina in the house." Mason then stepped back and walked to the fridge to get a bottle of water.

"I am driving to Soweto, wanna come with me?" Then it was as if they never jumped into a heated argument. As if he didn't barge in the house accusing his brother of being a murderer.

Mason kissed his teeth, scrunching his face as if thinking about it, "No."

"No? I can't go there alone Mace."

"Sorry, can't help you there buddy."

"Why not?"

"Lesedi threatened me with a knife yesterday... I am not in the mood for round two."

CHAPTER THREE

“The Tiger six gang kill anyhow they want; they will burn the corpse but before they kill a person they leave a T6 amateur tattoos on the victims. He has the same tattoo. So, they did kill him.”

That statement brought relief through Lesedi's veins, she kept replaying it over and over in her head, not believing that the storm was over on one side. She owed Mason and Ginger a huge favour for this. She was nervous, been on the edge ever since she found out that the gang left a certain mark on their victims. She kept wondering if Ginger didn't miss that, turns out the man is a pro!

"Which casket do you think we should buy?" Tracy snapped Lesedi out of her trance as they were looking through a brochure at a funeral home back in Soweto.

"Mhm?" Lesedi was lost in thought, she had even forgotten where they were.

"Casket? Lesedi please, I don't want to be here as much as you, the sooner we are done, the sooner we can get out of here." Tracy snapped. "The place gives me creeps."

Lesedi sighed and snatched the brochure out of her baby sister's hands. She was right, the sooner they finalize things the better.

"Have you two ladies decided? We also have packages which are really helpful where we provide casket, tombstone, gravediggers, tents - one at home

for the service and a stretch tent at the grave site, chairs and deco for both tents, the packages differ and all come with refreshments such as water and juice, we will do programmes and provide pocket tissues..." the young administrator at the funeral home listed to them the packages they had and it sounded so much better than getting things one by one.

"My girls... please don't get none of these cheap coffins and tombstones. Your father was a rich man, respected by many. He has to be sent off with dignity." Lucas who was walking around checking coffins with another sales person spoke behind the girls. He held a brochure in his hand. "I like that dark wood." He pointed to a coffin he had just seen and felt its texture.

Lesedi had passed by it and remember going off in her head over the price. "Rangwane that coffin costs forty-three thousand rand. We are not getting that."

"Lesedi, please. People will be coming over not to offer condolences but to see how he will be buried. He was a prideful man, give him some dignity. It's his last times here with us."

"You are right, it's his last days on earth and we are remaining. If we empty our pockets to pay for one measly coffin that's going to decompose faster than we can say decompose, what are we going to eat? Let alone feed the people that are coming to the burial?"

Lucas was irritated, Morris was right about his daughters, they were a handful. They were indeed little ungrateful hussies as he had called them. "My brother was right, you two are ungrateful."

Tracy was tired of being the peacemaker between her father's family and Lesedi, she kept quiet and looked at the packages the lady who was assisting them showed her.

"Rangwane, we are not buying a coffin that costs more than twenty thousand. Unless you are going to pitch in half..." Tracy left the words hanging. Every little thing was coming from her pocket, and she didn't appreciate how her uncle wanted to control how the money was spent.

"Twenty thousand? Those cheap things?"

"Like she said, we are willing to spend twenty thousand rand on the coffin, if you want that one, bring in twenty-three thousand." Lesedi backed Tracy up and Lucas knew it was a losing battle.

"Better get him a nice tombstone." He mumbled while walking away to go sit down. These girls were about to cause him a major stroke.

"Sorry about that Lerato, we will take package number one, it has everything we need." Tracy looked back at the sales administrator who punched away the keys of her keyboard.

"Great choice, which coffin and tombstone would you like? Please note that the tombstone might not be available for the same day of burial." Lerato explained.

The girls talked further with her, chose the cheapest coffin and cheapest tombstone, both amounting to fifteen thousand rand. They had hoped to get something way cheaper, but the tombstones were not all that cheap.

Lesedi was glad they didn't break bank with what they chose. That man deserves the best of nothing.

"If your uncle finds out what we chose for his brother, he's going to kill us." Tracy giggled as she signed on the dotted line.

Lesedi couldn't help but to snort in amusement. He'd like to see him try.

On their way back home, they picked up some food for the family they left behind and bought kotas for themselves and ate them on the way.

"There is nothing like a kasi kota." Tracy was delighted. "I missed this."

"Me too, hardly eat these things." Lesedi agreed. She ate a lot healthier than anyone could ever think. She worked out, and she didn't drink alcohol or smoke anymore.

When they arrived back home in the afternoon, the tent was already in the yard with chairs provided, a number of people there singing hymns in low harmonies and some just talking between themselves.

"Now where did these people emerge from? Do we know them?" Lesedi was confused.

"We are Africans, and there is a whole street with old people and their children as old as us. So, we do know them, I think." Tracy cut the engine and they used the front door to enter the house.

"She cannot sleep on the floor, it's bad for her hips!" the girls walked in the lounge to find Sofia up in arms arguing with their grandmother.

"She's a widow Sofia, it's culture. She has to mourn her husband correctly therefore needs to be sleeping on the mattress on the floor." Koko Phiri argued back.

Lesedi knew Sofia could handle their father's family well, so she walked past to the kitchen and found her cousin Yvonne there. Yvonne was Lucas's daughter.

"Yvonne." Lesedi greeted, she was annoyed that their father's death was bringing *by-gones* to their house.

"Lesedi, oh my goodness." Yvonne hugged Lesedi who didn't care to hug the chubby thirty-year-old back. "You look amazing, are you sure you're forty now?" she was amazed at how young Lesedi looked. The woman did not age one bit since the last time she laid eyes on her.

"Thanks." Lesedi spun around and left the kitchen with the food she brought and went to find her mother.

"Mama..." she knell in front of her mother and gathered her mother's trembling hands in hers. "What's wrong?"

"They... want... me... to mourn. They... want... me to sit on... on the mattress." Daisy's speech had gone terrible again overnight and this was what irritated Lesedi. For a minute she felt guilty because she was the cause of her father's death ultimately setting her mother's health back.

"I'm sorry mama, should I talk to them?"

Daisy nodded weakly. She couldn't mourn that man; she didn't want to mourn that man. He beat her with a baseball bat ten years ago, left her to die and now she had to mourn him? She couldn't. She didn't want to.

"Do you want to get some air?" Lesedi asked.

"People... people.. will... talk."

"Let them, your health comes first than what anyone has to say."

"Later...my girl." Daisy loved her daughters and she appreciated how they still loved and respected her thoughts even when she fully depended on them. She has been a pain to Tracy for a while, but it was because she didn't want Morris's money at all. She didn't want to give the man satisfaction that she still depended on his money.

Well now he was dead and good riddance.

"Lesedi?" Tracy poked her head in the room and smiled at her mother before walking in and kissing her mother's cheek and greeting her. "Kyle is outside and wants to talk to you for some reason."

Lesedi looked at Tracy like she grew two heads. "Your boyfriend... wants to talk to me? About what?"

"I don't know. I didn't ask." Tracy shrugged. "How are you beautiful?" Tracy turned to her mother, smiling lovingly at the frail woman.

Lesedi got up on her feet and walked out of the bedroom, through the lounge and out onto the streets.

Kyle was leaning against his car, wearing sunglasses over his eyes sticking out like a sore thumb. It wasn't everyday that a white person roamed their street.

"O batlang wena?" Lesedi fired up. (What do you want?)

"Hi Lesedi... how are you?"

Lesedi folded her arms, a scowl dancing on her lips. "What do you want? I am not your little friend okay?"

Kyle knew the woman didn't like him much, so he stopped toying with her. "Why did you threaten to kill Mason?"

"What?"

"Yeah, he told me that you threatened him with a knife, what did he do to you?" Kyle asked.

"How's that any of yo-"

Lesedi wanted to answer him by telling him where to get off but the car that was parked in her yard last night drove by and stopped right next to Lucas's car outside their yard. She and Kyle were across the street.

She wanted to see who was going to come out of that car. Her fists already curled on her sides.

"Are you gonna tell me?" Kyle probed but Lesedi had tuned him out. Her concentration was elsewhere.

Her breath hitched when she fully saw him. He got out of the car with his shiny bald head, grey suit and his fucking stupid big belly.

He looked like someone of importance, he looked like he was worth money.

So, he was the Mateo Molao. For so long she's been looking for him and didn't know how or where to find him. She was using the wrong name... she had been looking for *Lekau Singo* instead of Mateo Molao.

The man who had ruined her life. The man who her father endorsed once he heard that this man was in politics and was a running for ward councillor.

The man who had raped her.

**

"G my man." Mason had gone to see his trusted co-worker Ginger. The man dyed his hair Ginger and started calling himself the Ginger man.

"The Lord." Ginger teased him. Ginger was a big guy but compared to Mason's tall frame and all solid muscle, he wasn't a match.

"Talk to me did you find anything that could link Mateo and Lesedi?"

"Hey man did she really threaten you with a knife?" Mason had informed Ginger why he wanted him to dig more about Mateo and see if he could link the man to Lesedi somehow.

"Yo, she jumped on top of me and placed that blade to my throat. I can still feel it."

"But how? You are trained for this, you can't be caught off-guard, you have never been caught off-guard." Ginger was confused. He has worked with Mason for as long as he could remember, and the man was always ready for anything.

"Man, I underestimated her. I didn't think she walked around carrying a fucking knife! And I also didn't think she moved like that." He sounded so impressed.

"The girl killed her father in cold blood and said she wanted to bury him herself. If anything, you need to be afraid of her. Be aware of her."

Mason agreed, he shouldn't be dropping guards like he did last night. But fuck, how was he supposed to know that Lesedi would do that? They were working together for fuck's sake.

"Lesson learned. What you got for me...?"

"Nothing much but it's something." Ginger picked up a file which was next to him. He was sitting on the bonnet of his Jeep. "Man used to go by the name Lekau Singo... but had his name legally changed to Mateo Molao a couple of year ago." Ginger told him.

"Why?"

"Well, Singo was in a lot of shit, he wanted to run for ward councillor, wanted to build his hotel empire in Soweto but there was a scandal going around that he raped some woman at some party. Things weren't looking too good for him, so he made this drastic change, laid low for a while and emerged as this big businessman who owned one of the biggest hotels in Soweto."

Mason looked through the file and saw that the man was accused of rape on social media but none of his pictures were leaked. So, they only had a name to the allegations.

He looked into the file more...

"That's what I could gather about him, who made the allegations? No idea." Ginger informed him.

"No worries, I can work with this." Mason went to his car and brought out his laptop, he went everywhere with it. It was small, stunning and incredible, just what he needed to survive. "Yeah, Singo is popping on my channels... didn't do a thorough work with getting rid of all these internet news."

Mason had to wait a couple of minutes for his searches to yield results, "So Mateo Molao is clean, hence he had to kill Singo..."

Ginger nodded. "Since he changed his name, Singo died with those allegations. Mateo is a free man and very welcomed in society. Very big and respected in Soweto."

Mason's mind raced, he wondered what kind of scandals Mateo was running from that he had to legally change his name. A rape allegation can be swept under the rug in South Africa if you're a prominent man, clearly he had more heat than just that.

"Okay we got something..." Mason looked into the screen of his laptop, reading the information about Lekau Singo. The man did try to bury this information, he clearly had deep pockets to be able to pay for people to remove all of these from the internet. It was a shame that people like Mason existed. They could move mountains.

"A case was opened; the docket went missing... this was written on some blog that is now deleted." Mason told Ginger who was perched on top of his Jeep's bonnet, smoking his lungs away.

The blogger was the victim of the said rape. She didn't give out all details but how she opened a case and the South African police services failed her. She was calling him out, trying to tarnish his name so he didn't get any votes.

"Can you find out who the woman is? Maybe if you find her... you can find out more about this man."

"No, you see I don't have beef with this man, but the way Les reacted, that's what I am curious about. This doesn't give me the link between the two of them."

Ginger pulled a drag of his cigarette, then blew out the smoke through his mouth and nose before speaking again. "You think she's the girl?"

Mason's spine straightened at the suggestion Ginger made. That was a possibility, "That could be it... but... I don't know, I want facts."

Mason tried to get more information about the blog, but he was hitting a dead-end. "I am gonna have to find this blogger... because if that man raped Lesedi, he's gonna pay for it." There was a dark storm in Mason's eyes and Ginger didn't miss it.

"You like that hot little minx don't you?"

That question threw him off balance, "She fascinates me, that's all."

Mason responded coolly. That was the truth, the woman was... fascinating.

Ginger snorted and jumped off his car, dumping the bud of his ciggie on the ground and stomping on it with his boot. "Listen, if you're going to chase this and find out that Singo raped her, be careful of what you. He is backed up by many politicians and has a number of police officials and judges in his bag. Don't bring coals down your head okay?"

"What's my name G?"

"Mason The fucking Lord Pierce."

"That's right, I bring coals down everybody's heads. Remember that."

**

"Hey, what's wrong?" Kyle noticed where Lesedi's focus was, and he walked over to her. She was seething, chest rising up and down in an alarming way.

"Okay... who is he and why are you angry at him?" Kyle asked her again.

"He shouldn't be here." Lesedi muttered under a low breath. "He shouldn't be fucking here!" She almost yelled. Then in a speed of lightning she was charging at the strange man.

"You!" she called out to him before he could enter the yard, "what the fuck do you want in my house?" she angrily asked, gaining attention of those close by.

The man looked startled by Lesedi's ambush. He looked confused. "Excuse me?" the man looked at her, eyes narrowed into slits.

"You have some fucking nerve to show up at my house after what you did to me!" she screamed by now people were coming out, some holding out their phones to record the 'drama at a funeral'.

"Who are you? And what the hell did I do to you? I don't even know you." The man looked around, nervous at the sudden audience and the attention the young woman was attracting. "You have the wrong man sisi, ga ke go tsebe nna." (I don't know you.)

It was as if a truck load of ice fell on top of Lesedi, shocked that this man claimed he did not know her at all. "Oh, now you don't know me? You don't know me?" she picked up a disformed brick from the ground and was about to throw it at the man when Kyle held her hand.

"Okay Lesedi... you don't wanna do that."

"Don't touch me! Let me go!" Lesedi screamed. Now Sofia and Tracy were rushing to come see what was going on outside. Yvonne and Tapiwa followed close with Lucas right behind them.

"Now you claim you don't fucking know me? After you ruined my life?" Lesedi was thrashing in Kyle's hold.

Tracy noticed Mateo Molao from the many campaign billboards that were once plucked all over the township. The man was a ward councillor, a respected man in the community but at this moment he was a man that was hurting her sister.

"Sir, I need you to leave." Tracy stepped forward. When everyone was trying to address Lesedi, trying to get her to calm down, Tracy went to the root of the problem, the man's presence.

"Leave? Hey, I came here to pay my respects to a man who helped me out when I needed a hand." Mateo looked at Tracy with annoyance coating his brown eyes.

"I don't care. We are burying him Saturday, come only then if you must. But right now, I need you to go." Tracy was a lot calmer than she was inside. Clearly this man did something to her sister. She didn't care that he was a ward councillor or the president of the country.

"Lesedi calm down man, you are embarrassing us." Tapiwa snapped at the screaming and thrashing woman. Kyle was just too strong because he held on tight and not even once did she manage to break free.

"I will find you; I will find you and I will make you pay for what you did to me." Lesedi said to the man as he entered his car.

A while after the car drove off, Kyle released her from his hold. Lesedi composed herself then without warning she jabbed Kyle on his stomach with her sharp elbow. "Don't you ever fucking hold me back." She spat on the ground then walked off into the house, ignoring the group of people that had come to witness the crazy scene.

"Lesedi!" Sofia and Tracy called after her, but she ignored them. She walked into her room and sat on one of the beds and started rocking back and forth. Tears welled up in her eyes then trickled down her face.

She didn't cry, no she couldn't cry, she was a strong big girl, she was a strong woman. She wouldn't cry, she shouldn't cry... but God, it hurt.

It truly hurt.

Her self-work done over the years just got undone by one fucking visit from the man she despised.

He undid her work.

He was ruining her progress...

Like he ruined her life...

She worked hard to not feel this way, to not feel vulnerable, to not feel like a victim, to not feel dirty, to not feel like she did anything to deserve this, to not feel like it was her fault, to not feel like she couldn't breathe...

And he has the nerve... the nerve to show up at her house. And act... and act is if he didn't know her?

"Sesi..." Tracy walked in the room and her steps faltered at the sight. She has never seen her sister this vulnerable before. Lesedi was either nonchalant, angry or annoyed sometimes a little happy. This? Tears? This was new well in the past ten years it's very new.

Growing up the two girls were inseparable even with the ten-year gap between them. Lesedi wasn't those big sisters that didn't want their little sisters tagging everywhere they went; she wanted her little sister by her side all the time.

They were best of friends, took care of each other, loved each other unconditionally... until their father created a rift between them. Sending Tracy to school, forcing her to work for him, provided her with a luxurious life while Lesedi stayed home to take care of their unwell mother.

Even though Tracy tried to make Lesedi see that she wasn't working for her father willingly, the woman had made up her mind to cut Tracy off.

From there on Lesedi was just a bitter person. Exhaled fire everywhere she went, spewed venom at every opportunity but never vulnerability, she never showed that. She was as tough as nails.

Tracy tried to close the door, but Sofia was right behind and walked in. "Go and check Kyle. I will be with her." Sofia said to Tracy.

"Kyle is a big boy." Tracy walked over to her sister and pulled her into her embrace. Lesedi tensed for a hot second then allowed herself to be hugged.

Somehow she felt even worse when being hugged. She felt pathetic. She was strong, she was tough... she was not weak, she was not *pathetic*.

"I didn't know that you know Mateo sesi..." Sofia sat behind Lesedi on the bed and rubbed her back while Tracy was still holding her. "O go dirileng?" (What did he do to you?)

Lesedi didn't answer, she couldn't answer, she didn't want to answer. They were already treating her like a porcelain doll, she couldn't have that.

She pushed Tracy gently back, wiped the tears that had decorated her face, sniffed and cleared her throat of the lump that was lodged there. "It's nothing." She stood up.

"It's not nothing. What did he do to you?" Tracy asked, her voice so gentle.

"I am going for a walk, don't follow me." She said to both of the women then walked out. She met Tapiwa by the door talking to Lucas.

"Lesedi what is wro -"

"Voetsek!" Lesedi cut Tapiwa midsentence and stalked off towards the gate. Everyone was looking at her, she could feel the stares, she heard the murmurs. And she hated that. She hated that she lost her cool like that.

She walked out of the gate and wondered which direction she should take. Her eyes landed on two tall and great built men... the Pierce brothers. She

rolled her eyes; she was still very much angry at Kyle from stopping her from hitting that man.

She didn't acknowledge them, she just walked away, she didn't know where she was going but as long as it was far from home.

As she was walking, a car followed her, it was Mason. He drove by her side, rolled the passenger window and asked her where she was going.

"I don't know, leave me alone."

"Wanna drive?" he asked.

"I don't want a drive, I wanna be left alone."

"I asked if *you* wanted to drive. Driving could get your mind off things. Who knows, you might enjoy it."

That sparked her interest. She enjoyed driving and Mason's car was a beast. She's driven it twice before and suddenly she was excited to drive again. "Okay." She stopped walking; he stopped the car.

He got out of the car and jumped into the passenger seat, and she buckled up on the driver's seat. She ran her hands over the steering wheel, the car smelled incredible, the leather seat was so comfy and welcoming... the car was purring, waiting for her to take the punch and move her forward.

So, she did, her foot against the accelerator took them forward and she drove to the highway there she let loose. Mason directed her on which road to take and she found herself hightailing on a deserted long road.

She stepped on the gas pedal and became a fucking blur on the road, the trees whipped by in a blur too... she opened the window and allowed the breeze to take space in the car.

She felt alive.

She felt good.

She felt free.

Her thoughts were not consuming her.

She wasn't at home.

There wasn't a man who was threatening her sanity.

There was no shame she felt.

She wasn't crying... she was smiling. Loving the thrill of the ride.

Mason enjoyed the ride; he could see how much Lesedi enjoyed it too.

When he drove to her place, he didn't expect to find Kyle there, and he didn't expect to hear what had went down. He wanted to talk to her and see if somehow he'd have the balls or the right words to ask her if what he found out about Singo/Mateo was linked to her.

He didn't know how to pose the question. You couldn't exactly go to someone and say "Hey, I found out this man once raped a woman a couple of years ago, is that woman by any chance you?" he'd be finished by the time he ends that question. Lesedi would eat him alive.

She stopped at a clearing, there was nothing around them just green grass all over and some trees further away.

She stopped the car and jumped out, she needed to rest and stretch her legs. "I hope we are not trespassing." She spoke as she realized Mason joined her. "But if we are, you're my ticket so that's cool."

"I am your ticket?"

"Yeah, chances of this place being owned by a white person are high and well you are... white. It could be your great cousin." She smirked.

Mason pouted and eyebrows scrunched together, "That's... that's racist."

Lesedi couldn't help but to laugh out loud, "Maybe." She rounded the car and leaned against it, looking further at the road ahead.

She wondered where it led to.

"It's going to Bloemfontein." Mason informed her. "Wanna go to Bloem?" he asked, joining her in the front of his car.

Lesedi giggled, "No man. What will we do there?"

"I don't know, grab a beer... grab some dinner and then come back." He shrugged.

"You really think we can just drive to Bloemfontein for dinner and a beer?"

"It's five now..." Mason checked his wrist watch and quickly made calculations, "We can be there around half seven depending on the driver's speed. We get some dinner and drive back around ten. You will be home by one in the morning."

Lesedi maulled it over, it was tempting but that was such a long drive. They were already so far from home; she didn't want to worry her family more.

"Don't think about it, let's do it." Mason was already heading for the passenger door, "I'll drive us back."

Lesedi slowly walked back to the driver's side, "I don't know..." a smile however was dancing on her lips. She was starting to think positively about the little idea.

"Come on, I'll send Tee a text that you're fine and that we will be back a little later." He winked and quickly shot Kyle and Tracy text messages letting them know they were going for a night ride.

Two and half hours later, the pair walked inside some fancy Pub & Grill and Mason got them a table on the outside setting. It was only then Lesedi looked at his profile, the man was tall, bulky, sexy... and he was always dressed in black every time she saw him. He looked fucking sexy in black.

They were lucky to get a table at the far end near the wall. They ordered food and drinks, beer for Mason and a mocktail for Lesedi.

"Why did we come here?"

"Starting to regret?" he asked. On their way, they filled the car with radio music and casual chat about where they would go to once they arrived in Bloem.

"I mean... we are not friends and yet I am with you so far from home, in a city I have never been to."

"We are friends, friends help each other clean murder." Mason answered looking right into her eyes. She kept eye contact and he liked that. This girl challenged him. She didn't cower away.

"Not if you are getting paid for it." Lesedi argued.

"Touché... anyway, Ky told me what happened during the day, so I figured you might need a ride away from it all."

"That I did."

"About what happened last night..." Mason brought up the knife issue as they dug into their meals. "Do you walk around carrying knives?"

Lesedi had forgotten about that. Whenever she's in such a situation, her mind shuts down until she feels safe then she forgets what had gone down. It was a coping mechanism of hers. That she'd never take out a knife if she didn't feel threatened therefore wouldn't beat herself up about it.

"Yeah... always." She told him. "It makes me feel safe and I use it every time I feel unsafe, threatened..."

"I didn't make you feel safe yesterday when I locked the car doors..." it wasn't a question it more of a realization. He did think that but he was now starting to piece the puzzle together.

She nodded and ate her food. There was more vegetables on her plate than the grilled meat that was on Mason's plate. "Do you always eat that much?"

"Sometimes. I mean look at this body, it needs fucking fuel to function." He snorted. He always had such a huge appetite but since joining gym, he now has a good reason why he has such an alarming appetite.

"You wanna ask me something..." Lesedi mentioned after long silence washed over them. The man kept looking at her then stuffing his face with food as to reign himself in from saying whatever was on his mind. "You can only ask me one question... I may not answer it, or I may answer it and not in great detail. Don't push me to do anything else."

He thought about it.

Kyle told him Lesedi kept asking that man why he showed up at her house after what he did to her, yesterday she flipped and almost slit his throat open after seeing Mateo's pictures. He found out that Mateo once raped a girl and had to go in hiding then changed his name... what were the odds of Lesedi being that girl?

"I did some digging... and didn't find much but I found something. There is a link between Mateo and Lekau Singo." She tensed, even though his pronunciation of the names was a little cute, hearing those names unnerved her.

She didn't expect him to be so quick with his findings... she didn't know how he will pose the question. She didn't know how she will react to it... but for the life of God, she hoped it wouldn't make them fight, Joburg was too far away.

"There was a blogger who accused him of something... something horrible. It was a girl... are you that girl from the blog?"

Mhm, she was rather impressed but annoyed at the same time. Impressed on how he quickly made the link, how he posed the question but annoyed by the hold that damned man had over her.

"Yeah." Her response was nothing above a whisper. That lump made a return to her throat. Fuck, now she was going to look fucking pathetic in front of Mason, just her damned luck.

"Wanna make him pay for it?"

She had to do a double take at him. Now what? "What do you mean?"

"I read the stuff on the blog." Her heart sank. She remembered everything that was written there. She felt ashamed, embarrassed. So, she kept quiet and toyed with the straw of her drink. "I know the they failed you. I know the docket went missing, I know you tried to get him arrested and did not receive the justice you deserved. And I want to correct that."

Her heart clenched, Mason was being sincere, and it bothered her. "I don't need you make me a charity case or one of your little fun activities."

Mason chuckled and leaned back on his chair. He supposed he was coming too strong and too emotional for her. He was starting to figure her out, she wasn't the type to wear their vulnerability on their face.

"My *little fun activities* are actually what I do for a living Les." He smirked when she wore a confused expression. "I kid you not. I wouldn't even offer if I knew I wasn't going to do you justice."

"What are you? The Lord and saviour?" she cocked an eyebrow.

Mason laughed, exactly why he was nicknamed *The Lord*, he liked to help people in need. He lived to save lives.

"Maybe..."

"Okay, say I accept your help, how will I get justice? That man isn't like my father... we don't have the inside information, can't kill him cause that was my first and last time I ever do that... the police are useless."

"He has one of the biggest hotels in the country... situated in one of the busiest and popular townships, he's racking it in... we can get that."

Lesedi was amazed by Mason's confidence in his abilities. She laughed, started off as a light chuckle then a full blast on laughter. When she was calm, she looked at him.. "You are being serious..."

"As a heart attack firecracker," he took a sip of his beer. "What do you say?"

"You love danger...is this what you really do for a living? Steal from people and cause havoc in their lives? Kidnap them and hold them in basements?" Lesedi leaned back on her seat and folded her arms, she really didn't know this man before her for all she knew, he could be a serial killer.

Mason couldn't help but grin, his smile was broad, and his teeth were perfectly aligned with one vampire tooth sticking out making him even more handsome. "I love danger, it's thrilling, makes me feel alive." He told her. "But I

do not kidnap people and keep them in *basements*... I got people that do that for me." He winked.

Lesedi chuckled, "Now why did I think you'd say otherwise."

"I don't know... I mean you had a first class to my handy work." He wiggled his brows. Mason was ever playful or nonchalant. Easy to get along with. "You're avoiding my suggestions and my question... are we doing this?"

Lesedi sighed and looked around them, the pub and grill had a couple of diners, it was a Saturday night, this wasn't as shocking. Mostly were having beers, dancing, laughing...eating, it was such a nice vibe and the place was nice too.

It felt really good to be so far away from her family and her problems, for ten years she has been taking care of her family, her mother mostly. For ten years she was harbouring hate for a lot of people... and now, now she had to learn how to let go of all that, but she couldn't. Not when her rapist roamed the streets of Soweto free and had the nerve to show up at her house.

"What's in it for you? Shouldn't you also be going back to where you live?"

"The first time I saw you, I was chasing you with my car and I believe I am fantastic driver, Vin diesel and Lewis Hamilton got nothing on me... but I couldn't catch you, you were a beast behind the wheel, and you fascinated me."

Lesedi didn't like how he spoke; she didn't like it when men showed interest in her like that. It irked her soul. "Okay, don't go there, don't... don't ruin this." She grimaced.

Mason chuckled and shook his head, "You think I am trying to hit on you?" he corked his bushy eyebrow.

"Are you?"

"No firecracker." He rolled his bottom lip in his mouth, his green eyes so dark under the stars and the patio lights. "I was just merely saying you looked like someone who could enjoy the life I live. So, that's the second reason I want you on board, but the first one is I want you take from this man something he loves, something he cherishes like he did you."

Her heart was beating a little faster, she hated thinking about that, she had done a great job of shoving the memory of that day to the back of her mind. For so many years she struggled to forget the smell of the man's perfume, the smell of his breath... and now she was sitting in a bar talking about it in the most imperceptible way. Bringing back memories.

"I just wanna forget... Mason. I wanna live my life. I just..."

"You wanted to stone the man today like a crazy scorned woman. That... that's the anger you are keeping inside. I am no therapist, but I can assure you, it will feel good to take from him. He deserves it. And you deserve to move on knowing that he got what he deserved."

"I don't think a real therapist will suggest I avenge myself though." She giggled. She laughed a lot tonight. She was... she wasn't angry or upset. She was... well she was still upset by the visit and what happened earlier in the day but being with Mason and talking like that, his carefree persona awarded her a safe space to just let her face crack into a smile and her chest to vibrate with melodic laughter.

"That's why I am not one because trust me, I will be teaching people how to steal money and how to fucking get away with murder."

"How do you know how to get away with murder, I mean... I honestly expected to go to jail."

"Really? You wanted to go to jail?"

"*Expected to*, not wanted to." She chuckled with a roll of eyes. "I mean I killed someone Mason, what are the consequences to that?"

They were lucky the tables were so far from each other because they were just freely talking about killing someone, of course they were not loud and the music helped conceal most of the shared words but still, it wasn't such a wise idea to openly talk about killing people, kidnapping them or stealing from them.

"Well, you rolling with me, I got your back."

"That still doesn't answer me."

"I have my ways." As much as Mason indulged her a bit, he still kept a couple of things from her and the people in his life. He wasn't the one to go around exposing himself to people he didn't know or trust, even those he trusted like Kyle, didn't know all the details of his life and his career.

"Okay... I'll back down, can I think about it?"

"I guess I can work with that, it's not a no..." he leaned on the table with his arms and finished his beer and pushed the bottle to the side.

"You said you're driving us back and yet you're drinking." Lesedi rolled her eyes. She loved driving but now she felt like she needed to enjoy being driven. She had a lot to think about.

"I had two beers; I am good to drive... but I am gonna need a glass of water first."

"Should have just ordered juice you know."

Mason looked at her like she said something disgusting, "No." he signalled for a waiter and asked for a glass of water on ice and side plate of fries.

"Are you still eating?" Lesedi was amazed, she remembered how Tracy used to complain of Kyle ate too much seems like it ran in the family. These men loaded their stomachs and yet there was nothing but flat panes with blocks on them.

Mason ate the fries, Lesedi found herself helping him to eat them. "By the way... when are we making you a business account so we can start depositing money into your account? You know that I have cold dangerous cash with me?"

Lesedi had totally forgotten about that part. She knew there was money she wasn't going to send back anywhere least of all people to Mateo but didn't think how she will get it into a bank account. "I don't know, after the funeral?"

Mason shrugged, paid the bill left a tip and let Lesedi walk out first. "Alright, I am going to need to deposit some into the salon and restaurant too. I don't know how in the hell we are going to move this money into a freaking bank without crashing the systems or alerting authorities."

"Aww is poor little Mason scared of authorities?" Lesedi mocked her as they reached the man's car.

"Shut up. One, there is nothing little about me, two... I don't want to burn my fingers. I know how to hold off."

"You are a smart guy; I am sure you will think of something." Lesedi unlocked the car as she still had the keys, "I'll drive us an hour out, we will swap at the garage." (Garage = petrol/gas station)

"Nah, I am good to drive firecracker."

"Why do you call me that? Firecracker..."

Mason shrugged and grabbed her hand to take the car keys, but she panicked. Her body tensed; panic filled her body. He was too close. He was too fucking *close*.

Mason felt her hand shake and quickly stepped away. He didn't know how to react to this, or what to do. This... this was out of his reach.

"I'm sorry." Mason's playfulness quickly vanished into thin air. "I am sorry, I didn't think..."

Lesedi closed her eyes and then opened them. "It's not you. I just... sudden movements still get me in a bit of a jazz." She handed him the keys no longer in a mood to drive. "Take me home." She wished home was somewhere peaceful and full of joy.

This 'home' she was asking him to take her to... was the last place she wanted to be. But at the same time, she needed to get away from this man. She needed to get away from someone who could potentially ruin her life.

Lesedi decided to get in the backseat instead of the front. She couldn't reign in her thoughts. She also couldn't be in that close proximity with a man.

Mason understood and felt guilty. He felt like such a tool. The girl obviously didn't trust men like that. But he didn't mean no harm.

He didn't argue, didn't ask any question, he just heaved and got in the driver seat and drove them back to Gauteng.

The trip to the next province was good as it lasted, he just had to ruin it.

**

"I don't know that girl. I don't know who she is." Mateo Molao was pacing the floor of his home office at his lavish home in the North of Gauteng. In his hand he held a glass of scotch on the rocks, carefully taking sips and as spoke on the phone.

"I am telling you; I don't know her; she accuses me of ruining her life. Who the hell is she?" he was angry.

The person on the line was his best friend and lawyer, Lethabo Themane.

"I don't know, I will see what it is I can find about her but if she was talking about showing up at her home, then maybe she's Morris's daughter. Have you ever dated any of his daughters?" Lethabo asked.

Mateo was annoyed by the questions, "She's dark skinned, looks like a child to me, do you think she's worth my time? Of course not." He wanted to hurl the glass against the wall in frustration but didn't want to wake up his family. He couldn't afford any more scandals, he couldn't undergo another name identity change and lay low. He did that already and will not go down there again.

He was a respectable man in the community, a member of the ruling party, he received invitations to important events by hand damn it! He couldn't let some unruly girl ruin his legacy. He worked hard for it.

It was late at night when people started calling him, talking about some video that is trending on Facebook and twitter. A video of him being attacked by some crazy girl. People wanted to know why, what was going on. What did he do to her? How will he damn know? He didn't know the girl.

He had gone to meet with some business associates when he left the Phiri home, then came home and found his wife cooking dinner and had to play with his sons and then have dinner before he had to deal with this issue.

Damned that dark skinned ugly girl.

"I will get on it, I will try to dig up some information and let's see what I can find out about her. Do you have a name?"

Mateo scratched his left brow, thinking back to the conversations he had numerous times with Morris Phiri. Of course, the old douchebag didn't speak much about his daughters, but he could swear he once mentioned their names.

"Lucas... Lucas should know, contact him and find out what those girls' names are, find this girl and make her leave me alone or else, she will pay for this." Mateo then cut the call followed by a click of a tongue.

He gulped the contents of his glass and sat it on his desk and right before he could pour another one, a knock resounded on the door and his wife walked in.

Light skinned, wearing a silky red nightgown. She was stunning in his eyes, a goddess. "Babakhe?" she called out to him, closing the door behind her. "I can hear you shouting from the boys' room, kwenze njani?" his wife asked. (What's wrong)

"Nothing my dear one, nothing. Come here." He called out to her and hugged her.

"Is it work?" she asked, and he nodded. It was partly work, the only reason he was worked up was because the scandal could affect his work.

"I saw a video on Facebook... who's that girl?" his wife was soft spoken.

"I don't know her mommy, but I will find her, and I will make her apologize, don't worry your pretty head with these trivial things." He looked into her eyes and kissed her gently on the lips, "asambe s'yo lala." He smiled at her, mischief dancing in his eyes. (Let's go and sleep.)

"Haa.a hayi namhlanje babakhe, your kids and their friends wore me out, I just want a feet rub and a goodnight rest." (No, not tonight.)

Mateo sighed, what should a man do to fucking get some damned sex? "One round baby, you don't have to do anything... just lie there, I will put in the work." He tried to bargain as they walked to their enormous bedroom.

"No, tomorrow baby." It was always tomorrow. Sex was given according to timetable in this house and that annoyed him, but he wasn't in the mood to complain tonight. He simply took off his clothes, got inside his pyjamas and jumped into bed.

"Haibo?" his wife was shocked at his sudden coldness, "are you not giving me a foot rub? Ngiyak'cela bandla?" his wife pleaded, she already took out her oils, desperately needing a feet massage after taking care of the six years olds that were in her house to play with her twin boys.

"Tomorrow." Came his curt reply.

"Okay... we can *'have'*, but you will need to give me a foot rub." She tried to bargain, and it worked. Suddenly there was a smile on his face, and he wasn't grumpy anymore.

She lay there... and let him take from her as much as he needed.

She was his wife after all.

**

"Lesedi, your father passed away and you are galivanting in the streets until two in the freaking morning?" Lucas was seething Sunday morning. He had just fixed himself a cup of tea, could have preferred coffee but they were out of it.

"And on top of that, you tried to stone Mateo to death, what has gotten into you?"

Lesedi sighed. She didn't need such a lecture. The week was moving at a snail's pace, and she was slowly being driven up damned walls. "Why are you not at your brother's house? You know he moved out years ago right?"

"Don't be stupid his house burned down."

"What? When?" Lesedi had even forgotten about the cute little part that her father had a house of his own. A house she only ever heard of and didn't know how it looked. Tracy was the privileged one to see it.

"Yeah... eish those bastards really erased my brother's work in just a click of fingers. But we are working on something." Lucas assured her as if she was on his side. As if she cared about her father. "One of his boys, his right-hand man told Mateo he had information for us if he could get him out of prison. He swears that The Tiger six did not kill Morris."

"Akga maan!" Lesedi was now annoyed. Just when she was letting her guard down, this had to happen. She swore it was Punch, that idiot was a thorn on her backside and he needed to be solved. "Can't we just stop? Please... all these talks of gangs and taking people out of prison it's too much. It won't bring papa back or his money."

Lucas's features softened. Lesedi was taking her father's death hard, he thought. "My girl, I am so sorry. I know this is hard, but it's hard on all of us."

Lesedi looked at the man like he was insane but quickly wore a sad expression. She couldn't afford to have this man reigning terror on her, she had to pretend to be hurting. She went to the bathroom to bath, planned to go back to her place later to sleep there.

She missed her own space. This house was getting overcrowded daily. Dressed in black jeans, a black light sweatshirt and her combat boots, she was ready to catch a taxi to Joburg cbd to her flat.

Today there was nothing that she had planned to do for the family, she just wanted a breather.

"Morning..." Tracy greeted her when she returned to their mother's bedroom to get some of her stuff. "Where are you going all dressed up?"

"Town, just need to sort out a couple of things." She responded. Sofia and Daisy were also up but were outside, having tea with Koko Phiri. Apparently they had to talk before people came, the grandmother was trying to persuade Daisy to sit on the mattress.

"I also need to get some air, please wait for me and I will drop you off and go to my place."

Lesedi didn't protest, she sat on her mother's bed while Tracy went to freshen up. She opened up her WhatsApp for the first time since New Year's Eve and the number of messages from her colleagues and the guy she shared a flat with poured in.

Mostly were condolences, telling her, her clients were looking for her, some asking when the funeral was, when they should come, if she could just text them back and let them know she was fine. The people from the salon were decent and they actually tolerated her.

But it was the young lady from the salon who genuinely liked her, the girl was always by her side, or in her face when she didn't have clients. She found it annoying most of the times, but she tolerated it, it got lonely sometimes and she needed a friend. Mbali was that friend.

Mbali had sent her the video taken yesterday when she was confronting Mateo...well Lekau Singo whoever the fuck that man was.

"Bathong," (Goodness gracious) she gasped. "What is wrong with people?" she couldn't believe that the people who came by, pretending to be comforting them had the audacity to take videos and post them on Facebook and share on WhatsApp. That was so humiliating.

She didn't reply Mbali, she just switched off her mobile data and shoved her phone in the back of her jeans.

She didn't know what to say, or what to think. Mateo... she couldn't believe he has been here all along, right under her nose. The last she heard of him, her father had endorsed his political run and injected large amounts of money into his campaign, hoping that he too will get a seat at the table.

She had gone to her father, asking him to help her punish Singo for what he did to her, and her father downright declined. He did not care for her, he cared about his damn self. She hated him, that's why she killed him. She killed him because he supported the monster that was Singo instead of her. Killed him because of how he beat Tracy like a dog when she was pregnant and lastly she killed him for beating her mother near half to death. Rocking their lives upside down.

"Okay done, we need to go before Bo Tapiwa ba tsoga. I could hear her and Yvonne laughing in the bedroom, they still having pillow talk." Tracy rushed in the room and quickly got dressed.

"Yvonne slept here?" Lesedi rolled her eyes.

"Yeah koko said it was too late to drive."

"Bathong she lives around the corner." Lesedi rolled her eyes. She rolled her eyes way too much; it was a miracle they never rolled back forever. "Fetsa re tsamaye ge." (Finish up so we can go then.)

Not sooner than later, the girls were in Tracy's car and headed to town.

"Hey, rangwane Lucas tells me that papa's house burned down, you know I forgot that he had a house, I remember only today..." Lesedi brought the house issue up. She didn't know it burned down.

"Yoh, don't even talk about that one. Kyle told me that he and Mason thought my father would be scared and run out of the house so they can capture him, turns out he had already left the house. So yeah... My boyfriend and his crazy brother burned the house down." Tracy informed her.

Lesedi was amazed by that. Mason was... He was a dangerous man and knowing that made her a little excited. Just a little. Maybe she was a sadist... Who knows.

They arrived in Hillbrow, "Okay not to sound like a snob but this is not a safe area, I wanted to see your place, but I am not leaving my car out here." Tracy looked around the area as she parked on the side of a rundown building that had laundry hanging on windows and the small balconies.

This place was dirty and looked pretty unsafe. "I wouldn't advise you to do that either." Lesedi smirked and jumped out of the car. "It's still early though, so go before danger tries to lick your car."

Tracy had already pulled away before Lesedi even closed the door. The older of the two women giggled at the moving car. It was a G-Wagon, no way would Tracy gamble with that beast of a car.

Lesedi took the three flights of stairs to her flat she shared with Freddy, some guy who ran away from home and was hustling in Joburg. She had made people believe she and Freddy were an item, that he was some drunkard she lived with while it was quiet the opposite. Freddy was a big teddy bear that sometimes cut people's hair down at the salon she worked at... but most of the time he was just out doing his business, occasionally annoying her by asking her to cook for him.

She found the flat empty, it was a two bedroom flat, well kept for the most parts. The kitchen still had the old rustic zinc kitchen cupboards that were a little rusty on the edges and on the handles.

An old white refrigerator that hummed way too loud, one two-seater couch that Freddy got from one of his friends when he moved out of town and the old tv that was sitting nicely on a brown wooded table.

She was glad that Freddy wasn't a slob that didn't throw out the garbage or not wash dishes. He'd always say, "We live in the slumps, but our place can never be a slump." She appreciated that about him.

She went to her bedroom and collapsed on her bed. Her room was minimalistic. Dark grey curtains, a double bed in the middle, an old wardrobe that she bought from someone who was moving out of the building.

Her shoes were lining up the wall, mostly takkies and another pair of boots, she didn't have many clothes, well not as many as she wanted to. Couldn't afford to splurge on clothes as she had to survive.

As much as the area she lived in was unsafe and there were a lot of unruly people coming and going out of the building, people respected their place. Not even once did they ever have a break-in. People were afraid of her and Freddy, mostly her.

She sent Mason a text, telling him what her uncle told her about Punch. That idiot was another loose end. But she didn't want to kill him, killing her father didn't make her a *killer*... she hoped there was another way they could neutralize him.

Mason responded after an hour telling her, he was working on it, and she shouldn't worry herself about it and focus on burying her father.

She took a nap on her bed, loving the feeling of being alone at a place she trusted, well not fully trusted but it was her place, nonetheless. Better than her home where everything just reminded her of her stupid father who was soon about to maggot food.

When she woke up around two in the afternoon, she shot Mbali a text that she was at her flat and she should bring her some food. Mbali was happy to hear from her, she didn't even say no.

She got up from her bed and wore her boots again, she was tired of sitting on her bed and needed some fresh air. She walked downstairs to the Indian supermarket at the corner of the flat building to buy juice and airtime then she walked back to her flat.

Soon as she put the drink in the fridge and loaded airtime on her phone, a knock resounded on the door. Mbali lived in the next street building, she did expect her to come soon but not this sooner.

"Dude where did you -" she wanted to ask her where she ordered the food from that took that quick, but it was not Mbali at the door. It was two strange men who wore black and looked intimidating as hell.

"Hi?"

"Lesedi?" one of the guys asked, he had a blade scar running across his face, to ordinary people he'd look scary, to her... he looked regular.

"No..."

"It's her." The other guy with a missing tooth front tooth confirmed checking his phone. "Definitely the girl in the video."

Lesedi tried to close the door in their faces, but scar face pushed it open. "We have a message for you." He intertwined his fingers together snapping the air out of his them and crocked his neck like he was about to fight.

"What message?" she asked, slowly walking back. She looked at the two men trying to intimidate her. \

"Mr Molao said to send you a message to never mess with him ever again." Soon as toothless guy spoke, Blade jumped on her and grabbed her by her neck, cutting off her air supply.

"He says that you must make a video apologizing for what you did to him, and tell everyone that you have mistaken him for someone else, do you understand little girl?" Blade faced snarled in her face.

In a swift move, Lesedi brought her knee to the man's groin then sent him staggering back with an upper cut. Noticing that the girl was fighting back, toothless landed a fist to her ribs and she turned on him and kicked his stomach with her boot, he hit the wall with his back.

She hauled him off the wall with the collars of his black golf shirt and bumped her head hard against his. Her height was a huge advantage at this point, and she was grateful to be as tall as most men. The man cried "ow" at the impact, she felt it too and knew she was going to have a bruise and a killed headache, but the adrenaline pumping through her veins kept her going.

As toothless face held his head, eyes sparkling with stars, Lesedi sent a kick to his ribs on the side, and he fell to the ground.

Just as she was about to jump on top of him, scar face pulled her back with her ponytail, she screamed in agony but managed to twist her body around, ending up with his arm behind his back.

She twisted his arm and he growled in pain, but she kept twisting, her compassion was locked away in some basement and the key formed a part of the other hundred keys on the chain. She didn't care for him at this point.

How dare they come into her house and threaten her, try to intimidate her?

She managed to dislocate his right arm, the arm that was strangling her not so long ago. But it was two against one, she didn't hurry fast enough to dislocate scar face's arm because soon toothless dude was back on his feet pulling her away from his friend. He didn't waste a second because he had soon realized that she wasn't an amateur or a regular girl. Immediately he pulled her away from scar face, he slapped her so hard, she felt blood seep from her nose.

Shocked at the impact of this fucker's hand she held her side of the face, giving his fist an opportunity to collide with her face, busting her lip open. She grew angrier than she was.

"Oh, you're going to regret that." She spoke before spitting the blood on the floor. She charged at him in a lightning speed, her fingers and long nails digging into his eyes.

First instinct was to protect his eyesight, so he clawed off her hands from his eyes and shut them, cupping them with his hands, giving her an opportunity to grab the vase of plastic flowers from the side table and smashing it over his head.

When he fell to the ground, she started to kick him, scar face was crying in agony, from a dislocated arm. There was only so much he could do with his left hand.

"Oh my God!" That was Mbali's screeching at the door. "Help! Somebody help!!" she screamed.

Lesedi couldn't afford to be blindsided, she ignored her and kept on kicking the dog that was lying down, stomping his face with the underneath of her boots.

The Scar face dude ran out of the flat, then soon as Mbali set the McDonalds paper bag in the kitchen she pushed Lesedi off the man's body. "Are you trying to kill him?" Mbali was short and petite. It took all of her energy to push angry Lesedi off the man.

"Get out!" Mbali screamed at toothless guy who crawled out of the flat as the girls watched, Lesedi with anger and Mbali with utter shock.

"My sweet Jesus!"

"What happened in here? Why didn't you scream for help?" Mbali was shocked, she looked around at the broken glasses from the vase. The blood on the white floor. Lesedi's heavy breathing. "Who are those guys? Did they break in here? Did they steal anything?" She asked.

She wouldn't be surprised. Joburg was full of chancers and people that cared little to nothing about other people's belongings. They were fucking too entitled to things they didn't work hard for.

Lesedi walked to the bathroom which had a broken, cracked old tub they didn't and couldn't use, a basin which was constantly leaking and a shower which was surprisingly very functional even though it had no door. There was a mirror over the basin which she looked into.

With her chocolate complexion she wasn't red in the face, but she knew soon enough she will be black and purple. There was fresh blood dripping from her nose, her lip was starting to swell, and blood coated her teeth.

"Fuck!" she rinsed her mouth and felt fresh pain weigh in on her. The adrenaline was wearing off and she was starting to feel pain all over her body. Her ribs where that fucker had punched her ached, her face was just too painful to describe.

She tried to wipe her nose, but blood came pouring so she stuck toilet paper in one of the bleeding nostrils. She didn't have any painkillers in her flat, so she was going to have to opt for a grandpa from the Indian shop downstairs.

"Do you need me to get you anything? Panado?" Mbali asked as soon as Lesedi emerged from the bathroom.

"Panado? What am I? A five-year-old?" she snorted, limping a little as she walked to her bedroom.

She sat on the bed, clutching her side. The headache hit her like a train colliding into a wall. She felt pain all over her body.

"Okay not panado then... let me get you a wet cloth, and tissue." Mbali walked to the bathroom noticing that the other woman was bleeding a little too much.

Lesedi reached for her phone that Mbali brought from the kitchen when she followed her and scrolled through her call log. She didn't need to go too far.

"Firecracker... you just wanna talk to me whole day don't you?" Mason answered his phone in a cool and calm voice with a hint amusement.

"No, why would I do that? I only spoke to you once today."

"Twice if we count now." Mason tormented her and she groaned. She was in pain and didn't need his playfulness.

"I am in."

"You're in? in where?"

"I wanna make him pay." She spoke through greeted teeth. The pain was becoming a little unbearable. "I am gonna make him pay."

"What changed your mind?"

"He sent some stupid boys to scare me off... I am going to make him regret that."

"Are you okay? Did they do anything stupid?" as Mason asked the questions, before Lesedi could answer Mbali returned with a plastic bowl and a wet cloth that happened to be Lesedi's pink face cloth.

"Oh my God, your bleeding is too much now, take that tissue out it's soaked." Mbali's soothing voice greeted Mason's curious ears through the

phone that was in Lesedi's hand. She couldn't put it on her ear as she had a killer headache and her whole face felt hot.

"Bleeding... Les, what happened? Did they hit you?" Mason asked sounding alarmed.

Lesedi cast a wary look at Mbali who clamped her mouth shut. In her defence, she didn't notice or hear Lesedi being on the phone and talking to anyone.

"It's no big deal." Lesedi dismissed him.

"I am on my way to you, are you home?"

"No, don't come. This place is not safe for people like you pretty boy."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"Exactly that, I am fine."

"No, she's not. She's fucking bleeding and scaring me." Mbali chose to go against Lesedi. She didn't know who the man was but his concern over Lesedi was enough for her to spill.

"It's my fucking nose, nothing else." Lesedi wanted to throw Mbali out through the window for making Mason want to come over.

"Are you home?"

Mbali took the phone from Lesedi's hand, "We are at her flat in Hillbrow." Then Mbali carried on with giving the man the address and Mason told them he will be there in no time.

"So, you are just going to give out my address to complete strangers?" Lesedi was shooting daggers through her eyes. "You just want them to finish me off?"

Mbali rolled her eyes and threw the phone on the bed, "Didn't sound like a serial killer to me."

"Enlighten me Mbali, how do serial killers sound like?" this woman's innocence and naiveté was astonishing as it was refreshing. She lived in a bubble, sure she lived in the crazy and dangerous streets of Joburg, but she still maintained her innocence from her adolescence.

The young fair skinned woman decided to keep quiet for her sake. Lesedi was rough around the edges and as much as she knew the older woman tolerated her, she knew she could toss her out with a snap of her fingers. She asked Lesedi to remove the tissue of blood from her nose and she used the wet cloth to wipe the fresh blood on her bottom lip, rinsed it then put it back over the woman's nose.

"I am going to get you grandpa or something... for the pain." Mbali then left Lesedi alone after trying to get her comfortable as much as she can.

Returning back from the shops, Mbali was followed by Mason in all his tall glory making Mbali look like a midget. "You're so tall!" Mbali commented when they reached the door.

Mason had been around Joburg trying to sort out the Punch issue and that's how he made it in time to Lesedi's place. He was just entering the building when Mbali greeted him and asked if he was lost. The dude was clean, dressed in black cargo pants that showed off his muscular thighs and long limbs, a fitted t-shirt that didn't cling on his body but his biceps. He was also white, so of course he stuck out like a sore thumb.

She was astonished when he said he was Mason and looking for Lesedi on the third floor, he thanked the lucky stars that Mbali was the girl he spoke

with over the phone. Together they walked up the stairs as the building's lift had stopped working donkey years ago.

"She's in the bedroom, let me just get her a glass of water." Mbali showed him where the bedroom was.

Mason's head was spinning from all the red flags he was seeing in the flat. The whole area itself was a danger zone, a health hazard, the building was rundown everyone could enter and leave with no permit, there is no security by the door, there are no burglar proofs on doors or windows.

When he entered, the flat was bare, housed old furniture that looked like it would crumble in at any given moment, he was far too stressed about it.

He softly knocked on the bedroom door and a faint 'come in' danced in his ears.

Lesedi was lying on her bed, still wearing her shoes, the wet cloth still on her nose, her other hand over her forehead as she listened to the thump-thump sound from her head. The pain was still fresh, and she was trying by all means to stay strong, but fuck she needed something to numb the pain.

"What the fuck? What did they do to you?" Mason loomed over her, seeing the pink fabric soaking with blood. "Geez."

"You should have seen those dogs though, she *moered* the hell out of them." Mbali walked in with a glass of water and a sachet of grandpa. "Lesedi, where did you learn to fight like that? How did you take those two big guys by yourself?" Mbali was amazed.

Lesedi wished the girl could stop talking and Mason would leave. She was aching, a dull ache hitting her head constantly. She felt like she was about to seep into a coma.

Mason was amazed at what the petite girl whose name he didn't know revealed. Lesedi took on two guys? She was brave, a firecracker of note. The name was befitting. But the state she was in was alarming. "You don't look too good Les... we need to get you checked."

She wanted to protest but the headache rendered her speechless, the wound on her lip felt too heavy, she didn't wanna talk or open her mouth. But one thing she knew was that she was annoyed, at those guys and at the attention Mbali and Mason were showering her in.

"Fuck she's losing consciousness." Mason carefully lifted the woman bridal style off the bed. "Come with me." It was only then he saw the blood on the floor near the wall. When he walked in, he was taken in by the almost worn-out furniture, the chipping paint off walls, he didn't look much around.

"Jesus is that her blood?" he asked on the way to the door.

"No, she almost killed one of the guys, broke the other one's arm." Mbali informed him, "it was a scene out of an action movie I tell you."

Mbali spoke a lot, didn't know when to be quiet and always over indulged. She didn't know the guy's name; he didn't know hers and yet she was telling him everything he didn't even need to know while following him out of the flat.

"Oh! Our food." She went back inside and grabbed the bag of food, locked the door behind her and followed the guy to his car.

She found a group of black young guys guarding the car. "Hey please take out the keys from my left pocket..." Mason said to Mbali who carefully stuck her hand in Mason's front pocket and took out the key, unlocked the car

and jumped in the backseat so Mason could place Lesedi on the front seat since his car was a two door.

"Thanks gents." Mason pulled out his wallet and rolled out three hundred rand notes and passed it to the guys. He knew they were going to smoke it, but he didn't care, they took care of his car for him. This place was too fucked for his liking.

Jumping into the driver seat, Mason rushed them to a private clinic that was closer to them.

There, Lesedi was admitted, and he watched as Mbali ate her food in silence and chuckled. Petite girls loved to eat didn't they?

Mason couldn't believe he arrived at the right time; he couldn't see this girl knowing how to help Lesedi in her sate. The fact that Lesedi passed out in the car, and she almost screamed his ear off thinking Lesedi was dead was very telling.

After a long time of waiting, Mason got an uber for Mbali as she was tired and sleeping on the chair, he assured her that he will be with Lesedi through it all.

Soon enough, he was allowed to see her. She had regained consciousness and looked tired as hell. The story was there was a break in at her flat and he was a friend who she called for help.

"I don't think I've ever seen a patient looking so murderous." Mason spoke as he entered the room to be met by cold eyes from the woman whose life he saved.

"I want to go home, what time is it?" she asked.

"After eight..."

"Tracy..." she panicked thinking about her sister wondering where she was. "Mama..."

Mason sat at the end of the bed, concern filling his green eyes, "Hey, I called Tee and let her know you were with me, again."

"Oh God, now they will think I am some attention seeking bitch. There is a funeral at home and yet two consecutive nights, I have been on the streets."

"I mean technically you are in the hospital... but I don't think you want them to know that right?" she nodded in response. She felt a little better, the pain wasn't as severe as before and she was so sleepy.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"Can I have some water please?" she asked. She felt pathetic having to ask for help but she was chained to the bed by the stupid drip. She was in the oversized hospital gown, a plaster over her forehead and her lip still felt fucking heavy.

Mason stood up, filled a glass with water and passed it to her. She was shaking so he took it back, "Why are you shaking?"

"I am a little cold, hungry..." she mumbled.

"Can I help you drink?" he didn't want to startle her like he did the other night. He was glad that they didn't have to talk about it now. The ride back from Bloemfontein was awkward as hell, he was glad they swept it under the rug. But he didn't forget...and didn't want to make the same mistake twice.

"I hate this."

"Hey... soon enough you'll hold your own glass... don't worry about it." He brought the glass to her lips, and she drank. He tilted it slightly so she could properly drink but some still spilled from her lips.

He curled his finger and brushed the outside of it on her chin, catching the trail of water and slowly bringing the warm finger to her lips.

She shivered and looked up into his eyes and he locked eyes with her.

There was a beat...a moment of heat passed through, but as soon as it came, it left.

"Sorry." Mason apologized, then cleared his throat. "Let me... let me go find your doctor and see how long we gonna be here for."

Lesedi looked at the closed door after Mason.

Now why the hell did her heart skip a fucking beat.

**

"Hospital?" Tracy's voice rang in Lesedi's ears as she called her baby sister from the hospital. "What happened?"

"I got mugged and well... they hit me, I had a concussion and passed out. Mason took me to the hospital, but I am fine, I feel fine."

Lesedi felt it was important to at least let Tracy know why she was not at home so she wouldn't think she was deserting her at a time of need.

"Is Mason still there with you? Do you need me to come pick you up? Which hospital is it?"

Lesedi sighed, she had forgotten what a worrywart her baby sister was, "I am fine, I will be fine. And Mason will bring me home, I just wanted you to know that I haven't gone on another adventure."

"Okay, I will see you when you come."

"Yeah... tomorrow though. I don't want to worry mom. My face has bruises."

"I thought you said you are fine?"

"Between you and I... I have bruises I don't want people to see but if mom asks I will be fine. I just need to rest, and I will be okay tomorrow."

The sisters spoke for few more minutes then hung up. Lesedi was still in her hospital gown and the doctor was keeping her overnight, against her wishes.

The room she was in was nice and as comfortable as they can make a hospital bed and room be. Mason had bought her food from the Deli down the road, and they made the best chicken salad and fries.

"Are visiting hours not over?" Lesedi asked. As much as she was grateful for Mason's help, his presence unnerved her. She wanted to be alone, she wanted him to leave her alone.

Mason looked up from texting on his phone. He was sitting on a chair in the corner of the room, listening to Lesedi speak to Tracy but at the same time busy with his other things on his phone.

"What was that?"

"Are visiting hours not over?" Lesedi repeated, goddamn it, this guy needed to go. Her mind flashed back to when he touched her, when he was helping her to drink water. She shuddered at the memory. This guy needed to leave her alone. He was overcrowding her space.

"Dude I'm Mason, I can stay here until midnight... or even sleep here." He smirked, his eyes returning back to his phone.

Lesedi was curious to know what he was busy with, but that curiosity wasn't greater than the need for him to leave. She felt like he was spending way too much time with her than she liked.

Sofia had hinted that Mason once looked at her like he wanted to feast on her, she had hoped that was a lie. In the two days she has spent with him, he has been nothing but helpful and nonchalant. Didn't look at her in anyway except for earlier on. Something sparked in those green eyes that made her stomach flip and she wanted him gone before she thought way too much about it or he thinks too much into it.

"No. You can't stay here until midnight. I need to sleep."

"I have a funny feeling you'd discharge yourself..."

"I won't... you have been here since I got admitted are you not tired?"

She tried to make it seem like she was concerned about him, but the truth was, he was making her feel uneasy.

Mason stood up and stretched, he was really tall. And he looked damn good in the stupid snug cargo pants.

"How are you feeling? Your lip isn't so bruised like before." He ignored her question. He was more worried about her than him needing to rest.

"I'm fine." she snapped. She only snapped because of what happened earlier on. That was scary. What she felt was scary and this guy needed to go.

"Where did you learn how to fight? That girl we came with said you beat down two guys... Two? What are you, a ninja?" He had to admit though, he wished he was there to witness it. He couldn't stop imagining it. This girl never ceased to amaze him. She was... She was something else.

"It doesn't matter. Mason why are you still here? Do you not want to go home?" Small talk wasn't going to cut it. He needed to free her and go home. At least for tonight until she forgets about what almost happened.

"I will go, I am just talking to my boss. He wants me to help him out with something, but I really can't be in two places at once." Mason told her.

"You have a boss?"

Mason chuckled, "Yeah, not a lot of people know that. I do have someone I work for most of the time, makes sense to call him my boss but he's really just a superior in the field and a partner to me."

Lesedi didn't know what to say, so she kept quiet. Mason seemed to be leading a very interesting life and she really was curious, but she didn't want to make it seem like she was interested in anything he did.

"So, he has another operation running in Cape Town and wants me to help out the team there but I'm already using my resources for my own OP." he sat back down, checking his phone again.

"Can't you say no?"

"I can, I really can but like I said, he's a superior in the field, I need him like he needs me. I don't want to disappoint him."

"Can't you send Ginger to help him out or he doesn't know Ginger?"

"Ginger works for me and I have him doing something else... I actually am making him do a lot of things, like finding you an apartment."

That made Lesedi snap in a blink of an eye. Her eyes were narrowed and the dimple on her chin deepened, "What do you mean he's finding me an apartment? Mason, I did not ask you to find me an apartment. I am fine. And if I was looking for an apartment, I will fucking do that on my own." She wanted to scream and yell but she was still regaining strength and energy.

"Whoa, you do not think I'm gonna let you go back to that dump you call a flat, right? In that health hazard zone? Never mind the security risks, that place is a fucking dump Les." Mason fired back as good as he received.

"You have no right. Who do you think you are hey? I will decide what's risky for me. I will decide what's a dump and what's not. I am happy with that dump!" her eyes were blazing. She was very angry and very annoyed.

Mason couldn't believe this girl. She couldn't possibly be happy to live in that pigsty area and in that rundown flat with leaking pipes? Surely that concussion was causing her mental dysfunctionality because what in the hell?

"Are you kidding? Have you seen that place? I am doing you a favour."

"I didn't ask." she deadpanned. "I didn't ask for that stupid favour. It's one thing to help me out with things I ask you Mason, but don't you dare think you can control my life. That you can dictate what do with my life, where I choose to live. That... that is none of your fucking business."

Mason was gobsmacked. She really was serious. No playfulness attached to the words or showing on her face. She was angry.

"I am trying to help you."

"At which point did I ask? Mhm? At which point did I ask you to help me?" she held eye contact without wavering. Angry brown eyes to displeased green eyes.

"You know what, you are right, you didn't ask, and I shouldn't have tried to help." Mason stood up from his chair, picking up his empty takeaway bags he has been eating from. "You're such an ungrateful bi - Lesedi, you're ungrateful. I will see you around."

"Name calling, really?" Lesedi watched as he walked to the door, "And what does that mean?"

"I am a man of my word, I said we will get that bastard who hurt you and we will. And I will also still help out with the money transfer... other than that, I am keeping my hands to myself. I was gonna pick you up tomorrow but not anymore, let your sister know... or find a way I don't care." He then walked out.

Could he be any more dramatic? Lesedi was stunned, her mouth hung open as she looked at the closed door and back at the wall in front of her like she was looking at another person needing an explanation of what had just happened.

But she felt pushed into a corner, Mason had no right to try and get her a new place. She had dreams and hopes of where she'd like to live. What if he looked for a place in an area she wouldn't like? He had no right and it felt good to tell him that...

But goddamn it didn't feel good when he left and told her she was basically on her own once she was discharged. She felt weird...she felt strange... like she did something wrong.

He did call her *an ungrateful bitch*... Even if he stopped himself from actually saying the word bitch. She must have struck a nerve...

But the man was just so frustrating and invading her space. For a very long time she has been alone, doing everything alone, the people in her life worked at the salon and they were not that close to her. Mbali was an exception, she forced herself on the woman and for a while she let her almost

in. She wasn't all the way through the door, but she was the only woman outside family that Lesedi opened up to.

She was now patching things up with Tracy and Tracy was doing it so much better than her and she appreciated her for it. She didn't know how they were going to work things out, or how they will move forward after she spent every chance name-calling her, insulting her and making her believe their mother hated her but Tracy took the lead on that. She asked her out to lunch, she had pillow talks with her at night since they were sleeping at home now for the funeral. She appreciated her baby sister for that because in honesty, she missed her presence in her life.

In a very short space of time, she had to let go of the hurt, she found her rapist, Mason is by her side wanting to help her with every little thing... it was taking a lot out of her. She spent time building the armours she wore around her body, she spent time building the walls around her to keep herself safe... and now she had to break them, and she didn't think she could do that... or that she wanted to.

When she was not protected by the walls and armours, she got hurt, she got hurt very badly and she couldn't go back to that hellhole.

She looked around the room she was in... she's never been hospitalized before. She did spend a lot of time going in and out of the hospital with her mother doing her check-ups after their father beat her up and broke almost all of her upper bones and her jaw.

Hospitals didn't traumatize her, the memory of that incident did.

She checked her phone and responded to Lucy, one of the ladies she worked with in the salon, she behaved like the manager of the salon, but truth

is, everyone was their own boss, they just had to all pay rent of the space they were working in and Lucy made sure everyone did.

She told everyone she was fine, and the funeral was Saturday if anyone wanted to come. She didn't go into more details because that was who and how she was. She kept everyone at arms' length.

She then saw Mbali was typing, it was almost nine at night and she was wondering what the young woman was doing up or what she wanted to say.

Probably to ask her how she was feeling...

'*Are you awake?*' - Mbali asked.

'*Yes, wassup?*' - Lesedi responded almost immediately.

'*You place was vandalized; I just came back from there. I asked Junior to take me there to just make sure all was locked and to get some clothes for you and there was nothing in your wardrobe, no shoes, the bed is messed up, pillows slashed...*' - Mbali

Lesedi couldn't believe what she had just read. Her head spun dangerously fast, as she wondered who the hell did that and what the fuck did they do with her clothes?

The headache that seemed to be at bay came rushing back. Today was just not a good day. She was thinking a lot than usual.

Mbali sent four pictures of her room and her heart just broke. But a note on the last picture told her what she needed to know..

'*When Mr Molao speaks you listen mantsho!*'

Was written on the note. The jab at her complexion. (Mantsho - dark one) she knew a lot of people really did not find dark skinned people pretty but to make it known like that, hurt her.

She didn't even have the strength to respond to Mbali. She was just so upset that she switched off her phone and turned in bed to sleep.

Tears that night fell on her pillow... she felt so alone. Her chest was hot... she was pained... she was in pain.

But one thing for sure... Mateo Molao or Lekau Singo, was going to regret he ever threatened her let alone raped her. That was a promise she had to see to the end.

Lesedi had to wear the clothes she came in wearing yesterday... called her baby sister to come and get her. She wanted to go to her place and see what damage those hooligans did.

Tracy was under a lot of stress with the funeral preparations. While Lesedi was in the hospital, Sofia and Daisy lost the fight of her mother mourning their father's death on the mattress and not ever leaving the room unless it is to the bathroom.

They had the poor woman wearing black now and Tracy told Lesedi it was their mother's idea to agree to whatever the Phiri family told her. Some of the Motlhala family from Daisy's side of the family did call and told her they will come on Friday as they were held up with work.

Like they ever cared.

No one seemed to care about them... it was a damn shame.

"Okay, soo you wanna go to your place first..." Tracy was sceptical about driving to Hillbrow. Her car was a luxury German car, they will steal it faster than she could blink. "I can't park my car there and I can't stay in it and wait for you. It's too dangerous."

"I know, you can just drop me off and I will come home via taxi."

"Or you will call Mason... you still didn't tell me how you were attacked yesterday and the first person you thought to call was Mason and not me." Her baby sister sounded hurt.

Lesedi thought back to the conversation she had with Mason last night... they were back to being acquaintances, well they were just that but with a hint of friendship brewing but now none of that was ever going to happen.

She needed to fix that... she felt the need to fix that.

"I called Mason for a different reason, and I ended up telling him that I was attacked, and you know how he is. I didn't call him for help."

"Is there something between the two of you? I mean the other day you said he wasn't so great in bed... I didn't think you'd wanna go back to him..."

Lesedi wanted to laugh. Oh, the lies she's been telling Mohau were getting a little out of hand now. She should have said Mason was great in bed, but she didn't think she'd be seeing more of him and planning to work with him. Now she was in a jazz and had to keep lying.

"I lied, please stop talking about him." talking about Mason force her to keep lying and she wasn't in the mood. "I need to get to my place; I need to check some things..."

Tracy didn't ask any further questions. "Tshwara... I made you a card of our joint account. Profits from the salon and the restaurant go in there, do whatever you need to do. Get a place, buy a car... just I don't know, stay alive, stay safe."

Lesedi took the card and looked at it, "When did you do this?"

"There is this lady I work with at the bank, she is a miracle worker, she costs me a lot of money but she does the job." Tracy smiled. "It's something I immediately worked on when we patched things up. You deserve this."

"And you saying I can buy a car...?" Lesedi smirked.

"And get yourself a nice apartment, I can help you look if you want to. Just like sort out your safety hey... also I need you to come back home. Tapiwa is driving me up a wall, rangwane Lucas went back home to get some uncles, koko wants me to cook lunch and dinner for visitors... I cannot. I refuse to." Tracy told her as they walked towards the car.

Lesedi was playing mindlessly with the card in her hand. She appreciated what Tracy was doing for her, but she didn't feel good about taking her money. Tracy worked hard for it, their father made her life a living hell while she worked for him, all the money she made, she deserved it.

"I will come. I will come home tonight." She was distant but Tracy was already used to her sister's fluctuating moods. Lesedi has changed but she was slowly coming out of her shell, she comes out some days then go back in some other.

Tracy once again, dropped her sister off and left her at her flat.

Lesedi walked to her flat, she found Freddy just finishing to clean the house. "Oh, she's alive." Freddy rolled his eyes and picked the bucket of dirty water with the mop and set it outside in the hallway. "You good?"

Lesedi looked down on the floor and saw that it was almost dry, so she walked in, "I am. I hear my room has been fucked up, did they touch yours? Also, where were you?"

"Hey I never ask you where you go when you disappear..." Freddy walked back inside too, keeping the door open so the floor could completely dry up. "I was not here... just came back when Mbali sent me texts saying our flat was broken into. It was only your room that got shitted on though. Who did you fucking piss this time?"

Freddy wasn't even surprised that Lesedi found herself in a situation. The woman was a ticking time bomb, always threatened to beat people up and carried knives.

Lesedi ignored him and walked to her room and man the pictures Mbali sent were prettier than what she was seeing with her naked eye.

Her mattress was torn she could see its springs. Her wardrobe was cracked and chopped to little wooden pieces and all of her clothes were gone.

She couldn't even sit down on the bed and mull over the situation. There was nothing left to salvage. Nothing at all.

"Fuck!" she cursed through gritted teeth. So that bastard sent someone else since she dealt with the other two hooligans. Clearly he was having her followed. Damn bastard. Didn't he take enough from her already? *Fuck!*

"Whose blood did I also just clean? Yours or the motherfuckers that Mbali tells me attacked you?" Freddy smirked. He knew the answer to that. He has seen this woman fight first hand in the gym he frequented and he'd been dying to see her in real action.

"Theirs, thanks for cleaning it up." Lesedi looked around, she didn't know what to fucking think.

"So, what are you going to do now? Did you father at least leave you some money so you can replace your furniture?"

Lesedi turned and looked at him, remembered the card her baby sister gave her. That was a life line she needed. "I think I am gonna move back home for a while." She didn't wanna also flash her newfound wealth in the man's face.

"Makes sense. My brother can move in here."

"Your brother?"

"Yeah, he found me, and I didn't wanna share my bed, so this will work out. But keep in touch okay?" Freddy then walked away. He wasn't emotionally invested in their living arrangement. They hardly even spent time together. But they understood each other.

Lesedi said her byes to Freddy, told him she will come to get the mess in her room sometime in the week then walked to McDonalds in town.

She went upstairs after picking up her order and sat in a corner alone. There was one person she could call, who will help her, who will understand the jazz she was in. But she upset him already and didn't know if he will still be keen to talk to her.

She wanted to call him before she ate but didn't want to ruin her appetite, so she ate but didn't enjoy her quarter pounder cheese burger with large fries and a coke. It was her favourite go-to meal in McDonalds whenever she felt like not eating like a rabbit.

Halfway through her meal, she decided to look at the apartment she always dreamed of living in. It was in Fourways, Joburg North. Looking at the pictures, the place came fully furnished and it was a dream...

She sighed and went through her call log and again, she pressed call on Mason's number. She was yet to save it, and at the rate she called him at, she might as well save it.

"Hi."

"Hey..."

"How can I be of help today?" he sounded very sarcastic.

She rolled her eyes and sighed, "I am sorry for going off at you yesterday."

"Okay." There he goes with his nonchalantic self. It was unnerving.

"I mean it."

"Okay... it's fine."

"I do need a place, but I have one I like. If you still want to help me, I'd like that."

"What changed your mind? I know very well that you wouldn't change your mind overnight, what happened between the time I left you and now?" Mason was starting to get know this vixen well. She always needed a big push before changing her mind or making a decision about something.

"My room was wrecked up. I have nothing left... that guy sent more people to my place, I guess to rough me up but when they didn't find me, they messed up my room." She told him. It was shocking to her how easy it was to talk to Mason and be honest with him. Something she couldn't do with her sister because she didn't want her to be stressed and over-worried.

"I don't blame him; he's taking heat on social media and he's trying to control the situation. People are still asking what that was about." He informed her.

He has been keeping tabs on the situation since he found out someone took a video and posted it online. She hadn't checked social media for that

reason. "I am sure his colleagues want to know who you are. Some people think you're a bitter ex..."

"Bitter ex my left fucking ass. I will never touch that man, not even with a 15cm ruler." She grew mad at the suggestion. "Mason I want to make him pay for this. I need to make him pay for this."

"And we will make him pay. I am just... I need you to focus on the funeral and once that is done, we can move onto the next phase. I just need to plan it out." He told her.

"Concentrate on the funeral, like waking up every day and looking at Tapiwa's ugly face as she walks up and down the passage complaining about every little thing insight? Fuck man."

"Yeah do that. There is also something I need you to do though." Mason told her, sounding all serious and no play.

"What's that?"

"I need you to make a video apologizing to that Singo man -"

"No! Never!" Lesedi cut him off before he even finished the sentence. "I will not do that. I will do no such thing. I'd rather fucking run up the streets fucking naked than to do that."

Mason chuckled on the other side of the line, "That would be a sight don't you think?" he teased her.

She could just picture him, wiggling his brows and smirking.

"I am serious Mason."

"So am I."

"Why?"

"So he can get off your back, so he doesn't see you coming
Firecracker... think."

"Oh!"

"I am genius I know, look you can do this with your phone, try not to get all your face out there, I need that face for this operation. So do it, be creative so he can buy the story and I will see you sometime this week."

They exchanged a few words, a couple of details and Lesedi was game for whatever it was Mason was cooking. Dare she said, she was excited.

She was definitely going to make that man rue the day he was born.

"Do you wanna accompany me to Cape Town tomorrow night? We will be back Wednesday night."

Lesedi was taken aback by the request, she didn't respond immediately.

"I am not asking you out, I have decided to help my boss with something, and I am going to need a driver and someone who can fight." Mason knew she'd think he was coming unto her after that moment that shook his bones at the hospital.

She grinned. Never mind she just got discharged from the hospital, what she felt while fighting those guys yesterday was exhilarating. She was not scared at all; she had a goal in her mind, and she saw it to the finish. So of course she'd like to do it again...

"I will see you tomorrow night."

CHAPTER FOUR

“**B**rother, you need to see this.” Zakes Singo, Mateo Molao's brother but known to the rest of the people as one of his employees slid in the backseat of the man's car which was parked in the streets of Joburg. Zakes had his phone out, a video on the screen ready to be played. “That girl has posted a video online, apologizing to you.”

Mateo was surprised and relieved to hear that. He folded the newspaper on his lap and took the phone and pressed play.

The video was blurry and she was standing too far from the camera, hair in her face, you couldn't really see who it was but those who saw the previous video will know, it worked in his favour. She finally came to her senses and did what he wanted her to do. Clearly his scare tactics finally worked. She acted like a *badass bitch* fighting his two men that he initially sent. He was forced to up his game to up his game.

She was a poor little girl; he couldn't possibly know what her end game with him was. She probably wanted money from him. But she was not his type, she couldn't be one of his mistresses or his exes.

Maybe Morris told her something he didn't know...

But as he watched the video, she mentioned how her father went broke and said it was the man's fault, so she was angry to see him at the house.

“It now makes sense. Phiri ruined my name to his family, but it's all good now. Son of a bitch. He left me in a fucking mess... General wants his cut, his daughter wanted to beat me up, *fok*.”

Zakes took his phone back and pocketed and relaxed in the seat next to his brother, "Well at least now the public will be at ease and trust in your leadership and influence. We just need to find Punch and find out what he knows about Morris's killers."

Mateo hummed in response, "Yes, let's go there. He did call me and asked to meet me. I told him that I know who the killers are, and he said it was not the Tiger six boys. So... if it's not them, then someone has my money out there."

"Let's go pay the boy a visit then, because we need to find that money soon. Someone needs to pay it back or give it back."

The ride to the Leeuwkop Correctional services was a little longer than they intended for it, but they made it anyway.

It was a late morning on a Tuesday and the wicked of course were working harder to save their own skins.

"I can't be seen visiting prisoners of that calibre Zakes, you will have to take lead on this." Mateo said to his brother who was two years his junior.

Zakes sighed and opened the door of the car. He was used to doing the dirty work for his brother, they were rewarding anyway. "Of course. I will be back."

Zakes walked to the station and was hit by devastating news, Mzoxolo also known as Punch was moved yesterday afternoon to a Prison in Eastern Cape. His case manager approved it because the man wanted to be close to his family and all paperwork was filled signed, filed and permission to move was granted.

"He's a damn prisoner, where does he get off making such requests to move prisons?" Zakes was enraged.

"Unfortunately, he can make such a request, power hand was used in this, and we could only follow orders from upstairs. If you have any power, try your luck and have him returned here, which I doubt will happen." The officer told him while busy stacking files on top of each other, ready to go in the back offices.

Zakes couldn't believe this. "Do you know who I work for? I work for Mateo Molao, he will not be pleased."

The officer sighed and walked around the front desk, "even if you worked for the president, there is nothing I can do. Hands are tied, unless you make things happen..."

And it ended there. Pinching the bridge of his nose, Zakes walked outside and walked to the parking lot to join his brother.

"He's gone."

"What do you mean he's gone?" Mateo asked, eyebrows scrunched together in confusion.

"They moved him to Eastern Cape, something about needing to be closer to family and whatnot. Apparently it is something he can do."

"But that process takes time, it has been only a few days." Mateo was confused.

"Well, the useless cop who was giving me this information says the order came from 'upstairs' and if we have any power, we can try to overturn the situation, but he doubts we would be successful." Zakes informed him of every

little detail he could remember. "Do you know anyone in Eastern Cape that could do you a favour?"

Mateo thought about it, he didn't know anyone. His biggest connections were in Gauteng, as much as he acted like the big fish, he really was not. "No, I don't know anyone, damn it!"

"So, what are we going to do?"

"Someone has to pay, if Punch is not here to give us anything, then the Tiger Six better start working damn hard for my money."

* *

Lesedi couldn't believe the mission she just helped Mason with in Cape Town. It was in the early morning of Wednesday, and they just returned to what he called a 'safe house.'

She met some of his team mates from New York and they were on a mission of tracking down a US official that has been under their radar, they tracked him down to South Africa.

The man had his own little army and they put up a damn fight in the huge mansion he was docked in. Lesedi was the designated driver but at some point she found herself fighting two men outside the car they were assigned.

The guys put up a good fight and unlike the previous fight, she didn't smash her head into anyone, and made sure to preserve her face.

Her job wasn't that hectic, she just made sure to drive the rest of the team safely back to the safe house while Mason finished whatever it was he told her he had to do.

Now she was waiting for him in the bedroom they were given when they arrived, looking at the mirror and seeing life in her eyes, she was amazed. How could danger excite her in this manner?

She felt alive, hell this was all she could think about when she went shopping immediately after Mason asked her to accompany him. She had to get proper clothes for the trip since everything was gone.

She and Tracy decided to get a catering company to cook simple lunch and dinner meals for the family until day of the burial. Mason gave them some hard cash that they kept inside Tracy's car.

Tracy was happy to be free from the labour of having to cook and bake for visitors, so now she went to work in the morning, came back home later just so Sofia and Daisy wouldn't be alone.

Lesedi told her that she needed to do some few things and needed a day away from the family, she promised to tell Tracy about it when she returned.

She and Mason flew in a private jet that apparently belonged to the team and she was just too anxious and excited wondering what the mission was.

She was so happy she didn't back down. It was exhilarating as hell. She wanted to do it again, in fact she looked forward to bringing Mateo Molao to his knees.

She took off the jacket she wore as she felt pain on her abdomen. She was still healing from being kicked and punched on the ribs the other day and now she was kicked and punched on the same spots. It did hurt, but she wholly welcomed the pain.

She walked over the mirror and raised the bottom half of her shirt to look at herself. She hasn't been able to assess her wounds well since the last incident. She took a bath Tuesday morning and felt pain on her abdomen and suspected she could have bruises so she quickly dressed before anyone could see the purple marks on her body.

Now she had the time to look. She didn't even hear the knock on the door until it opened, and Mason's face came into view on the mirror.

"Oh sorry." He pulled the door back.

Lesedi pulled down her top and turned around to face him, "It's okay."

"Can I come in now?" he asked, he didn't want to spook her like last time. He was treading carefully.

Lesedi called him back inside and sat on the ottoman in the room, wincing as she did. Mason was holding a first aid kit in his hands, "Posh said you might need to be checked..."

Lesedi looked at him, looked into his eyes not knowing what to say. Posh was a woman, couldn't she come herself?

"She couldn't come by herself?" she asked after a beat.

"Uhh she's not good with these types of things. We usually do it, well I usually check the team."

Lesedi just stared at him, "Okay..." she realized at some point she'd have to trust this man if she didn't want her whole body turning blue.

Mason asked her to sit on the bed and so she did. "Do you mind if I look at your torso?"

With a deep sigh, she took off her top and remained in a black bra and her leather pants. "Fuck. Is that new?" Mason commented on the dark patch on

her side of her abdomen. He carefully touched it and she flinched. She was very much aware of him, reminding herself that this was Mason, and he wasn't going to hurt her.

He checked her out, avoiding eye contact as much as possible because the woman's boobs were begging him to touch, and he had to restrain himself. *She had a fucking nice rack.*

He wondered if the nipples were darker than she was... her skin was flawless minus the bruises on her abdomen. She glowed.

"Thank you for coming with me today." He made light conversation so she didn't concentrate on him touching her as he applied ointment over the bruises as gentle as he could. "Did you enjoy it?"

A grin made its way on her face, "I did." Then the smile was gone, and a scowl took its place. "Does that make me a bad person?"

"No love, it doesn't."

"Are you just saying that because it's what you do and you're justifying it?" she asked, looking up into his eyes. Man, she shouldn't have done that. She should have concentrated on looking at his arms or chest as he worked. But that didn't help either... she kept thinking of how ripped he was, all those muscles...

Mason chuckled as he moved from one bruise to the next, "Maybe. But I do it for a good cause so that's why I never feel bad half the time."

"Half the time?"

"Well, I do feel bad when lives are lost... but sometimes they really are bad people who shouldn't make part of the society. But it's still death you

know?" Mason's tone was different. He was opening up to her, she could tell when someone was opening up about something. She was the same too.

"I totally understand that." Lesedi looked to the side, catching their reflection in the mirror, they looked... she couldn't say it. Her thoughts were worrying her now. "So, what happened to that man? I couldn't ask your team mates when I drove them back here."

"He is arrested and will be deported tomorrow. That's what I stayed behind to make sure of. Sometimes we leave matters in the hands of wrong officials who let go of the culprits who then come back to do worse shit. So, I had to make sure that this fucking child molester gets what he deserves. Boss is happy."

Lesedi nodded and her eyes drifted back to the man's hands, he was working on her last bruise. The ointment was oily, she could make out the spots he put it on. Six spots... no wonder she couldn't sleep last night unless she slept on her back.

"You're really good at this aren't you?" her voice was breathy. Her chest was heaving. She was having crazy, wild thoughts... about those damn hands.

Mason was about to talk about being good at his job but the tone of the woman's voice, her looking at his fingers... now he wasn't *stupid*, but this girl was clearly talking about something different.

The air in the room heated up, he was okay with keeping his distance but fuck it, she was one gorgeous woman with a stupid chin dimple that he was fascinated with.

"Yeah..." his voice, his voice was hoarse over a sudden.

Lesedi looked up and met his eyes. She lowly gasped at the intensity behind those green orbs. What the hell was happening?

She disliked men, she hated men. She loathed it when men touched her... but why the hell did she like being touched by this man?

She cleared her throat and stood up; Mason only stepped back a little to allow her space to stand up. They were still in close proximity, their bodies were almost touching, creating little sparks of heat between them.

Mason's hand went to touch her side of the face and she didn't flinch, her eyes were trained on his...

He didn't know what the fuck to think...

His mind raced to the first day he saw her exit the car she was driving after he had chased her down back in December thinking it was Punch. Her driving skills had impressed him but when she stepped out in her black skinny jeans, all tall and lean with a mean streak on her face, anger flashing behind her brown eyes, he wanted her.

But she was too crazy for him, she was a hard nut to crack, too hard to please, a wild card and fucking wounded that he did not want to hurt her any further. Her smart mouth and dangerous eyes kept him at bay, but it was those very same qualities that interested him.

A magnetic pull squeezed itself between their faces, causing them to lean towards each other...

It was sudden, it was out of the blue... but it was happening... They were going to kiss. The air was thick with something they couldn't decipher. Danger did this to them. Adrenaline did this to them. Living on the edge... Helping

each other out, fighting the bad guys... Because what other explanations was there?

Lesedi could swear she saw her heart beat through her chest.

Mason smelled good, his warm breath tickled her face. She was looking into his eyes, they were slowly dropping in anticipation...

"Mason..." a female voice resounded outside the door, followed by a rapid knock. "We need to talk."

They pulled apart, losing the magnetic energy, Mason dropped his hand that was ready to cup the back of Lesedi's head and bring her lips closer.

He looked at her, but she was working to put her shirt back on not even casting one look in his direction. Clearly the moment was gone now... As it came.

He sighed and walked outside...leaving her alone.

She looked at herself in the mirror, "Now what the hell was that Lesedi?" she whispered to herself, feeling hot all over.

What was that!!

**

The flight back to Joburg was uneventful and Lesedi couldn't get her head together. She saw a side of Mason that made her feel hot back in Cape Town. Now she couldn't help but to look at him with a different eye. Well that was annoying.

Right after he left her in the bedroom after they had almost kissed... well they were leaning towards kissing each other and as much as she was glad it did not happen, she still felt tingles thinking about it. Thinking about how close

their bodies were and how she could make out his cherry breath. The man apparently preferred the cherry gums and sweets as opposed to mints.

She had dressed up and followed him in the open lounge where three of his teammates were waiting for him.

And that's when she saw a side of him that made her feel all hot and fucking bothered.

One of the guys whose name she picked up was Sean was going crazy at Mason...

"So, you just brought a random girl to our safe house and didn't bother to inform us? You even let her drive us Mace, what the fuck was all that about?" Sean had demanded answers from Mason, he was clearly ticked off.

Mason stepped forward towards the man, they both had the same physical structure, but Mason was maybe an inch taller, "Her name is Lesedi, call her Les if you like but not '*some random girl*', don't you fucking dare call her random. If she's with me, you going to respect okay Sean?"

"You are not the boss Mason; you can't just come here and take over. I ran this OP! Blake put me in charge." Sean was not backing down, "we didn't need you or this girl who by the way almost got us killed."

Lesedi was astonished at the tone of the man, and the lies he was spewing about her. She handled herself just fine when she drove them back and when she fought the two weak guys that tried her.

Mason chuckled but nothing about the situation was amusing, "You didn't need me here? Pray tell how you were going to get into that house without my help Sean, fucking tell me how you thought you were going to hack into the systems and make sure you were granted entrance into that fortress..."

Sean kept quiet as well as Posh and Omari who were drinking shots of tequila, watching Sean bunch up his panties in a knot.

"I didn't think so." Mason snapped then stepped back.

"You didn't have to steal all the glory, I am the reason we found Jackson, I am the reason we ended up here. I should have been there for his arrest."

"Yeah and do what?" Mason asked, "and fucking do what Sean? This is a fucking team work and Blake knows fucking well that you led this OP and did a fucking good job. So, what is this?"

Sean sat down and chucked the shot he had poured before Posh went to call Mason from his bedroom. "You just get all the credit sometimes; Blake always wants you running Ops."

"Look Sean, you're the best soldier on the team and every time you lead an operation almost all the time we are successful, but I am the tech guy here... I am an all-rounder, I enter locked spaces with just my laptop... of course in Blake's eyes that is genius, and he respects that, but you need to know something, Blake Hayes is not my boss, he's my partner. So don't ever think you can talk to me the way you want and insult my guests. The operation is done, you got Jackson... and I am staying here while you fucking go and gloat in NYC."

Mason turned around and found Lesedi leaning against the kitchen counter, watching the interaction, he just told her to go sleep and that he will wake her up when they have to fly back home.

How he handled Sean, how he exudes his power, how he walked, how he stood with square broad shoulders... she was taken by that. Her body and her mind were betraying her.

And now, dressed in comfortable tracksuits and taking off the charter that Mason had them fly in as the Jet flew off the NYC team, they headed to Mason's car which Ginger organized for them.

"Mason..." Lesedi decided to voice out what's been on her mind since last night.

He hoped she was not going to talk to him about the almost kiss cause heaven knows that he didn't have any excuse for what he tried to do.

"Yeah..." in his line of work, he knew to never jump to conclusions and always wait for the next person to say their piece before you give yourself and your thoughts away.

"Why did you take me to Cape Town with you? Those guys seemed to only need your help, not mine."

Mason was driving them to Lesedi's house now, trying so hard to not think about what had almost happened. He relaxed when she voiced her question.

"I told you... I am figuring you out, seeing what makes you tick, and I thought you'd somehow like what I do and find joy in it. Also, I needed to give you a taste of how my operations work so you can prepare for when we start to attack Singo."

It made sense, it made total sense. The only violence she was exposed to, was the petty thieves in the streets of Johannesburg. What Mason brought into their lives was stuff the movies were made of, she was glad he took an

initiative of involving her somehow in his other side ops so she could get used to it.

"I don't think I wanna fight anytime soon though, my body aches." She rambled.

Mason smirked; his eyes still focused on the road as he changed lanes. "I am sorry about that, I'll just get you a couple of ointments we use to make you feel better, by weekend you will be okay."

As he said that, his phone rang, and he had it connected to the Bluetooth in the car. "G my man."

"The Lord, Punch was moved, all paperwork checked out... and guess who went looking for him yesterday?" Ginger sounded so happy.

"Singo?"

"Yes. So, the heat is probably back on the Tiger Six..."

"Let's hope Punch won't speak when he gets to Eastern Cape, can't relax as yet."

"Don't worry about that, I took care of him. He won't be saying a damn word for a while." Then he hung up.

Lesedi was intrigued and had many questions to ask. "Okay now that's good fucking news, that guy was a thorn but what did Ginger do?"

"I don't know, but if he says he sorted it out then I am good. Sometimes I never want to know what methods he uses to get information or silence some people. Even though I get involved in crazy madness, most of the time I prefer not knowing how people get shit done because the do-gooder in me might object..."

"Do-gooder..." Lesedi giggled. "You are a do-gooder indeed."

Silence fell upon them as Mason drove them to Soweto. Lesedi asked to be dropped off by the mall because she needed to buy some clothes and shoes for the funeral and a new phone. Hers was old and she had money now.

"I will probably see you on the day of the funeral, we will go and check out that place you wanted on Monday." He was so happy they didn't discuss the almost kiss. He didn't want her pressing a blade to his throat again.

* *

Lesedi didn't want to use Tracy's money for getting an apartment, Mason told her he will make a plan with their father's money which he kept safe for them.

After shopping for all that she needed, clothes, shoes, bags, sunglasses, a new cell phone...Lesedi ubered herself home.

"Yah neh," Tapiwa was the first to talk when Lesedi walked through the door carrying clothing shopping bags. "We came here to support you and your sister but the two of you are always up and down the whole town and not being home to welcome guests and help us make tea."

"No one asked you to come Tapiwa, you could have stayed at your place and the world would still carry on." Lesedi coolly responded as she walked past to her mother's room.

There she found her mother knitting on the mattress and her grandmother sitting next to her. "Bagolo." (Elders) she dumped her plastic bags in a corner dragged a chair to sit in front of the two women to greet properly.

"Where did you sleep Lesedi?" her grandmother asked. It took a lot out of her not to roll her eyes at that question.

"Cape Town." She responded after a beat. She enjoyed riling her father's family up.

"Cape Town? Lesedi?" that was Tracy walking in the bedroom, catching Lesedi's response just in time. She was bringing the elders their lunch. The catering company was a great idea and it saved them a lot of time and stress.

They were serving pap, mogodu and cabbage and chicken stew for those who didn't eat mogodu.

"Come help me dish up, you will see mom in a bit." Tracy smiled coolly when she was done passing the food.

Tracy didn't need help with dishing up, the visitors(mourners) were queuing up in the tent in the backyard, helping themselves to the yummy smelling food.

"You went to Cape Town with Mason?" Tracy was very curious, "You have been so sneaky lately... but I need to know what is going on. The other day you almost attacked Mateo, a ward councillor and one of the richest men here... and then you disappear with Mason, and then suddenly there is a video of you online, apologizing to Mateo and it looks so weird, so blurry, so... calculated. What is going on?"

Lesedi couldn't get out of this one easily. A video of her did go around, well two videos now, she assumed since she wasn't even keeping tabs on either one of them. "I don't want to stress you and I don't want to make my problems yours."

"Don't you get it? You spent so many years hating me because I left you to take care of mom all by yourself. You deserve a break, it's my turn to worry,

it's my turn to carry the burden... I wanna be there for you. I saw you cry... I saw you the day that man was here... please, let me in."

Lesedi chewed on her bottom lip, they were outside the yard in Tracy's car, away from prying eyes and eavesdropping ears.

"Mohau... it's nothing I can't handle, okay?" she hated getting emotionally, she reckoned it made her weak. She was weak that day Mateo assaulted her... she was too emotional, and it got her nowhere. So, she hardened over the years and yet looking into her baby sister's calm brown eyes...

"He's the man okay?" Lesedi turned in her seat and faced forward. She was playing with her hands.

"The man? What man?"

"Remember the day papa beat mom, and you found me home... and I said -"

"That you came from a party, and you were... he's the guy? Mateo? He's the one that did that to you?" to say Tracy was shocked would be an understatement. "That man, that scumbag!" her voice picked up an angry note.

Lesedi kept quiet, she didn't want to have a heart-to-heart about this. She only ever told three people, Tracy, Tapiwa and the police. Tapiwa and the police were of no help and Tracy... well her father sent her away to school causing Lesedi to shove her feelings into a corner and take care of her sick mother.

"I am so sorry that you had to relive this again sesi... I am so sorry."

Lesedi shrugged. It felt good to not lie to Tracy, but she wasn't looking for sympathy or pity, she was beyond those days. Now she wanted to cripple some toes and fingers. Now she wanted to get even...

"Are you okay? Is that why you have been hanging with Mason? Because of this?"

Scratching her right ear Lesedi didn't know how to answer this, "Yeah..." she figured honesty was the way to go.

"Is he planning to steal from him too?" she asked and Lesedi laughed.

"Is he like some professional thief or what?"

Tracy cracked a smile too, "I think so. Kyle doesn't go into details about Mason. He is so cagey about what his brother does."

"Well, we are still thinking of what to do about him.. seeing him that day Mohau... yoh!" Lesedi relaxed. The fact that Tracy was hoping Mason was going to help her get Mateo made her feel at ease to talk to her. "I lost it, I have been looking for him for a very long time and he just appeared. What's funny is that... I didn't know what I was going to do to him if I ever find him."

"So, you didn't know all this time that he was the ward councillor?"

"I honestly stopped caring about politicians the day papa backed this fucker up... I went to him asking for help and as soon as he found out that the man was into politics and running a campaign, he pumped money into him.

"That's when I lost it. I couldn't believe him, so I went off on social media because I opened a case and nothing was done, the docket went missing. So, I started trashing him on social media, then gone, for years he was gone. I gave up the search... I stopped caring, I concentrated on hating men, hating

you, fighting... keeping busy and it became my life." By then she was running her hands over the steering wheel as she sat on the driver's side of the car.

"What kind of a man was our father Lesedi? Who does that to their own child?"

"That's why I don't feel bad that we bought him a five thousand coffin." The girls giggled at that cute little fact. They were so amped to see the family's reactions when that cheap ass coffin arrives on Friday. They just couldn't wait.

"So, when Mason did a search on the man that visited us because I had to find out who this Mateo guy was, who was threatening to make us work for him... he mentioned how the Mateo owned the biggest hotel in Soweto and is a ward councillor, when papa was injecting money into Singo which was the name Mateo used before, I heard that part of the plan was to acquire that hotel. So, I wanted to see who the owner was... I couldn't believe my eyes..."

"To think he has been all over the news, his face was just there but because you weren't looking for him, you missed him because he had changed his name."

"I changed baby sis; I didn't check social media. I started receiving threats on my blog, my site crashed, so I decided to stay off social media, for my sanity and safety. Hence I couldn't see this Mateo guy... it makes me angry that he has been here... all this time. Getting fat, while I was..." *dying inside*. She wanted to say but that part was only for her to know.

"He deserves whatever it is Mason is planning for him. If you need my help, let me know. I support you hundred and ten percent."

Lesedi turned and looked at her baby sister, this was them, they were always thick as thieves. Cared and loved each other on a whole next level.

She truly missed this.

"Thank you, I will keep that in mind."

"And.. speaking of Mason, so how do you feel working with him after sleeping with him? How does this work? *Wam, bam thank you ma'am let's forget it happened?*"

Lesedi let out a loud laugh, head turned to the roof of the car, "Goodness what a way to put this. Mohau I am forty... I can handle myself." that was a lie. She hadn't slept with a man in years.

After the whole ordeal of being raped, she's only ever been with two guys and she was using them to get over the pain, to forget her family issues and to try and claim her body back.

Well, that didn't work...

So, she resorted to toys... those were not fulfilling so she just dumped them in a bin one morning and has been celibate ever since with no sexual relief of any kind.

She wasn't going to correct Mohau even though they were having a heart-to-heart moment, she was not going to confess to killing her father because if she tells her she lied about sleeping with Mason, then she might as well explain why. That was one secret, she was going to the grave with.

"I am glad you told me the truth. And you better get that motherfucker. Get him good."

Lesedi smiled, "I hope we do. I think that's only when I will have peace."

"Good, anyway let's go to the salon and prepare for the weekend. From tomorrow we won't have time to get dolled up. We need to do our nails and

hair... you are into those kinds of things right?" Tracy knew her sister to love such treatments, getting hair and nails done. Lesedi was the one who introduced her to those things anyway.

"Of course, I may love my boots and converse shoes now, but my nails and hair have to be done. I work at a salon girl... what do you even mean!"

They giggled as Lesedi buckled up and drove them out of the yard, with Tracy sending Sofia a message that they were coming back.

"We sure are acting like spoilt rebels." Tracy commented as they pulled out of the yard.

"I love it." Her sister finished. "Also, what are you going to do to your head? You cut your hair."

"Oh, I forgot." Tracy touched her head while Lesedi burst out laughing.

CHAPTER FIVE

The week flew by, and the two sisters were trying by all means to behave and treat their family relatives well and with respect.

Lesedi was a ticking time bomb while Tracy appointed herself the peacemaker between the volcano threatening to erupt and their cousins, uncles and aunts.

Daisy was not from a huge family so most relatives were from the Phiri side and that maddened Lesedi to a whole new other level.

Tapiwa and them complained about the way Lesedi was carrying herself as the oldest child in the family. She and Tracy were vilified for hiring catering services instead of cooking of which Lesedi told them to go hang themselves.

Friday arrived, the girls once again refused to go and take clothes for their father's burned body that was at the morgue. They told Lucas and the other uncles they were welcomed to do that on their own.

"But he was your father Lesedi, you and your little sister need to do this for him." Their aunt, the last born who came after Lucas sat on the kitchen chair, hands clasped together, sadness filling her eyes. She was also one of the other people who were financially benefiting from their father's wealth, and she has been crying ever since she arrived on Thursday.

"Rakgadi... please, I told you, I will not do such thing. Mohau won't do it either. I don't know... it's like y'all are asking for a fight here... and in case you couldn't tell, I have time, I have the energy. We can do this all day long... or

you can go and dress your brother and bring him home." Lesedi was sitting across her aunt in the kitchen.

Some locals were outside in the yard, helping to erect the tent outside the yard, where the service will be held while the women helped themselves to the tea and scones outside.

Regina sighed, when Lucas told her how difficult Lesedi and Tracy were, she didn't know just how bad it was. But she knew deep down the girls were justified for their behaviour.

She saw their mom, Daisy. She didn't look like the petite young woman Morris brought home, telling them he wanted to marry her. Her sweet laugh, her sparkling eyes, her sweet and calm voice... she had drastically changed and looked way older than her. And Regina was much younger.

"So, you girls will just stay here while we go fetch him..." Regina confirmed and Lesedi nodded.

"Come on cuz, we will go with you. You, me, Tracy and Tapiwa. We are here for you."

Lesedi chuckled and kissed her teeth, "It's funny... you are all available when we don't need you. We don't need you now, no one in this house is sad over that man's death but when we did need you, you chose a side." They gasped in shock. It was the first time Lesedi has ever admitted to all of them at once that she wasn't sad their father was dead.

"You chose a side, and we chose ours too. He's your brother, your uncle... you go and bring him here so we can bury him. So, all of us can get on with our lives."

It was at that point that Lesedi wished she still smoked or at least drank alcohol. She needed a fix; she needed an escape. She needed to get away from these people.

"Mara o buwa jang Lesedi? Ka Papago? Yes, he made mistakes, yes he did something cruel but he's dead now. And we don't speak ill of the dead, no matter what they did." (But how are you talking Lesedi, about your father even.) Yvonne argued back. Tapiwa wasn't in the kitchen and Lesedi knew if Tapiwa was there... she'd also have something to say, probably insult her too.

"Maybe *you* don't speak ill of the dead Yvonne, but I do. And don't you dare call what he did *mistakes*. And I am done talking about this. Done!" she pushed her chair back and walked outside.

She was irritated with the fact that she couldn't go to her room because it was now occupied by her cousins, their children and whatever else nonsense was in there. She had to move her stuff into the boot of Lesedi's car so nothing could be stolen.

They literally lived out of that boot. Sleeping arrangements were also insane, some of the aunts were now sleeping in their mother's room so they slept in that very same car too.

As the day proceeded, the vegetables they had bought as requested by the catering company were delivered. They were going to cook in the garage instead of cooking at their place and transporting food.

Did you manage to get the six-plate gas stove the caters asked for?

Are they bringing in their pots?

Do we have enough electricity?

Was the light bulb in the kitchen fixed?

Those questions were flying between Tapiwa, Lesedi and Tracy as they were preparing for the burial and needed to make sure they were on track.

They were going up and down, driving in and out trying to make sure the event will go smoothly.

Around four in the afternoon, Yvonne called Tracy alerting them they were on their way back home with their father.

People were gathered around sitting on the black chairs, singing hymns. One of their neighbours asked a pastor to come and help the family bury their father, as Daisy used to attend their church until she '*got sick*' as they liked to say. He too was present and Tapiwa was on his every beck-and-call. Getting him tea and scones, getting him water, getting him pocket tissues and more water.

"Lesedi, go and wear a skirt, you can't welcome your father in tracksuits." Koko Phiri told Lesedi as she went to get the electricity card in her mother's room.

She didn't even respond her grandmother; she took what she needed and went to give it to their neighbour to go and buy them electricity.

The only thing Lesedi wore was a doek on her head and that was only to keep her new hairdo protected. She had on a long black weave that was sewn in. The salon Tracy ran had an amazing team and they worked magic on her head. The quality of the weave was amazing, and she had to protect it.

They gathered at the gate as the hearse drove in, followed by Lucas's car that was driven by Yvonne.

Lucas was a part of the men that were slaughtering the cow behind the tent that was erected in the yard. Soon as his brother arrived facing up in a brown ugly box, he came to welcome him.

The shock on his face as he watched the coffin being carried out of the back of the hearse.

Lesedi and Tracy were standing next to each other... enjoying his facial expressions. His mouth was opening and closing like a fish. Anger flashed in his eyes. He searched the crowd for the two girls and Tracy looked away while Lesedi corked her head to the side, maintaining eye contact.

The man couldn't say anything in front of people, so he kept quiet and helped the men carry his brother to his bedroom he once shared with his wife.

"I am so going to dodge him now." Tracy giggled as she whispered to her sister.

"Me too."

And they did, they indeed dodged Lucas like the plague. Yvonne also expressed herself how disappointed she was with the coffin while helping 'abo mama' to peel veggies for the caterers.

"Aowa Yvonne, if you were that disappointed you could have popped out your own money and asked them to change the coffin. I am sure they would have made a plan." That was Lesedi's response before she disappeared for the night.

They couldn't take one more night of sleeping in the car, so they booked themselves into the biggest hotel in Pimville.

Asante Paradise.

Lesedi's suggestion.

When everyone was occupied with whatever they were occupied with, the girls said their byes to Sofia and drove off.

"I don't know why you would want us to come to this hotel." Tracy commented as they were ushered to their room after checking in. They booked a single room with double twin-beds.

Lesedi after walking around the room, checking what it offered, sitting on the beds, bouncing on them a little to have a feel of them, checking the balcony to be presented by a crazy night view of the suburb... the complimentary drinks, the dark wood, the amazing dark bathroom...the TV mounted on the wall, the couch sectioning a little lounge area... the hotel was perfect, she was blown away.

And she wanted it.

"I just wanted to see how it looked like."

"They have amazing service hey... it's like a hotel in Sandton. It's soo... it's gorgeous." Tracy was full of compliments and Lesedi for the first time didn't tense or grow angry at the thought of the owner of the hotel. She just couldn't wait to take it all.

It was huge. It was the biggest in the whole township and probably matching one of Sandton's hotels.

They ordered room service, apparently the kitchen closed off midnight and the girls were very fortunate.

"Do you mind if I smoke weed?" Tracy asked while they were waiting for their food.

"Nope, I am going to take a bubble bath. I smell like a damn funeral." Lesedi responded, taking her toiletry bag to the bathroom while Tracy laughed her way to the balcony to smoke her joint.

* *

The following morning the Phiri sisters got ready for their father's funeral. The caterers were called and were on schedule, the funeral home was also done and ready for them at their home, the service was about to start, and the pastor was ready...

All they had to do was get dolled up and go bury their father.

"You know... I am glad they killed him. I don't condone violence and all, but this... this was a huge blessing." Tracy commented as they walked to the reserved parking lot of the hotel.

Lesedi smiled, she'd take that gratuity *thank you very much*.

Lesedi was dressed in a black body-hugging dress with a short back slit, Tracy gifted her with YSL black heels with gold YSL heel signature. The hot January weather was having mercy that morning, it was pretty cool. Not too hot and not cold either, just perfect.

They did their makeup and Tracy remained with her short blonde hair, she just trimmed it and levelled it at the salon.

"Kyle said they were on their way; he's coming with Mason." Tracy smiled at Lesedi before walking to the house to check on their mother.

Her heart skipped a beat at the mention of Mason. The last time she saw him was when he dropped her off at the mall after their fun trip to Cape Town where they had almost tried to kiss.

I was not going to let it happen. She thought to herself.

"And I need to stop thinking about it because I do not want to complicate my life by trying to kiss someone I am not attracted to." She talked to herself as she looked at her reflection on the car windows.

The service started and she just remained outside, sitting in the backseat of Tracy's car with the door open. She was waiting to go to the graveyard and be done with all of it. Had no interest in listening to people lie of how a good father or a good man Morris Phiri was.

It has been a very stressful week; she wanted her father's family gone as in yesterday. She was tired of Tapiwa, Yvonne, rangwane Lucas and rakgadi Regina. Exhausted of having to deal with those people.

Last night they were blowing up their phones, they ended up switching them off because Tapiwa couldn't believe they left during the vigil.

"How did I know you wouldn't be a part of the service?" she was startled by a deep voice coming from the side of the open door. She's heard the voice a couple of times to know who it belonged to.

Mason Pierce.

"Go away." She needed to put up her walls against this man or she'd find herself behaving recklessly and ruining things.

"No, Kyle is busy kissing his girlfriend in the car and I don't know anyone else here but you."

Lesedi sighed and opened her eyes, and her breath hitched. Mason Pierce looked good in jeans and tight t-shirts, he looked good in cargo pants and almost fitted t-shirts but Mason Pierce in a damn suit?? He looked *scrumptious*. He looked like a delicious Sunday meal.

"You look like a priest." She commented. Lying through her teeth but this was the only way she could rein herself in.

Mason's jaw slagged then he grinned, "You wanna know what's funny, I told Kyle the same thing. I hate suits."

No kidding. Lesedi thought to herself. *Why hate something that made you look so... incredible?*

"If you go inside that tent, you'll find a pastor dressed just like you." She carried on with the jabs, but Mason found humour in them and laughed them off.

He really didn't understand why this woman was the way she was. One minute she's breathing fire and the next she's insulting you. Or just looking at you...with her hazel eyes and her stupid chin dimple... making you want to kiss her. Damn those thoughts.

"Let's go inside, this is the last time you ever have to do anything for your father." Mason suggested. He couldn't believe those words were coming out of his mouth. He really didn't want to come to the funeral, and he'd have been perfect staying in the car with her, but he needed her to get closure.

He helped her step out of the car and wished he had left her alone. The dress she was wearing was a killer. It was too tight, the slit at the back caused his imagination to run wild... she had the most perfect ass...

This girl cleaned up very well. It was like looking at someone different. The make up on her face, her red lips, the heels, the dress, her long hair... she was a stunner.

"You look amazing." He complimented her.

She almost stopped walking, but she told herself not to. "Thank you." She mumbled walking away after locking the car.

Mason followed her all the way to the front where her family members were sitting, one side it was the Phiris, and the other side was the Motlhalas and from the back sitting on black chairs covered with white clothes were the locals that came to support them. The tent was full of people. Clearly the man was well known.

People looked at them as they walked to the front to sit on the Motlhala side of the family as there were a lot of unoccupied chairs also because Lesedi didn't want to sit next to Tapiwa and the rest.

She and Tracy refused to be included on the programme, Yvonne asked if she should say something on their behalf and they agreed. Regina was going to speak for Daisy and Lesedi warned her not to tell too many lies because she'll object like they were in court.

"You know they are looking at us because you're white, right?" Lesedi spoke lowly so that only Mason could hear her.

Mason did notice the stares, but he was indifferent, didn't care. "I know, the sooner we bury the big guy the better."

Tracy and Kyle didn't join them in for the service, when they were walking out of the tent to go to the grave yard, Lesedi noticed Tracy was still in Kyle's car with him.

She noticed Sofia and her mother were not in the tent as well, so she gave Mason the keys to Tracy's car and told him to wait for her.

She found her mother dressed in a new black dress, a hat atop her head and she was sitting on the bed, shoeless with Sofia sitting on the chair in the room.

"Mama, Sofia... what's going on?"

"Sis'Daisy doesn't want to go to the graveyard... and I think it's okay. Seeing that coffin in here broke her man." Sofia was heartbroken. Daisy's progress was undone in a matter of a week. She was back to keeping quiet and locking herself in the shell she has built in her mind.

Lesedi grabbed her mother's hands and Daisy looked into her eyes and as if seeing Lesedi for the first time her eyes sparkled with realization. "Hello my love." Lesedi murmured with a small, worried smile, how could she not worry?

When it came to her mother, all walls were invisible. When it came to her mother, she wore her heart on her sleeve. She'd kill for this woman. She did kill... for this woman.

"How are you feeling?" she asked but Daisy just shrugged.

"Okay at least you got a response. I got nothing." Sofia sounded upset.

"It's okay... let me take you somewhere you can relax." Lesedi helped Sofia to get their mother ready. Instead of wearing full black dress, she wore a white dress with black stripes. Wore her house shoes and they walked to Tracy's car.

Most people were already driving to the graveyard, Tracy and Kyle seemed to have gone too, Mason remained behind...waiting for Lesedi.

"Uhh detour, let's take mom to the hotel Mohau and I slept at. She's not doing to good I don't know why in the hell I thought it would be a good idea for her to be crowded by that god-awful family." Lesedi sounded pissed.

Mason helped get her mother in the back of the car, Sofia jumped in next to her while Lesedi drove shotgun.

She put in the directions in the GPS and once they reached the hotel Mason corked an eyebrow at her, but she only smirked.

She booked the royal suite for Sofia and her mother then left Sofia with a ward of cash to order room service and just relax.

Once they stepped out of the lift, walking to the exit, "Checking out your palace my queen?" Mason asked her.

Lesedi only smirked and waved at the doorman who was at the reception desk, watching her. Once they reached the car, she turned to Mason...

"Of course." she smirked... "By the way, if it's no problem at all, I need you to create some sort of trail to show that the restaurant and the salon have been sold by the bank or something. I know my family, they are going to ask about the businesses and I don't want them stressing Tracy."

"Roger that!"

Mason was impressed with Lesedi. The woman was wicked and clearly going to come at Mateo hard...

The fact that she booked her family into his hotel... He had to take off his hat for her.

She was a firecracker and he might just enjoy this operation with her.

**

The service at the graveyard was shorter than at home and soon everyone was going back to the Phiri home to eat what has been prepared for them.

It was tradition that after burying someone, the mourners would then go to the deceased's home to have lunch before going back to their respective homes.

Lesedi noticed Lucas at the gravesite talking to Mateo Molao and her body was instantly filled with rage. The need to push that man into the same grave her father was deposited in overwhelmed her.

Tracy was next to her, and she held her hands while Mason and Kyle sat on either side of them.

The two white men were sure attracting attention but with ray burns on their eyes, they seemed oblivious to the stares, but Lesedi knew that Mason saw all of these people looking at them. They just couldn't do anything about it.

They sat under the family tent on chairs, being given pocket tissues, refreshments and there was enough to pass around to those who couldn't fit into the small stretch tent meant for family.

"Don't let him get to you." Tracy whispered in her ear, and she nodded, willing herself to calm down.

She closed her eyes, they two wore their sunglasses. She couldn't wait for all of this to be over so she and Mason could put their plan into motion. She was more than ready to put the plan in motion.

Once their father's coffin was lowered and the grave filled to a mound with soil, the mourners started to evacuate the graveyard as soon as the MC hired for the occasion mentioned that they were done and asked them to

please pass by the home to get something to eat as means of gratitude for the support.

"The way y'all bury people will never cease to amaze me. It's so much money spent and so many people coming to the funeral. Are they all family?" Kyle asked when the girls didn't make means to get up from their seats.

"No babe, they are not family. It's just an African thing, *ubuntu* you know? They come to help us during the funeral... they are here to show support." Tracy responded her boyfriend.

"Some are just here to see how the man will be buried while others are here for the food." Lesedi added causing Mason and Kyle to chuckle. Trust Lesedi to not call a spade a fucking garden tool.

"Mhm, like your cousins huh?" Mason asked.

"Like my damn cousins. I can't wait until they are gone. Can you believe the nerve Yvonne has? She asked me how much the policies paid out since Tracy and I were in and out of the house going shopping and even getting caterers..." Lesedi sounded very annoyed but a week with her, you'd know she was forever annoyed.

"So, your father didn't take out any policies? No life insurance? Nothing?" Kyle asked, and Tracy shook her head.

"Nothing, what he did was to leave a stupid instruction with his lawyer that should he die, I should bury him with dignity." Tracy giggled thinking of the coffin they picked for him. "He's probably in hell right now, pissed to the highest level at the cheap coffin we bought."

"I wish I could see him." Lesedi cracked a smile.

As they sat, watching the man's grave, one of the funeral home workers came to ask them to leave so they could start packing up what belonged to them. The chairs, the tent and the carpet on the ground.

"We did it baby sis. We planned and executed a whole funeral." Lesedi linked arms with Tracy as they started to walk out. The graveyard was almost empty save for them and the funeral home workers.

Kyle and Mason trailed behind them, walking silently.

Kyle couldn't keep his eyes off Tracy's big butt in the body-hugging dress she wore, and Mason was enchanted by Lesedi's legs and how she walked.

She was a Jack of all trades.

Rocked combat boots like she slept and woke in them... and yet in that same breath she could rock a killer pair of heels and walked like she was on a runway... it was incredible. She was incredible.

Mason couldn't wait to put their plan in motion. He loved seeing people happy, he loved to see victims being vindicated in the most insane and rewarding way, he couldn't wait to do that for Tracy's sister.

He had seen Mateo at the gravesite, how he carried himself, how people treated him like some demi-god. He was a man that loved power, you could see it all over him. And it made him sick that he had raped someone. Made him wonder just how many women he has abused in the past and the present.

"Do you guys want to eat?" Tracy asked Mason and Kyle as soon as they arrived at their cars. Tracy once again was going to drive with Kyle was Lesedi was stuck with Mason.

"Uhh yeah... I think we can eat, right Mace?" Kyle didn't want to disappoint his girl by refusing to eat at a funeral, but he wasn't keen.

"Cool, I know just the right spot for us to get some awesome kasi food and less stares, tail us Mason." Tracy jumped into her boyfriend's car who was confused. He assumed they were going back home to eat.

"I thought we were going to eat at your house?" Mason asked Lesedi as he started Tracy's car.

"Yeah no. We haven't been eating at home the whole week. Can't trust those people not to bewitch us." Lesedi coolly responded while buckling up.

Mason looked at her like she was a strange thing. "What do you mean *bewitch* you? Y'all have witches in your home?" Lesedi couldn't help but to laugh out loud. Now here was another example why she wouldn't date a white person. She didn't want to explain such things...at least with a black African man, it would be so easy to understand each other. But either way, she wasn't looking.

"It's nothing Mason." She giggled some more.

They went to an upper echelon Shisanyama to eat then Mason and Kyle left and the girls went back home.

They were happy to see that people have eaten to satisfaction and some were even taking takeaways probably for their children. The caterers did a marvellous job, Tracy couldn't stop thanking them.

Tapiwa and them were overly defeated, Lucas had no words for the girls. They had taken off their heels and wearing flat shoes, making sure their mother's house was still standing.

"Bo rakgadi ba re they will leave on Monday." Tracy informed her. (The aunts said they are going to leave...)

"I am going back to the hotel. I want to take a nice hot bath and a nap." Lesedi was over being there. The worst was over, so she didn't have to play pretend with her relatives anymore not that she did much of it anyway.

"Let me go get some drinks before bo rakgadi pack all of them up. It's my money." Tracy went to the garage where the caterers had stocked up the cans of soda and grabbed two packs and put them in her car.

They drove back to the hotel, checked in on Sofia and their mother to find them watching 'Mponeng' on TV, having ice cream and fruit salad, a hunter's dry dumpy on the table for Sofia. Tracy remained there while Lesedi went to their suite.

Entering the lift, a scent hit her so hard, her eyes snapped to meet the person who was already riding in the lift.

Mateo Molao.

She didn't know how to act. She didn't know what to say. The last time she saw him, she had tried to hit him with a brick she had picked off the ground.

"Going down?" he asked as he held the lift for her.

"Yeah..." she found her voice. She stepped inside the lift, clutching tightly to her phone and their suite key card.

"You look oddly familiar. Have we met before?" he asked, looking at her.

Lesedi looked at him, she remembered those dark eyes, they had been closed the whole time he was moving inside of her. He only opened them after

he had ejaculated inside of her... that thought almost had her pulling the knife from her thigh and slitting his throat open.

"I am Morris's daughter. The girl who tried to stone you." She answered him, gauging his reaction. He seems to be a forgetful man. She was gambling when she asked Tracy to check in this hotel. What was she thinking!

His eyes went large for a split second before a smirk appearing on his face, "Oh yeah. The little girl that tried to play with the grownups, don't ever try me again little girl, I don't play nice." He warned her and she wanted to eat him alive. Anger bubbled up in her being, she had to control herself. But he didn't seem angry enough at her. The prick vandalized her place damn it. How was he so... Calm?

"I apologize Mr Molao. I got carried away." She hated having to apologize to him. But she had to. She needed to, again.

"Water under the bridge, I understand you just lost your source of income but I must say, you two did a great job burying the man, spare for the cheap coffin you bought for him of course." He laughed. Even his laughter was irritating as hell. Did people go around checking how expensive coffins looked like? Because that damn coffin looked fine to her.

"We tried." She wanted to take out his damn eyes.

"Look, I am sorry he left y'all without his millions, not really his fault someone stole our money, but they will pay for it."

"You worked with him all the time?" She was fishing for information. Maybe he could let something slip that she could use against him in the future. But in her mind, she couldn't understand how this man really forgot about her or understand how was he being so casual after wrecking her flat in town.

"Yeah. We worked together. This is my hotel by the way."

"Really? Wow. I didn't know that. It's amazing." Lesedi wasn't lying about the beauty of the hotel. It screamed luxury.

Mateo seemed so proud of that, "Yeah, your father helped me to get a stake in here. I owe him a lot. You should have told me you needed help buying him a coffin. I would have spared at least twenty grand on it. He was my friend." Mateo carried on.

The lift was not moving fast enough for Lesedi. She was going to the second floor while Mateo seemed to be going to the basement judging by the highlighted buttons on the lift button-pad.

"We didn't know..." how was he having such a casual talk with her after what he did to her? Did he truly forget? Was it all in her head? Was she the only one who experienced that day? What the fuck was the meaning of this!? Her mind was racing!!

"I see you're going to the second floor, money is tight huh?" he asked, scratching his eyebrow. She hated this small talk but she was a woman on a mission.

The second floor suites were a little cheaper compared to the other floors. "Well, we just found out that we lost the salon and the restaurant. So yeah... Money is tight." The thought of him demanding the salon and restaurants because of the hundred million their father owed him wasn't forgotten so she made sure he knew they were no longer owners of the premises.

He raised his brows a little, he didn't know that. Damn it!! Lucas did tell him that Morris's daughter told him the accounts were frozen pending investigation. They didn't waste time.

"What happened to my clothes?" She asked.

"Your clothes?" he was confused. This girl was... Strange.

"Yes, you vandalized my flat and all my clothes are missing." She was so angry but had checked herself in. She appeared calm on the outside.

"Oh! I don't know what they did. I just needed to send a message across. You shouldn't have fought the two men I sent earlier on. You just thought I am the reason why your financial situations are about to change. Had you said that, none of this would have happened. So maybe they burned them or threw them in the bin..." he shrugged. He wasn't even going to apologize. *Sies!*

"I apologize... Again. It was indeed my fault." Now she wanted to cry. A small lump formed on her throat. She had to swallow multiple times.

"It's alright, look, ask the manager here to organize you a better suite on me, and maybe a job too. For your clothes. You don't have to spend your last cents on my *little* hotel." Mateo told her as they arrived at her floor, "the little I could do for my friend's children."

Lesedi only nodded before bolting out of the car. She walked - no - marched to their room. This man, this man was insane. He was totally insane. He truly didn't remember her from ten years ago... and after what she did to him on Monday, he was oddly nice. Too damn nice!

Offering her a job? A better suite than the one they had, on the house? What was his deal?

She was angry.

She entered their suite, and it was clean and fresh sunflowers were left in the room. The hotel staff had asked upon arrival if anyone was allergic to flowers just in case. This hotel ran so smooth, she was far too impressed.

But what made her happier was that she was going to snap it out of that bastard's hands. She had to.

She stripped off her shoes, her dress and underwear and deposited herself in the hot bubble bath.

She was only ever able to take baths at home when visiting her mother as the tub at her flat has been out of use for a while now. Baths calmed her down... for that moment.

She used to soak herself in and just imagine a life where she didn't feel so much anger in her heart, where she was at peace, where laughter was her daily medicine, not anger, not bitterness, not hatred... just laughter, happiness...

It was unfair and very sad that people around her regarded her as the bitter woman, the 'bullfighter', miss-angry-two-shoes like some of the salon workers called her. She pretended to not care but it irked her that they'd call her such names...

She wasn't making it easy for them that she knew, but it gave them no right to try to force themselves in her life and when she held up barriers, they called the bitter one.

She hated how people wanted to befriend her, to get to know her... she just wanted to work and move on with her life. She didn't need them meddling.

And now... she's been feeling some weight be lifted off. When Tracy was in her presence, when Mason took her on adventures... that, that made her feel hope play around her heart.

She used to think that Tracy was the only one who was enjoying life without a care in the world and that made her bitter because they had promised to take care of each other after their father almost killed their mother, beat Lesedi up and left them hung and dry.

Her thoughts went back to her family members left at her mother's house, they had made sure to lock their mother's wardrobe and took anything that could be important like their father's death certificate, their mother's medical records, ID and Sofia's just so they were safe from possible evil claws.

She thought back to the day Tapiwa called her after their father disappeared and when Tracy was sent to go to school, she was just randomly calling in to check up on her, they spoke a lot as they were not much different in age.

Lesedi confided in her, told her what happened with their father and mother and Tapiwa straight out refused to believe her. Claiming Morris loved Daisy he'd never do that.

Lesedi was mad at that, she tried to convince Tapiwa, but the woman was adamant that Morris would never ever hurt a fly let alone the woman he loved with all his heart.

She decided to drop another bomb on Tapiwa that on that very night their mother was beaten, she got raped and Tapiwa laughed.

The woman laughed and Lesedi still remembered the words that were accompanied by more laughter, "Now you're just pushing it. I don't know what

the hell is going on in that pathetic life of yours, I know not going to school and struggling to get a job while your sister is living it up can cause depression... but girl please, stop with your silly tantrums." Then she hung up.

That's when Lesedi decided that it's okay...she didn't need anyone to hold her hand. That she will be okay.

The ringing of her phone from the purse she carelessly threw on the bathroom dressing table earlier on snapped her out of her thoughts and she quickly caught a tear that had escaped her eye.

She ignored the ringing phone though, and just tried to think of the exciting future... where Mateo Molao or *Lekau Singo*, will dance to the beat of her drums.

**

The following day on a Sunday, a day after the funeral, Lesedi woke up to feeling as if someone was watching her. She was calm though because she knew it could only be her little sister, Tracy, whom she shared the room with. And she was right, when she opened her eyes, she found Tracy staring at her.

She stared back, of course she wanted to ask Tracy what the hell was her problem, but she didn't feel like it, so she stared back until Tracy smiled. "You still don't cower away from eye contact."

"No... I don't."

"The first time I met Kyle he stared at me, and I stared right back..." Tracy informed her, giggled a little and continued. "But he looked at me like he wanted to eat me alive, so I looked away first."

Lesedi smiled, she and Tracy used to have crazy staring competition when growing up. Tracy liked to stare at people, it used to annoy Lesedi so

much to waking up to a pair of eyes staring at her. She went from always asking '*what*' to staring right back.

"We need to talk." Tracy sat up in her own bed. They were both dressed in their pyjamas.

Lesedi sighed, checked the time on her phone and it was eight in the morning. She was well rested though, which was a good thing as she had been tired as hell.

"About what?" she mumbled.

"Everything." Tracy said to her. "Last night I was talking to Sofia and mom, well it has been something we have been discussing the whole week while you were going on adventures with Mason... but we wanted to take mom to a hospice where she will be taken care of twenty-four seven, with the right therapists at her aid."

Lesedi now sat up in her bed too, anything that concerned her mother deserved her full attention. "Dad is gone now, and she won't be objecting to the money we have... so she agreed last night. I told her that you and I can still buy them a house, but Sofia said they have been looking around and found the perfect hospice where they will also accommodate Sofia. It costs shit lot of money, but we can afford it."

Lesedi mulled it over and it made sense. Their mother deserved a nice place where she will be fully taken care of by people who will truly have her best interest at heart. And as long as Sofia was going with, she had no doubt her mother will fully recover, and she will be happy.

"I have zero objections, if the woman is happy with that, I am on board." Lesedi responded. Her voice was still laced with sleep. She yawned and stretched.

"That's not what I want to talk about though... well I mean partly but... okay, so I want to know if you don't think that's selfish..."

"What do you mean? How is it selfish?"

"Because you spent quite lot of years taking care of her and I said I can step in now but my stepping in is sending her to a hospice? Are you okay with that?" Tracy now couldn't look at her in the eye.

Lesedi felt bad for her, for so many years she's hated Tracy for that, for leaving her alone to care for their mother. She understood why the curvier woman felt the way she did.

She heaved a sigh, "Mohau, I did what I had to do, you did what you were forced to do. Both you and I didn't have it easy. If I must say, you had it rougher than I did. You suffered physical and emotional abuse and didn't have support from either mom or me... so no, I don't find it selfish. I think mom is doing this for us too... so we can try to live..." she shrugged.

"And we will, from tomorrow I will be working towards the success of the restaurant and the salon while you finish whatever it is you are working with Mason on, then focus on me and Kyle. You should also... you know focus on your relationship. Hey, how come you never showed me your boyfriend did he come to the funeral? You only showed me Mbali and the guys you worked with... but didn't mention boyfriend."

"Who says I have a boyfriend?" Lesedi asked in a monotone voice. Tracy was quite the morning person.

"Sofia told me that you had a boyfriend you lived with... I mean no one ever really knows what's going on in your life."

"I don't have a boyfriend and I lived with Freddy. He couldn't come to the funeral." Lesedi shrugged.

"Do you... uhh want one?"

"Want what? A boyfriend? No. Dude I am forty... forty." Lesedi got up from her bed to use the toilet.

Tracy followed her, "So what you're forty? You look young. You look young and healthy. People find love when they are fifty and all... you can too."

"I am forty and I am not looking for stress thank you very much, I am already stressed enough as it is. Boyfriends? No thanks. Now get out I want to shower."

They took turns to shower and only Tracy packed up her bags as she won't be returning to the hotel. They went to get Sofia and their mother who will be returning to the hotel later.

The tents were being removed when they arrived home, the caterers came to take what belonged to them, the yard had less people than the previous day and Lesedi grew tired by just watching the activities. Sofia and Daisy who was again dressed in black went to the lounge where the Phiris were holding a meeting in.

"So, you guys decided to sleep at a hotel, once again leaving us alone here to clean up?" Tapiwa's welcoming words annoyed Lesedi as she entered the kitchen to find Regina and Yvonne cooking on the stove.

It was after ten in the morning, and it smelled like chicken. They were cooking chicken stew with pap. *How lovely.*

"Tapiwa, you have annoyed me since the day you arrived here... please it's too early for you." Lesedi grabbed a chair and sat down.

"You have embarrassed us so much during the week and yesterday was just cherry on top. What the hell was that coffin you bought? Who still buries people in a *fish* coffin?" Tapiwa was enraged.

"This again? Really?"

"Eya Lesedi, what you did to your father was horrible. You're busy taking the money he worked so hard for buying new phones, new clothes, sleeping in hotels, paying caterers for the whole week but couldn't spare a decent coffin?"

"That was a decent coffin Tapiwa. Like I said, if anyone had any objections they should have coughed money from their own pockets and bought this '*better coffin*' you speak off." Lesedi was just too tired of her family, but she'd never be tired of talking back and setting the record straight.

"Hey girls... it's all in the past. Can we move forward now?" Regina as the aunt interjected between the two fireballs.

"NO YOU BLOODY LEECHES!!"

Lesedi and the gang in the kitchen heard Tracy shout from the lounge. She had joined her mother and Sofia in the living room as she wanted to know what it was the Phiris wanted to discuss.

Lesedi looked at Tapiwa, at aunt Regina then pushed her chair back and rushed into the living room.

The uncles, koko Phiri and one more aunt were sitting in there with Daisy, Sofia and Tracy. Tracy was fuming, she was even turning red due to her

light complexion which she shared with almost everyone in the room except her mother. Daisy just like Lesedi were dark skinned.

"What's going on?" Lesedi asked, she was followed by Tapiwa and Yvonne.

"They are saying we should give them money made from the restaurant and the salon." Tracy blurted out; her angry eyes trained on Lucas.

"And why would we do that?" Lesedi asked folding her arms and leaning against the doorframe.

"Apparently since they all depended on papa, they reckon it's the right thing to do." Tracy was angry.

Lesedi couldn't contain herself, she burst out in laughter. For a good minute she laughed, and everyone stared at her, anger filtrating the room.

"Y'all have jokes for days. No one is getting a damn thing from us, not even a cent. And by the way, this restaurant and salon you think you can get the money from? They took them away. Remember that investigation? Your son was a drug dealer, they came for everything he's got." Lesedi wasn't afraid of anyone and she hoped that Mason would get crackling with the proof of the restaurant and salon being taken and sold.

"And don't think to try us about wanting money from us... Don't even think it." Then she walked out. She didn't even need to say anything or listen to anything else. Tracy had already informed her a long time ago that everything was in her name. That's the greatest thing their father could have done for them. So they could all try what they want but they are not getting a cent.

She couldn't believe the nerve of those people. They really sat down and thought they could still get their lives sponsored? Jokes.

Lesedi couldn't believe them. She and Tracy had lied to them that the accounts were frozen pending investigations but seems like they did not care about none of that. They just wanted the money the girls supposedly have. They'd surely spasm out of control if they ever found out she and Tracy had hundred million hidden somewhere. Lucas would kill them for it. Literally.

She was standing by the gate, her mind drifting away when two cars pulled up at her gate. One she knew belonged to Mason and the other, she had no idea who was in it.

The other car was a Range Rover Evoque driven by Ginger. She hasn't seen the man since the night she stole his house keys from Mason to go kill her father. He looked good though in his ginger hair. It suited his tanned complexion. Usually ginger heads had pale skin, but Ginger wasn't a natural ginger.

"Les." Ginger stepped out of the car, which was parked next to the gate, Mason tailing behind.

"Ginger."

"Good to see you."

"I guess." Lesedi wasn't a fan of small talk. It made her uneasy. Like she had to think of something to say back, or something cool to say so people wouldn't think she was boring.

Ginger chuckled, "Is it not good to see me too?" he teased her.

Lesedi looked into his playful eyes and smiled, "Oh! She can smile. One point for you G-man." Ginger hooted. Causing Lesedi to now roll her eyes.

"Hey Firecracker." Mason approached them; his eyes were covered by the dark sunglasses he wore.

"People call before going to other people's houses you know. You don't just rock up unannounced!" She directed the words towards Mason.

Mason looked at her shorter frame, well Tracy and Lesedi were tall women, but they were nothing compared to him or his brothers. "I thought of doing that, but why would I? Where is the fun int that?"

"Common courtesy? What if we were not here?"

"But you are, and if you weren't... I was going to show up where you would be. Cause I know where you always are." Mason was so smug about it.

Lesedi opened and closed her mouth, eyebrows scrunching in confusion, "You didn't bug my phone did you?"

Mason laughed and dismissed her, "Look I bought you a gift. You don't even need to thank me..."

Ginger passed Lesedi the keys to the car he drove in. "What's this?"

"Your car dummy."

"You got me a car?"

"Lending you a car..." Mason smiled, his smile was deadly. Those teeth man. And that little one that stole the spotlight. It's as if he was aware that his smile shone brighter than then sun. She *hated* that. How come he get to look this good and have such an amazing smile.

"You're lending me a car... this car?" Lesedi was dumbfounded.

Mason rolled his eyes, "For a firecracker you sure are disappointing me. Yes I am lending you a car... Kyle mentioned Tracy going to help them out at

Greymont while they try and find a replacement assistant for Grey... so I knew getting by for you would be hard."

"Why would getting by be hard Mason? I have been doing it all my life." She just couldn't tell her heart and mind to accept this nice gesture. Sure, having this car would make it so easier to move around but... she didn't work hard for it. She didn't think she deserved it.

"Geez, just fucking say thank you." Mason was losing his patience.

Ginger who was by Lesedi's side chuckled, "Man I need to go. I need to sort out something for my other boss... I will bring your car later." Mason gave Ginger his car keys.

"You wreck it, you buy it." Mason told him as he gave him the keys.

Once Ginger left, Lesedi looked at Mason, "Why?"

"What do you mean *why*?"

"Why are you being nice?"

"Oh, is this is what it is? Me being nice scares you? I mean... you have money that you can't access yet but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be living it up now. Besides, we are ready to start with our mission and I need you to have the correct tools."

Lesedi almost sighed in relief. For a moment she thought Mason was going to be all soft on her, being sentimental and all. She was glad the car wasn't hers; she was only borrowing it even though she technically didn't, it was his decision to lend her that car. She was also glad that it was for a good use.

"In that case, thanks." She smiled. "How are you getting home?"

"You will take me, do you have your license with you?" he asked, seeing that she wore leggings, a light sweater and sneakers, he didn't see any pockets... so he just needed to be sure.

She showed him the back of her phone cover, "It's right here."

"Are you not feeling hot?" Mason asked. Her attire bothered him. It was hot, the blazing January sun was not playing games.

"No, and no I am not driving you home."

"You are because my new home is your new home."

"What?" Lesedi was confused. "What does that mean?"

"The apartment I got you? Well, I moved in too. Let's go and see it." He smiled, but this time around Lesedi didn't appreciate his pretty smile. She was freaking out inside. No way near hot hell will she live with Mason. *No fucking way.*

"Come on let's go."

"I am not moving in with you." She deadpanned.

"With me? Oh no, I meant that I got a separate unit, at the same building." He clarified.

"Why?"

"I am going to be here for longer so I can't put my family in danger should anyone find me out. Even though I am a beast at what I do, I am not that arrogant to think I am the only incredible hacker there is. Also, it makes sense to live closer to you, so we can work properly and discreetly."

It made sense. That she could accept.

"Okay... Okay let me just go tell Tracy I'll be back in a few."

Mason drove them to Fourways where they entered the lavish estate that she's only ever seen on pictures on the internet.

Her dream.

The reception area was as gorgeous and friendly, security was very secure. They were welcomed by the building manager who had with him a set of keys. "Mr Pierce, lovely to see you again." The man had on a thick accent, if Lesedi had to guess she'd say he was Zimbabwean.

Living in Joburg and working with different customers daily, she was able to distinguish between the accents of fellow Africans. She was very good at it.

Naison, was his name. He took them to the fifth floor to a corner unit. "We have furnished units but if you aren't too happy about the colours or some of the furniture, you can let us know and we will see how to fix it up for you miss Phiri."

Naison unlocked the door and Lesedi went in first. She was taken by everything. The simple art on the walls, the lavish huge grey couch in the living room. The plasma mounted on the wall, the fact that all she had to do was roll her suitcases in was a huge win for her.

It was a two-bedroom apartment, and the main bedroom had a balcony that overlooked the city. It had its own bathroom which was nicely spacious. The bed looked so comfortable, there was enough cupboard space. She was in love.

She checked the secondary bedroom, she liked it as well but not how she liked the master.

She looked around; the kitchen was open overlooking the lounge. There was a small eating table with four chairs just next to the lounge... there was a sliding door that opened into a beautiful private balcony.

She could already see herself working out on the balcony, enjoying her privacy. She was beaming, she never thought she'd be smiling this much so soon. Maybe killing her father was just a blessing.

"You like?" Mason asked as she returned back inside.

"I love! When can I move in?" She asked.

Naison smiled, "Mr Pierce already took care of everything. It would have been a bummer if she didn't like this unit because then we will have to go back to the head office."

Lesedi was confused but she'd talk with Mason afterwards, she was happy that she now had a place.

There was a couple of documents she needed to sign before moving in, so they went to Naison's office which was on the top floor.

Once she got her set of keys including getting her fingerprints for the fingerprint scanner to access the gate and the main doors of the building, Lesedi rushed back to her unit.

"It's so beautiful Mason, is this all for *me*?" She gushed.

Mason couldn't help but to stare at her wonder-filled face. She had a beautiful smile. She scowled a lot, but when she smiled... it was so breathtakingly beautiful. He had to snap himself out of that daze, Lesedi would kick his balls if she so much had a snip of his thoughts.

"All yours. I had Ginger work on it... I had a copy of your ID, so it was so easy to do."

"The rent though..."

"Don't worry about rent. You have bigger things to worry about." Mason went to sit on the grey couch. Naison was right, it was fucking comfortable.

Lesedi joined him, but she sat on the other end. "Naison said the couch could turn into a bed..." she spoke while feeling the material. She couldn't wait for Mason to leave so she could explore it all. She was far too excited.

"Yeah, well imma leave you soon to explore that. Listen... about Singo." Mason called Mateo Molao by his original name most of the time. Singo came almost naturally to his tongue. "I can't get much about him online, so we need to do some ground work."

"Okay... what does that mean?"

"It means I need an inside person at the hotel. I need someone working there or can access his office to plant some bugs." He informed her.

She rested her back on the couch, crossing her leg over the other, "We can't pay someone?"

"No, because we don't want to jeopardize this. The less people we involve the better."

"Mhm he offered me a job yesterday."

"What job? What do you mean?"

Lesedi went on to tell him about the elevator scene with the culprit himself. "Okay, you're still staying at the hotel right? Follow up on the job and maybe you can be the inside person we need."

"I don't know Mason... I might lose my cool. It took a lot out of me yesterday to not pull out my knife and stab him in the neck. I don't trust myself to work for him and be level headed."

"Well, you're gonna have to train yourself harder. You are getting a job at that hotel Les if we are gonna do this... What I don't understand though, is that even after you tried to beat him with stones, embarrassing him online, he offered you a job? Even after he wrecked your place?"

"I know right? It's like he is insane. Apparently me blaming my father for going broke got to him. He somehow sympathises with me." Lesedi grew angry at the memory of that man. Oh, how she loathed him.

"Mhm, he does sound crazy and strange... " Mason wanted to ask how come this man doesn't even remember raping her but that was not a can of worms he wanted to open this early.

"Okay, I mean if he sympathizes with you... then get that job. It will be easier for me to get inside. So, chat him up on that offer and listen... if you want to do this, and you want to see him fall to his knees, you will have to control your temper. Learn to control your temper." Mason was all business-like and Lesedi knew she couldn't even fuck with that or argue with him. He was dead serious.

She sighed, "Fine, I will see what I can do." She rolled her eyes. Just when she thought she and Mason were getting along well, he had to dictate to her what she should do. Leaving her with little choice to nothing.

"Okay and by the way, my unit is right above yours, in case you need me. I have to go. You enjoy your new place and your new car." He winked at her before leaving.

As soon as he shut the door, Lesedi took off her shoes, socks and walked barefooted around the house. There was dark wood flooring, some plush, thick rugs... it also smelled great.

The place went for eight thousand, five hundred rand (R8500) a month and it was worth it. Totally worth it. She didn't want to change a single thing, she just wanted to put up pictures of her family instead, next to the other paintings on the walls.

She jumped on the couches like a happy little girl, jumped on the bed in the guest bedroom and ended up throwing herself on the master bed.

She folded her arms behind her head and stared at the ceiling, wiggling her toes a little.

She could get used to this. For so long she dreamed of living in such spaces and it was finally happening... she must be doing something right to deserve all of this.

She snorted immediately after that thought, "Lesedi, you think killing your father is why you are deserving of nice things." She giggled to herself as she got up from the bed.

She looked around and all that was missing was her clothes, some more towels and maybe some blankets, some throws. She will need to go shopping. But first, she needed to secure a job.

Tracy texted her, telling her that she was going to drop off Sofia and their mother at the hotel and she was leaving to Pretoria.

They had left Lucas and the rest of the gang at the house in Soweto. No one really cared about that house anymore, now that Daisy expressed how she loathed it, they just needed to move her out of there.

Lesedi picked up her keys and took one look at the apartment as she stood by the door. "Welcome home baby girl." She said to herself before locking.

She took the stairs instead of the lift as she needed to work out and also because she had since been spooked about elevators after the incident with Mateo. Stairs were such a nice workout considering how she hasn't been working out for a while.

She couldn't help chuckling at the car waiting for her in the basement parking lot. Mason was such a nice person, she was grateful. She jumped in the car and drove to the hotel.

They used a code to enter the parking lot, she had forgotten that Tracy had their key card. She hoped that she'd left with Sofia at least.

Jumping out of the car into the lobby, she was warmly greeted by the doorman who took a liking to her. "Hi," she greeted him back. "Is my sister here?" she asked him.

"She was here but she left. She came with your mother and that lovely aunt of yours." The man must have been taken by Sofia as his eyes twinkled at the mention of her.

"That's good, and is Mate- Mr Molao available? Yesterday we met in the lift, and he asked me to ask the hotel manager if they maybe have a job for me..."

"Ah! Okay, go and ask for Gregory at reception. He will know how best to help you." The old man smiled warmly at her. His smile tugged at her heart strings. How she wished he was her father.

How come they had such a terrible father? It was not fair.

The lady behind the reception desk called Gregory for Lesedi and she was told to go up to the last floor as offices were situated up there.

It didn't take her long to find Gregory's office, it was written in gold letters outside one of the brown oak doors.

Gregory was a balding white man who sat behind a usual brown oak office desk. He was typing away on his laptop when he welcomed her in.

"Sit and I will be with you just now." He told her as he furiously hit the buttons on the keyboard.

Lesedi looked at him, he was married, guessing with the gold band on his ring finger. He wore formal, a scowl on his thin lips. She couldn't make him out but one thing she knew, he was stressed.

"I am just typing this message to our wine supplier. He bailed out this morning and I need to know why." He informed her. She couldn't care any less. She needed to know if she could get a job or not. She was running on time here.

Once Gregory finished typing the lengthy email, in the most dramatic way, he turned his body towards Lesedi. His eyes swept all over her frame, making her feel uncomfortable.

"Hi there, Mr Molao told me he may have offered one of our guests a job, I am guessing that's you..." Gregory spoke in a monotone voice. She was even surprised the man was working on a Sunday.

"Yes." Lesedi politely responded.

"And your name is...?"

"Lesedi, Lesedi Phiri."

"Ohh! Is it your father's funeral that Mr Molao just came back from yesterday?"

Lesedi could only nod. Clearly Mateo had informed him of every little detail.

"My condolences." He passed a closed mouth smile. Lesedi returned the gesture. Because what was can she say, the fucker had it coming. It's good riddance.

"And how old are you Lesedi?"

"Forty."

His jaw dropped, "No kidding. You don't look a day over thirty." Gregory was stunned and awed. Lesedi shrugged. She'd heard that almost her life. Taking after her mother's petite body frame, they never looked their age. It was both a curse and a blessing.

"Okay as I have said to him that unfortunately I don't have anything for you. I am sorted with cleaners... waiters... bellboys... kitchen staff and drivers. I have nothing for you sweetheart."

She was bummed. Now how in the hell would they gain access to these offices?

"Oh!" That's all she could say. She had no better words.

"But... we are having a cocktail do at the end of this month, welcoming the new year. I will need waiters. It will be a huge party in our ballroom, so how's that?" He made a suggestion that she loved.

"I will take it!" She enthused.

His eyes narrowed in concentration though, "But I am not sure if I will keep you as a waiter or have you help wash dishes in the kitchen. Mr Molao doesn't really like seeing people that look like you around a lot. He prefers them at the back."

"People who look like me?" Lesedi asked, forehead scrunched in confusion. Now what the hell did that mean? Did it mean black people? "Black people?"

"No... not black people, just *dark-skinned* black people."

"Oh!" again, she was left stunned. This has been a norm in her life. Being dark skinned, she was always told she shouldn't walk so much in the sun, or she should try certain creams so she could look '*beautiful*' like her baby sister.

"I am sorry, it's not you. It's definitely him. All the dark-skinned people who work for us are hidden in the back. They cook, work in the kitchen or clean the rooms."

"I see." She was boiling inside. *Who does that bald headed man with a big belly think he is?*

Gregory sensed the girl was upset, but he just had to be honest. If she was going to work for them, she should know how the big boss rolled. Mateo reminded them at every chance that they should keep them hidden from his guests.

"Look, email me your CV, and contact details... when the party time arrives, I will give you a call and let you know what the plan is. He did tell me you needed the money, so I will give you a call."

She didn't have anything else to say to Gregory, so she took his business card and left.

She was supposed to be excited that somehow she still managed to get a job, but that darkskin comment left her feeling raw.

She didn't want to go to her mother's suite and dampen their moods, but she needed to access her room. So, she sucked it up and went their room.

Luckily she found her mother asleep, Sofia was watching Nigerian movies on TV when she knocked.

"Hey sesi, are you okay?" Sofia asked when she opened the door.

"I am just tired, did Mohau leave our key cards in here?" she asked.

Sofia responded by giving her the key cards, "She said she left your stuff in your room."

"Okay, I will see you two later or tomorrow." She didn't wait for Sofia's reply, she just stalked off. Sofia knew when Lesedi wanted to be alone and when she wanted to talk. She never pushed.

Getting to her room, she packed up her bags, checked out of the hotel and loaded her bags in the car and drove to Fourways mall. It was Sunday so most shops were closed while some were still open.

She managed to get some shoes, some clothes, some toiletries and some groceries then left to her new place. It still felt very odd when she pressed her finger on the finger print scanner and the gate opened, parking in her designated parking spot... going up to her room... it all felt like a very nice dream.

She dropped all the bags in a corner by the door, took off her shoes and sat on the couch.

Her heart was heavy... she needed to vent. She needed to scream. She needed to yell... she felt like crying.

Picking her phone to call Mason, he answered on a third ring, "Hey... what's up?"

"Are you at your place?" she asked.

"Yeah... wanna come over or should I come there?"

"Can you come?"

"On my way."

She didn't know why she decided to call Mason, but he has been a very sensible part of her the past week. He understood her before she could even speak. It was as if he could read her mind and knew what she needed.

She hoped that even today, he'd be able to make her laugh or forget. Maybe talking in great detail of what they were going to do to that bald headed man will help cheer her up.

"You don't look as happy as I left you, what happened?" Mason asked as soon as she opened the door.

She sighed and closed the door behind him, he was holding a six pack of beer which he put in the fridge returning with one bottle to the lounge.

"I went back to the hotel... spoke to the manager."

"And you didn't get any job? Were you mean to him?"

Lesedi cast him an angry glare and Mason shrugged. The girl was a mean fireball. Who's to say she didn't burn bridges before crossing over? "I did get some job..."

"Okay but why do you look so... so morose?"

"Am I ugly?" now that's the question he did not expect to get from this woman. Lesedi oozed confidence with a dash of arrogance. She walked like she knew she was fucking gorgeous... but to hear her voice that question in that sad, unsure tone tugged his heart strings.

"Where is that coming from?"

"Answer me... am I ugly? Is my complexion that terrible?"

Mason moved from his seat and sat next to her, "Look at me Les..."

One thing Mason liked about this girl, was her ability to look a person straight in their eyes without wavering or cowering away. Her brown eyes were a lot sadder than the other days.

Something in him wanted him to wrap his arms around her and squeeze the sadness out, but this was Lesedi, she'd eat him alive for touching her.

"Your complexion is perfect, you are gorgeous. Did someone call you ugly?" he was getting hot and angry at the thought of someone calling her ugly.

She shrugged. "It doesn't matter does it, I've heard it all my life."

"Don't believe what other people are saying about you. What is it that you see when you look in the mirror? Do you not see a beautiful girl with a stupid cute dimple on her chin? Do you not see how radiating and glowing your skin is?"

Lesedi couldn't keep looking into Mason's green eyes. His eyes made her feel hot all over a sudden. She looked at the black screen of the TV that was still wrapped and covered up.

"Apparently Singo does not like dark-skinned people, so he gives them jobs that aren't high rated. Like cleaning...or washing dishes in the kitchen just away from his *lovely* guests."

"It doesn't matter what he says or what he does... this dark-skinned woman is going to be the end of his stupid pride. So don't take to head what that bastard says about you. You're beautiful. You're pretty as fuck! A little mean, a little rude, a little dangerous... a little scary... but definitely gorgeous."

Her face cracked into a smile. Her head swung back in his direction, "Oh yeah..." she breathed... Mason was too close now. She could feel his body heat radiating to hers.

"You like being dangerous and mean... Don't you firecracker?" whatever pull was between them, he felt it too. He couldn't stop looking into her eyes and looking at her lips as she kept biting them...

Their voices dropped to breathy sounds. Chests heaving, eyelids heavy. Eyes staring at each other's lips...

He had cute pouty full lips, they were pink... and she had this crazy feeling of wanting to taste them.

Their lips softly met each other halfway...

It was just a greeting of the lips, just a mere featherlight kiss... but it spoke volumes. It burned.

Lesedi was the first to pull back. She couldn't go on with it. She didn't want to go through with it because... Well she didn't want to complicate things.

"That shouldn't have happened." Mason spoke first.

"Agreed." She nodded, looking away.

"Shouldn't happen again." He continued.

"No complaints from me," She conquered.

"Good." He left it at that... but deep in his being, he was scared. Scared of what he felt. It was not normal; it was damn unusual.

"I am working on some encryption... I will check you later." He almost, almost ran out of the room. His long and hurried strides may as well be assumed as running.

Lesedi looked at the spot he was once sitting on and sighed. There goes him making her feel better.

Instead he awakened something in her... something she was not sure she was ready to deal with.

CHAPTER SIX

Daisy was taken to the hospice, Tracy and Lesedi drove to the place and loved it for their mother. The pictures online did the facility no justice. There were a lot of activities to be done in a day and so much care that they were very happy about the decision.

Once Sofia and their mother were settled the two ladies met at the restaurant Tracy owned to meet with a lawyer who was going to help with transferring the salon's title deed to Lesedi's name. Even though they had told the Phiri family that the businesses were sold, they still carried on life as usual. Mason cooked the pots, and they sent notice letters to Lucas to show him when the businesses were taken so that they can get off their backs.

Lesedi however wasn't ready to accept such a great gift from her baby sister, so she took the papers to go read them at home. It was a lie; she wasn't going to read them. She was just stalling.

It had been almost a week since all of that took place, their mother and Sofia leaving, their uncles calling them non-stop to wanting to talk about the house and how they could help each other because somehow Lucas was convinced Tracy was a millionaire and could sponsor their lives. Those greedy hypocrites.

Also, it has been almost a week since they buried their father and a week of no action since she and Mason had the kissing moment.

She told her salon crew that she won't be returning for a while, they should instead attend to her clients.

It was Friday and Mason had texted her to come over to his place. She has never been in there yet and didn't know what to expect as she took the stairs up to the sixth floor where Mason's pad was.

She knocked on his door and almost sighed in relief when Ginger opened the door. Had it been only her and Mason, she was going to be on the edge. And Lesedi being on the edge meant Lesedi either being snappy and rude, or a mute.

"Yo Les." Ginger greeted her and she walked in to find one more guy sitting with Mason on his black couch. Their apartments were almost the same except Mason's one had more black deco than hers.

"Hey Les... uhh this is Milo, one of the guys I work with, Milo meet Lesedi," Mason got the introductions out of the way. Milo was a black man with a nice fade, sharp eyes and a bored expression.

He greeted Lesedi and went back to looking at the screen of Mason's most trusted PC.

"Milo here is our PI, he does the ground work. Follows whoever we need followed and comes back to report. So, he has some intel that I think we can use."

"Okay..." Lesedi sat on the one-seater couch and looked at the direction of the three men.

"I still don't have access to the hotel's system but... I can get you a decent job than waiting for the stupid party where you will probably be a one-day waiter and not even get a break to sneak out." Mason carried on.

"Okay... uh what is the job?"

Mason looked at Milo whose brown eyes travelled to where Lesedi was sitting, "Okay, I have been tailing Gregory, the hotel manager. He makes executive decisions, Singo trusts him."

"That tells me nothing..." Lesedi said to him.

"He's a uhh... a fan of dark-skinned women, there was a case against him for sexually harassing his previous assistant, so he has vowed to not get any female assistants, but he needs an assistant. He bitches about it a lot to anyone with an ear and he doesn't want to get a male assistant." Milo said a mouthful.

Lesedi wasn't sure how she was going to feature in that, but now it made total sense of how Gregory was looking at her. He was just too nice at her. Very welcoming and seemed like he really wanted her to work at the hotel.

"I need you to seduce him, and blackmail him into giving you a job as his assistant." Milo told her.

Lesedi felt dizzy for a hot second. "Are you hearing yourself?"

Milo looked at Mason and Ginger before looking back at the woman whose eyes have turned sharp and angry. They did tell him that she had a very short temper. She was had a short fuse. "It's how we can actually get our foot inside the bloody hotel. Do you not want this?" he probed.

"Do I not want this? Do you even fucking know what is it that I went through? Why the hell would I want to do this? You want me to be vulnerable with yet another man? Are you insane? Have you lost your fucking mind? Who the fuck are you anyway?" she stood up.

"If this... is your great idea Mason, forget it. I don't want to be a part of it. Leave me out of it." She marched to the door with Mason hot on her tail.

He knew how she'd react to it, but he thought if maybe Milo could suggest it, it would be better. Clearly he didn't think things through.

"Les..."

"Leave me alone." Lesedi snapped as she marched to the direction of the stairs.

"Wait, this could work..."

"Nothing is going to work Mason. Leave me alone." She went down the stairs and the man was right behind her.

He didn't want them to have a screaming competition in the hallways, so he followed her all the way to her apartment.

"How did that make sense to you Mason? I can't believe that even after you know what happened, you still want to put me in a similar situation."

"I did think about it... I did, I just thought that considering what this Greg guy did to another woman, you'd want to make him pay too." Mason closed the door behind him.

"Why me? Why must I fight my own battles and someone else's? Huh?"

"Because you are a fighter. Because not everyone is like you. Not everyone can stand up and say I want to fight these monsters. That girl... she's booked into a mental asylum. She's going off the rails. She can't accept the situation, she blames herself... and she can't gather her thoughts. He did that to her."

Hearing about the woman Gregory abused calmed her down but still made her angry. What was it with men and thinking they can do whatever they wanted to do to women?

"Listen Les, I know you can do this. You have me and Ginger behind you, and Milo. You're not doing this alone. I will always be by your side during this mission. I promise you that."

Lesedi looked at him, biting her bottom lip while anxiously tapping her booted foot on the floor. Mason took notice of her attire today, skinny black jeans, a black micky mouse t-shirt and combat boots. Well at least she didn't fucking wear a sweater today, it was hot for heaven sake. Boots he could take.

He was wearing Vanz for a change, swore to the gods that they were the most comfortable shoes, ever.

"Come on...what do you say?"

"I hate men... I don't like being touched by men." Tears welled up in her eyes, so she looked up at the ceiling, hating how vulnerable she felt. Having to talk about how she felt, ten years later... It still affected her.

Mason could have shot himself in the foot when he watched her repeatedly blink the tears away. But he had to remind himself, he was doing it for her.

He walked over to her...

"Don't come near me." She warned him...

But he didn't listen, he stalked towards her, she started backing up and slammed into a wall. "Mason..."

"I just want to hug you... I can't shake this feeling off that I need to hug you."

Lesedi needed the hug, she felt like she wanted to be hugged, someone to hold her and tell her that it will all be okay. But having that someone means

opening up herself... opening herself to possible betrayal. Possible heartache. Possible judgment.

She sniffed, feeling that the tears cleared from her eyes but the lump on her throat was still choking her.

"I am okay, some days I am not, but I will be okay."

Mason reached her, his arms stretched out, he grabbed both Lesedi's arms and brought them around his waist.

He rested his chin on her head. He let go of her arms and she willingly secured them around his waist, hugging him tight.

His strong and large arms covered her upper body. He felt so fucking warm. She could hear his heart beat and the sound of it calmed her down.

A few seconds passed maybe only a minute passed and Lesedi harshly pushed Mason away. She wasn't about to start feeling a certain way about him. No.

If she wanted hugs and kisses, she'd start responding to her Facebook inbox. Or smiling at men in the damn streets and grocery stores.

"Don't do that." She warned him and walked over to her kitchen. "I won't be nice next time."

Mason's jaw dropped. Just when he thought they were getting somewhere she pulled back. Lesedi was a damn maze.

"So, I can't even hug you when you are feeling sad?" he asked.

Lesedi took out a bottle of water in the fridge and uncapped it, "No."

"Why not? It doesn't mean anything; it doesn't mean what happened the other day could happen again. We agreed that we weren't going to cross that line. It was just a friendly hug."

"Yeah well take your friendliness and shove it."

Mason chuckled, not out of amusement no. Nope, out of annoyance. Lesedi really had a knack for riling people up and killing any spark of hope.

"Okay..." Mason accepted defeat, "but will you think about this?"

"Seducing another man... letting him get too close, let him touch me, let him feel my butt, possibly my boobs?" there was sheer irritation and disgust in her tone. Mason winced.

"Okay, okay, I get it... I get it. I guess we will just wait for the stupid party, and have you bug the offices, if they will be unlocked."

"In Cape Town.. you managed to unlock the gate and the freaking doors of that house; would you not be able to unlock the hotel's offices?"

Mason sighed, "If the doors require a key I can't but if they are using biometric security, then I can bypass my way in."

Lesedi thought back to Gregory's door, a key was sure hanging from the door when she was exiting the office. "Damn it. Gregory's office uses a key..."

"And Mateo has his own office as well... that's why I need you this close to Greg. Once you blackmail him into giving you a job, he won't harass you on the job, he will most likely overload you with work to force you to quit."

"You have thought about this haven't you?" she asked, then took a sip of water before placing the bottle on the kitchen counter. So many times, she wished she could go back to drinking. She missed her drunken moments where she'd get sloshed and pass out.

"Not in great detail. Look you don't have to do it. I am sure I can think of something else."

"Mason...."

"Talk to me..." he walked over to the kitchen counter, she stood on the other side while the counter separated them.

"If I am to do this... please be where I always am? I don't know what will happen... if he tries something I might kill him, so I am going to need you... okay?"

Her voice cracked a little at the end, and he vowed to himself that he will bloody make sure, she was well taken care off.

"That's the one promise I can fucking keep." He assured her.

"Okay, then bring me up to speed."

"Greg... there is this club that he likes to frequent and there, he is always aiming at women who look a certain way. Showing some skin, a little bold, clubbing alone, dark skinned and very pretty." He explained to her.

"The trick tonight since he knows you, is to seduce him instead of him coming to you, you go to him. Make him eat out of your hand... chances are he will ask you to retire for the night at a motel just down the club, he loves it..."

"All of this you found out in a week? How many women does he take to bed?" Lesedi asked, disgust showing on her face.

"A lot. He's a sick motherfucker." Mason grimaced, "But yes, he takes you to the motel... that's when you will plant a camera in there, we will use the footage to blackmail him into giving you a job... and take it from there."

Lesedi mulled it over and nodded in understanding, "Okay. We start tonight?"

"We start when you're ready."

She looked at the time on her phone and it was half past five in the afternoon, "Okay, pick me up at seven?"

Mason agreed and went back to his apartment.

Lesedi ran some errands, then came back and took a nice hot bath, applied her body with shea coco butter, sprinkled some apple body spritzer that she loved so much and locked it with the coconut oil.

She let her skin soak up the body lotions before moving to apply makeup on her face. Once she was done, she combed her weave, parting it in the middle and letting it cascade down her back.

She wore a satin dress with draw strings on the side. She pulled the string, revealing a glowing thigh while the other side was little bit longer, covering the left thigh to the knee. She paired the red dress with gold four-inch sandals complimenting her height and giving her that edgy and sexy look.

She stood back and observed her reflection and might she just say, she looked pretty. This was once upon a time her life. She used to dress up to go and party with friends.

She took a few pictures on her phone... something she didn't do regularly.

A knock on the door caused her to check the time on her phone, it was five minutes to seven... she took her purse that housed her necessities and left her bedroom.

She opened the door to reveal a dashing Mason who was clad in black jeans and a black button shirt which had a couple of top buttons undone.

He looked so sexy, and those green eyes darkened at the sight of her.

"Fuck!" he cursed... "Fuck!"

"What?" Lesedi looked down at her attire then up at Mason... "Mason..." she saw the hungry look in his eyes.

If it was any other guy, she'd be pulling the knife she had secure on her thigh under the dress and threatening him with it... but this was Mason, and he has been making her feel funky a couple of times.

And right about now... just the dazed look in his eyes made her feel hot.

"I need you to forgive me..." he told her, "And I don't care if you pull your fucking knife on me..."

"Wh- what do you -" *mean* was swallowed by Mason's lips crashing on hers.

He had tried, God knows he tried really, really hard to control himself against her but she *fucking* kept pulling him in.

She pulled him in when she was in just jeans and boots... now she looked like a fucking goddess in a red number... he was rendered powerless.

She smelled heavenly...

This time, the kiss wasn't featherlight, it wasn't a tease, it was intentional.

Lesedi moaned in his mouth, dropping her purse to the floor, her hands going up to tangle in his soft and silky hair.

Kissing Mason felt like she was going on an exciting high school trip. It felt so good, his lips were so plumb, his mouth was so hot and tasted like cherries...

When they pulled back for air, Mason was hard as hell and her nipples were poking the dress she wore...

She looked him in the eyes, chest heaving... and Mason just knew... from the look in her eyes...

He had screwed up.

"Mason?" Lesedi snapped her fingers in Mason's face, snapping him into the land of the living. He has since been stuck on the doorway, staring at her. He went from staring at her, to having a dazed 'far-away' look.

"Earth to Mason?" Lesedi was confused by his reaction. "You just zoned out on me there..."

Mason laughed, he laughed at the joke that was him. How on earth did he manage to imagine all of that in such a short space of time? Lesedi was pulling a number on him that's for sure.

"Shit, sorry love." He shook his head as if trying to clear it from the crazy thoughts he just had. *Kissing Lesedi...* God he wanted to. He *wished* to.

The woman cleaned up so good. She did his head in when she wore skinny jeans and boots, but when she put on a dress and heels... she was the eighth wonder of the world... a total stunner.

He was definitely going to have a hard time keeping his hands to himself when all he wanted to do was caress her flesh.

"Are you ready?" He asked, and she nodded.

"As ready as I can be... a little nervous though." She admitted once she locked her apartment door behind her.

They fell into easy steps as they walked to the elevator. "You know for the past few days I have been taking stairs instead of the lift." She admitted as they waited for the car to come up.

"Yeah? Why is that?" Mason still couldn't believe he had imagined all of that. He had some stupid active imagination and it was pissing him off. How he even imagined her growing pissed at him? Walter Mitty has absolutely nothing on him. Nothing at all.

"Ever since I met Singo in the lift at the hotel... I have been avoiding them."

"You know what I think?" Mason asked her, turning to look at her, "I think you give that man too much power over you. What happens when you're too tired to take on the stairs?" he asked. At least they were talking about something different other than how he zoned out while staring at her... Thinking filthy things he wanted to do to her.

She bit her bottom lip and shrugged. She knew that she gave that man too much power over her, but to hear someone else say it irked her.

"I don't give him that much power." She snapped.

"You do and you need to stop. Get inside the lift and tell yourself that should you bump into him in the lift, and he tries something... you will have his heart beating out of your hand." Mason smirked as they stepped into the lift.

He couldn't stop but to notice how good they looked together through the lift mirror. A smile on Lesedi's face made him grin, "You're insane you know that? When someone talks about you inflicting pain on someone else you smile... you're a sadist."

"Whatever you say... is this what you do with your life Mason? Plan crazy ass missions as means of vengeance?"

"Yup!" He responded, popping the 'p' with a smirk on his lips, "It pays really, really good."

"What's the most you made out of this job at one go?" She just had to ask.

"Uhh... well I got ten million rands from you and Tracy... that's a lot but besides this... I made like a one point three million dollars... that's like twenty million rands."

Lesedi's jaw dropped as they reached the parking lot in the basement. "Twenty million? What was the mission?"

"This rich couple in LA were having a nasty ass divorce and the husband who was a serial cheater did not want to grant his wife the divorce because she was going to walk away with their cash cow, their biggest business." Mason explained to her as they walked to his car.

He couldn't help but to love how this woman walked. She walked with poise, she walked with intent... and the sound of her heels clicking on the ground caused him to internally groan. He wanted her.

He was admitting to himself that he truly wanted to *bang* her.

"So, you helped the woman steal the money?"

"Well... she didn't exactly come to me initially... only when he plotted to have her murdered. That woman should forever thank her lucky stars, God or whatever because the killer her husband hired couldn't go through with it. Instead, he kidnapped her and told her what her husband had hired him to do."

"Wow." Lesedi was stunned. They were now standing just behind Mason's car, "that was one greedy husband. To even kill his wife for wanting a divorce?"

"Yup. So, through the right channels, they found me and asked for my help... and well, I love fixing things." He grinned.

Lesedi narrowed her eyes, "Mason... how much did you steal from him?"

"Take a wild guess... I mean *wild*..."

Lesedi narrowed her eyes, putting her guessing cap... "Everything they owned together?"

Mason couldn't contain his grin, "Everything they owned together... and everything he owned. Emptied his bank accounts and left him with three dollars." He laughed.

Lesedi couldn't help but joining him in laughter, "Three dollars? You're terrible. No, o bothhoko Mason." (You're lethal.)

"The best part about it is that he didn't know who it was because we faked his wife's death. So, she took everything and dipped. He went off the rails last I checked."

"But is his wife okay? Is she safe?"

"Yeah, she skipped the country, new identity, new everything... she was actually excited about all that." Mason unlocked the car and opened the door for Lesedi who shyly thanked him.

Sometimes she forgot how Mason was big on chivalry.

Once they settled in his car, she had on an amazed smile on her face, "You are... I don't know, incredible? A genius?"

Mason blushed and turned the car on and in a beat they drove out of the parking lot into the busy streets of Johannesburg.

Light conversation kept them occupied, mostly talking about the mission on hand. Lesedi was less tense and nervous than she was before, she

was more determined to get justice for herself and the supposed girl Gregory had abused.

She walked up into the club alone and within a minute, hungry, lust filled eyes zeroed in on her. That part she didn't anticipate, growing up being called the ugly sister because of her complexion didn't really give her a confidence boost.

The sudden interest in dark skinned women by men startled her, made her nervous. Made her feel like if she wasn't too careful, history might repeat itself. Which was what she had told Mason before they left the car.

"You have a knife wrapped around your thigh, you trained hard as a fighter, if history threatens to repeat itself, I have no shadow of doubt that you will take care of yourself... if you can't I will be just right there..." with that he proceeded to give her an ear piece which was hidden by her long hair.

Milo who was on duty as well had one and she was told that she only ever had to tap on it once and they will be able to hear her and if they tap on theirs, she will hear them too.

That gave her comfort...

She scanned the area; a few men nodded her way, and she passed a very congested smile that wasn't pleasant or welcoming.

She saw the man she was looking for; he already had a woman sitting dangerously close to him.

She walked over to them, he saw her approaching, the club was not jam packed, it was one of those expensive members only clubs and Mason being Mason pulled some cards and got himself a membership card and brought her as his plus one.

Gregory's mouth was dry at the sight of Lesedi, of course he recognized her, but she looked way better than when they met. She looked hotter. Her skin was calling for him... her beauty rendered him speechless.

And when she smiled.

He grew hard.

He harshly turned to the woman who was sitting next to him and dismissed her. "You can go now." He rudely dismissed the other woman who only rolled her eyes and stomped her foot as she left the table.

The man was sitting on a purple couch, maybe it was black and looked purple because of the purple lights flashing in the club...

"My, my... aren't you a goddess miss Phiri." He complimented her. Lesedi smiled coolly... putting her game face on.

"Mind if I join you?"

"Not at all, I will be delighted if a goddess like you joined me."

"Les, I wanna hear what he says." Mason's voice startled her but she played it cool. She sat down on the couch leaving much needed space between herself and the man, then looked around the club and saw Mason sitting by the bar, a beer in front of him.

She rolled her eyes... but didn't turn on her mic.

"Why are you sitting so far away... I don't bite, unless you want me to." Gregory then laughed at his own silly joke.

Lesedi was annoyed, she inwardly groaned but plastered a smile on her face, "Buy a lady a drink first... and we shall see where the night takes us."

On cue, Gregory signalled for a waiter who took Lesedi's drink order. With the loud music booming in the club, Gregory couldn't hear what it was

she ordered. Of course, she didn't drink alcohol, but he didn't need to know that. She ordered a virgin cocktail, making sure only the waiter could hear her.

"Fancy meeting you here..." she made small talk. Something she hated.

"Indeed, how did you get inside? This is a very exclusive club you know?" He asked, since he was told that she and her family were having financial problems and the girl was desperately looking for a job.

"Oh, no I know the owner." She went with the lie Mason fed her, "Yeah Thomas, great guy. He asked me to come check his place out... and I was bored. Then I saw you here, I crossed my fingers that you'd keep me company." She crossed her legs, making sure the side where the thigh was exposed was very visible to him.

Mason was going to pay for this. He was so going to pay for this.

The way this man was staring at her thigh... when she looked up to see what Mason was doing, the man was entertaining himself with a blonde busty girl who was now laughing at something he said. The blonde girl had placed her hand on his ripped arm... and Lesedi wanted to cut it off.

Noticing her train of thought, she looked back at her *date* for the night and summoned courage from the universe and scooted over to him.

One drink turned to three and the man asked her if she wanted to leave the 'noisy club'. The plan was coming together, placing her hand on his chest, she batted her eyelashes at him, "Lead the way."

She had made sure to turn on the speaker of her ear piece so Mason can know it was time to go. The man placed his hand on top of her thigh, feeling her up... "Let me get the bill."

He paid their bill and took his hand and led them out of the semi-dark place.

"Can you walk in those shoes? The hotel is just at the next robot." He asked. (robot = traffic light)

"I can." She smiled at him. They didn't walk much longer before they arrived at his preferred hotel... if she could call it that. It was more of a motel than anything else.

Cheap, raggedy and she could swear the carpet had bugs on it. They went to his reserved room and the man was already grabbing her boobs... "Hold on tiger... I'm a lady. Drink first... you made me walk *half a mile* in heels." She scolded him.

"You said you didn't mind." Gregory sounded like a baby, whining.

"I didn't, but that doesn't mean I don't need a break to get in the mood. How's about I pour us some drinks... before I strip for you... *daddy*." She almost puked in her mouth when she called him 'daddy'.

Milo, in his genius findings, found out the man had a daddy-kink. So, she had to use that, and it disgusted her.

The man excused himself to go the bathroom and that's when Lesedi poured them two glasses of whiskey.

When Greg returned from the bathroom Lesedi passed him the drink, he gulped it down... "Are you not going to drink yours?" he asked, already taking off his shirt. What an eager beaver.

This man had sex almost everyday with different women and yet he was acting like it was the first time a woman ever graced his room. He looked pathetic.

"Not a whiskey girl actually... you can have mine. I am still good." She gave him her glass and he gulped it down.

"Let's play some music... we have music?" she asked, and he turned on the TV and shuffled the channels to a music channel. Some crazy hip-hop song was playing, and she wasn't complaining.

Grabbing the chair... she started erotically dancing for him... and he was dazed...

His movements started to get sloppier, his words incoherent... he stood up and took off his pants...

Lesedi pulled out the camera Milo gave her from her purse, "Are you gonna dance for me *daddy?*" she teased him. He smiled, his eyes were almost shutting down but when she called him daddy, he became alert.

He took off all his clothes and started dancing naked for her. He was well aware of the camera, but it made things all the more exciting.

"Play with it *papi...*"

"*Play with it? Les what are you doing?*" once again, Mason's voice rang in her ear but she ignored him.

"You like that?" Gregory asked, holding his dick in his hand and stroking himself. It was the most disgusting thing Lesedi could ever witness but she needed to see the mission through.

"Oh yeah I like that." Lesedi moaned.

"*Uhh Lesedi o shup?*" Milo's voice joined the party. (Lesedi are you okay?)

"Come all over my tits Greg... just keep playing with it like that." Lesedi teased the man whose hand was moving dangerously fast. And she was catching every moment on the camera.

"*Come all over your tits? What in the fuck?*" Mason asked, his voice was on the edge. Like he was about to come in and fetch her.

She was starting to like the attention a little too much from the two men outside, this will serve them right for making her do this and for Mason flirting with that blonde girl in front of her. Doesn't matter if she's said a number of times she wasn't interested in him like that but fuck it... the man was handsome, and he smelt great. He made her feel things.

"I am gonna come baby..."

Milo and Mason could hear Gregory perfectly well.

"*No, you're not.*" Mason kicked the door open, and Gregory's head turned to him.

"Who are you?" He slurred, still holding his dick in his hand. He was truly on the verge of coming, Lesedi had planned to jump off the seat before he could ejaculate all over her... but turns out she didn't even need to be a ninja warrior. Mason saved the day.

"Her boyfriend!" Mason hauled Lesedi off the seat and dragged her out of the room. "Wank off and get some sleep motherfucker, you ever look at my girl again, I will gouge your fucking eyes out." Mason angrily spat before dragging Lesedi all the way down the stairs, through the lobby and out on the streets to his car.

"Let go of me you *beast!*" Lesedi tried shrugging her hand out of the man's tight grasp to no avail. She couldn't use her other hand as it clutched her purse tightly. The purse that had their golden ticket in.

"What in the fuck was that? That was not part of the fucking plan." Mason was outraged.

"Your plan sucked okay? So, I made another plan on top of your plan... and might I add, it was working."

"It was working? Working?" Mason let go of her hand to run his hands through his hair. He couldn't help but to remember her breathy sounds, her moans, calling that fucker *daddy*... "What is wrong with you!!"

"No, what is wrong with you? I was just being a team player and doing my part okay? If you didn't fucking barge in there like some alpha wolf... I would have been -"

"You would have been what? Covered by that lunatic's semen?"

"No, I was going to move out of the way."

"Oh, you think he was going to give you a warning in time?" Mason asked, his eyes were burning with anger. Lesedi didn't quite understand why he was so angry.

She shrugged. She didn't like being scolded, especially when the person was making valid points. Chances are Greg wasn't going to warn her in time, but the way he was so vocal about whatever he was feeling, she could bet that he was going to warn her.

But she knew... what she did was hectic.

"I don't understand why you're so mad though." She mumbled.

Mason sighed and walked over to her. He touched her ear and brought the ear piece out and turned it off then turned his off too. "Get in the car before I do something I might regret."

He was looking intently in her eyes. The flames burning in those eyes caused her stomach to flip. Her thoughts took a new direction. How he barged in that room, how he pulled her out just in time and how he threatened Gregory... Mason was a man... a sexy man... a gorgeous man...

"Yeah? And what's that?" She was tormenting him, she just had to be tormenting him because suddenly her voice dropped. It was huskier... more flirtatious.

"You don't wanna find out." He opened the passenger door of his car.

"Maybe I do." She defied him.

Mason looked at her... and chuckled. Before Lesedi could even ask what was funny, his lips were on hers, his large hands cupping the sides of her face.

The kiss was a slow burn. It confused Lesedi. His lips were so plumb, he tasted like cherries and beer. A wild combination.

What confused her was her own body moulding into his, giving into the kiss... feeling his tongue sweep up in her mouth and tasting her... the foreign moan that escaped her throat...

Then he bit her bottom lip, "What the fuck!" she was shocked. She touched her lip, expecting to find blood but there was nothing. "What the fuck? You - You bit me!!"

"You try that shit again..." Mason warned her. "Get in the car."

**

"She did a great job... this is... this is good yet disgusting, his dick is... I wouldn't want the world to see that." Milo commented on the video footage that Lesedi recorded on the camera.

After the incident outside the motel, they drove to Mason's place. And she gave Milo the camera and the men had a look at what exactly it was she recorded.

She was fuming. Now Lesedi was not the type to let things slide easily... and what Mason did to her, not only did it render her speechless but she didn't know what to fucking say or do to him.

She allowed him to kiss her.

He *kissed* her.

It was so good that even when he bit her, she felt herself get wet.

She was scared.

She has been with maybe two men in the last ten years since the whole ordeal and none of those men actually made her feel what she felt when Mason kissed her, or when Mason touched her.

She was sitting in his kitchen, drinking water... watching the two men work through the footage with disgusted looks on their faces. Well, they should join the club, she was sitting front row to that freaking show.

She looked at Mason, how his stupid hair fell into his eyes... how he was trying hard not to look at the footage, but had to cause they had to edit it and transfer it to Lesedi's phone so she can be able to use it against Greg.

"Okay, our plan could have backfired... this plan is good. This is good. Well done Lesedi." Milo was full of praises, and she was just annoyed and

wanted to go to bed. It was after midnight, and they were busy plotting on how to ruin someone's life. *Yay.*

"So, he was really that drunk huh?" Milo commented, a smile on his face.

She passed a smile that disappeared as quickly as it came.

Mason's eyes swept over to where she was standing, and he found her looking at him. He held her gaze for maybe five seconds before turning his attention to Milo.

His damned eyes. Lesedi wished she could tell what was on his mind. What was he thinking kissing her? They almost did the other day and they promised to not ever cross that line, but they did. He did. And she *allowed* it.

Milo worked on whatever he worked on and sent the edited footage to Lesedi's phone and bid them goodnight.

Once Milo closed the door, Mason closed his laptop and looked towards his kitchen where the bloody vixen that made him lose his cool stood.

She didn't know why she was still in his apartment. She couldn't bring herself to leave. She wanted to scream at him for manhandling her earlier on and for talking to her the way he did.

But words just couldn't form. So, she just stared at him, and Mason being Mason... he stared back.

Lesedi didn't know what to say so she rounded the kitchen counter, swiped up her purse and made a beeline to the door.

"Don't go." Mason called out to her.

He stood up from the couch and walked over to her. "I have to... go." She turned to look at him. Now finding her voice. "If I stay here, I might say things I will regret."

"Say them then. You wanna lash out at me for what I did? Go for it." Mason couldn't say he was scared but if he was really good what reading people... Lesedi had wanted him to do just that... minus the biting.

The look in Mason's eyes was strange. She couldn't read it. Was he playing with her? Was he trying to push her buttons on purpose?

"Why the hell did you do that?"

"Do what? Kiss you... or bite you?"

"Both... but why did you bite me? Why did you scold me off like I am some kid with no sense?" she lashed.

"Because of what you did Les! You went completely off script!" he matched her tone now.

"I did that because your plan was crazy to me. You wanted me to seduce that man, get to the stupid hotel and then fake him trying to rape me! That is sick and twisted. I know he did it to someone else... but what about what I have gone through? Did you really want me to relive that moment?"

"Of course not, that's why I was waiting outside the door, so it could be just a few minutes thing. We talked about this; we went through this." Mason was frustrated.

"It doesn't matter, the psychological part of it was weighing down on me so I made another plan okay? You had no right to talk to me the way you did and to handle me the way you did and to fucking bite me!" *Although she liked*

it. But he didn't need to know that, and she was going to deny liking it as well so she could forget about it.

"Lesedi... what you did was fucking reckless. That was some reckless crazy shit, and I was not going to sit idle and let that man fucking wank over you. Yeah, it turned out to be a smart idea but to freaking ejaculate on you?" Mason was now seeing red. The thought of that man wanking himself to the sight of her while she waved the camera in front of him angered him.

"*Reckless shit* that paid off, besides... I had drugged him. One hit to the head and he was going to be out of it. And I was going to do that. I was fucking going to punch him and knock him out."

Mason blinked.

"You did what?"

"I did what I had to do, okay? You put me in harm's way, and I made sure that I'd come out unscathed." She hoisted the string of her purse over her shoulder and folded her arms.

Mason just blinked again, maybe three times, opening his mouth and closing it. "What?"

Lesedi rolled her eyes and sighed. She had drugged Gregory, poured the drug in both the glasses of whiskey he had which was why he was acting out of character. She made sure the drug worked by stalling... dancing, making him dance. He was getting sloppier by each passing second...

He was probably going to ejaculate while playing with himself or pass out before he could, she was going to move out of the way... and then punch his head and leave him to rest for the night or for however long the drug will be in his system.

There was no way in hell, she was going to let that man touch her and film the supposed 'rape' that Milo and Mason hoped would happen.

"You need to admit that your plan wasn't solid. So, when you left my place earlier on I went to the drug store in CBD. I know someone who sells some things... and I got it." She shrugged.

Mason was at loss for words. This woman continued to shock him every single time. "I am not sure if I should be proud of you or be freaked out." Mason said.

"Be glad it worked out the way it did because I won't be putting myself in such a position ever again where a man can just look at me and weigh me up and down like a piece of meat."

That point made him snap. Mason was so used to being a part of a team that took risks to get results. Often times his team mates had to go undercover for months in order to get the missions completed.

Often times, his team mates had to do whatever was necessary to get the job done and that was the mindset he had about the whole situation. For a minute he had forgotten what Singo did to Lesedi.

For a minute he had forgotten that Lesedi was forever angry because she has been harbouring this hurt and hatred withing her that now she was just bitter and spewed venom and threatened to kill anyone that dare tries to hurt her.

But the points she made now, standing in his living room... the measures she took in making sure she will not come out of this hurt but with the needed results... were an eye opener.

"I am sorry." He approached her.

Lesedi arched an eyebrow, confused at the change of tone and the apology. "Sorry for what?" She questioned him.

"I am sorry I put you in that position. It wasn't right, we should have thought of plan b, hell even plan c and d." He unfolded her arms and held her hands in his.

"It's done. It's whatever." She felt her temperature rise. The apology sounded sincere, but it was him touching her that was working a number on her. She needed to run out of this place before she did something she wouldn't be able to explain.

"Still... I am glad you did what you did. You thought of a more perfect plan. Even so, you shouldn't have been bait considering what you went through. I just... I don't want you to have this victim mentality, that's why in most cases I rope you in so you can be at the forefront with me. So, you can claim your power back. I shouldn't have accepted Milo's suggestion."

He was looking intently into her eyes, this time she couldn't keep looking at him. Flashbacks of the kiss attacked her, and she bit the inside of her bottom lip so she wouldn't moan. That would be embarrassing.

What the hell was this man doing to her? She was fucking forty years old man. Not a bloody hormonal teen.

She was hearing him, and he was making sense, but she was no longer listening... she watched his Adam's apple bob up and down... and she wanted to run her tongue over it....

"Look at me..." he placed his hand on her chin and tilted her head up so she could look him in the eye. "I am also sorry for biting you. I just... the

thought of that man... the thought that you put yourself in harm's way... but I take full responsibility. I put you in harm's way. "

"Mhm okay." She replied. She no longer wanted to be in the same room alone with him. He was getting way too dangerous for her. "I need to go."

"Okay... can I get a hug before you go?"

That was new, he went from kissing the living daylight out of her without asking to now asking for a hug? What game was this man playing? Because she wasn't keeping up. She wasn't.

"Uhh..."

Mason looked her dead in the eyes... he could tell she was confused but no other emotion reflected in those hazel eyes... she was such a mystery. Very good at hiding emotions, sometimes.

The first time he saw was when he chased her down in Pretoria thinking she was Punch, and when she stepped out of the car, he was taken aback. Her beauty was striking. But it was her driving skills that made him swoon, she was fearless and fierce, a firecracker. Her body, her beauty was just a major plus.

"I wanna do it again..." he whispered, still holding her hands.

She opened her mouth but only to breathe... She knew what he meant by that. Her stomach flipped, nervous fairies erupted into a chorus at the pit of her belly.

He moved towards her, placed her hands over his shoulders... and pelvic to pelvic they touched.

"Do you want me to kiss you?" He asked, his voice so low and husky, she was melting inside.

What in the hell... why was he asking, why couldn't he just do it like he did earlier on? She wondered. Her thoughts were jumbled, *she wanted to, no she didn't want to, she wanted to...*

"Yes..." *no*, her mind was not corresponding with her lips.

Mason smiled, his smile was very brief, it was a '*thank fuck*' kind of smile or '*of course you do*' kind of smile.

This time, the kiss wasn't hurried. It was so slow, it was like he wanted to savour every moment, like he wanted to embed the feel and taste of her lips to his mind.

He kissed her like he was drinking from a fountain after spending long hours in the desert with not a single drop of water.

When his tongue slipped into her mouth Lesedi held onto his biceps, loving the feel of them but also holding on as her mind had gone on a trip and her legs felt wobbly.

Mason backed them up until her back hit the door.

Lesedi moaned into his mouth when she felt his hands cup her boobs. They felt so heavy and so perfect in the palms of his hands. He loved the feel of them, he was after all a boob man.

He found himself in the crook of her neck, smelling her in. She smelled like apples... and coconut... her scent was beautiful. He wanted to eat her up...but not as much as he wanted to kiss her.

His lips found hers again and this time, their tongues wrestled each other... it was a war... but neither wanting to win. They just didn't want it to end.

Lesedi couldn't believe after swearing she'd never be with a white man let alone her sister's boyfriend's brother... she now had her tongue down the man's throat.

Mason's sneaky hand travelled up the exposed thigh. His hand was too hot, making her feel warmer than before, she wanted him to go higher...

He parted her legs with his knee and with an angle, his hard member rubbed against her pelvis. His hand seeped between their bodies, and he rubbed her clothed coochie.

Lesedi lost her mind at that moment.

When last did a man touch her like this? So attentive, so intentional and soo good?! The series of moans that left her throat were music to Mason's ears.

"Mace..." She couldn't even say his full name now. She was hiking to cloud nine.

"Yeah baby..." oh he responded. She loved that, she loved that a little too much. She loved a vocal man in bed. Stuff her fantasies were made of.

Mason shut her moans with lethal kisses and that bloody thumb was rubbing her clit all so nice, the pace was not too fast, not too slow, just fucking perfect.

She felt her orgasm build at the pit of her belly. Her toes curling and wiggling, her nails digging into his arms, her kisses turning to sloppy and fucking hot...

He knew she was about to cum, and he'd give up his last cent to see her fall apart. To see the high and mighty Lesedi Phiri lose her shit right there and then...

He increased pleasure, listening to the sound of her moans, knowing when to slow down or to increase pressure. Knowing what she liked and what she didn't based on her moans...

Lesedi couldn't believe that she was allowing this man to do this to her, to make her feel this good...

The sudden vibration of Mason's thigh shocked them apart. "What the fuck?" He cursed, pulling his vibrating cell phone out of his pocket. It was Milo.

"It better fucking be good Milo." He answered the phone, his eyes trained on Lesedi who couldn't for the life of God look at him. Her purse had fallen to the floor, so she picked it up.

"What are you busy with?" Milo asked on the other side of the line. "I wanted to tell you I forgot my PC charger there..."

Lesedi took that opportunity to dash out of Mason's apartment. "Lesedi!" Mason called after her, but the woman ran, she ran as fast as her heels allowed her.

Mason cursed before closing the door of his apartment with Milo still on the line.

"Aw shit, you two were getting it on? I knew something was going to happen. I saw those - nope - I felt those sparks man. They were burning me." Milo sounded proud of himself.

"Man fuck you." Mason then cut the call. He looked down at his jeans and he was bloody fucking hard.

"Guess we taking a cold one now buddy." He mumbled as he locked the door.

**

The following morning, Lesedi was dancing on the edge. She was so edgy and so agitated.

How in the world did she and Mason get to this point?

She was very clear to him that he shouldn't hit on her. Well, he didn't exactly hit on her but still, kissing her? What the fuck was that? And why did she allow him?

And most importantly, why on God's green earth did it feel so good?

Now she was skiing on the edge, she couldn't even bring herself to touch herself last night to get off. Nope she tossed in bed until her body finally gave in and she passed out.

She hadn't masturbated in a while. She has been basking in celibacy.

She went from riding a man's dick almost daily to quitting altogether. The last man she was with, Nico, he was rough around the edges, not a perfect lay but when she rode him, that orgasm was almost guaranteed. She got tired of always having to ride him in order to get off, so she dumped him.

Not that they were exclusively dating, they were just exclusively *fucking*, the perfect setup for her.

There was no need for her to be vulnerable with him and vice versa. They'd watch movies at his place, then fuck and then call it a night.

She'd gotten bored of that. Gotten bored of having to always finish the job herself so she stopped.

Stopped fucking and stopped making herself come.

It was working well, minus the occasional mood swings that she knew a good orgasm could fix, otherwise she was *thriving*.

Then this fucking gorgeous sex-on-legs comes into her life, pretending that he wants to help her get her revenge but no, he had other plans... plans of fucking seducing her.

Making her lose herself and possibly her mind because how did she lose control in a matter of few minutes like that?

"Okay easy now..." Jamie, her trainer for the day held the boxing bag and stopped her from going overboard. Clearly the woman wanted to blow off some steam.

"Take a breather and we will move onto the mat in a few." The estate had a gym downstairs as well as a coffeeshop. They were keeping their tenants inside rather than have them going out which was a win for her.

The gym was spacious, offered self defence classes that she loved so much and Jamie. Jamie offered to personally train her after she joined her self-defence class and wowed her.

She loved the fact that Jamie was a woman, and she was strong as hell and her self-defence classes were kickass. So, when she offered to train her, Lesedi couldn't say no.

She took her bottle of water and gulped down to quench her thirst. Her mind still on Mason *fucking* Pierce.

How did her life turn over so quickly? One day she was hustling at the salon, trying to make ends meet, the next she wished she could wake up dead and now she was living in her dream apartment, trained at a very clean gym where people minded their own businesses and she let some white man play with her clit while kissing her?

What was happening to her!!

"Do you want to talk about whatever it is that's eating you up?" Jamie asked. She was a little taller than Lesedi, more muscle on her body, her posture and physique were great, slightly intimidating if you weren't Lesedi.

She was mixed race, *coloured* as they are called in South Africa, had curly short hair and was a sight to sore eyes.

"Nope!" Lesedi answered her then screw back the cap of her water bottle. "I just want to punch that stupid bag." The bag had Mason's face on it. Well in her mind it did.

Mason with his stupid soft lips. His stupid cherry breath. What man ate cherry sweets anyway! "Arg." She groaned.

Jamie couldn't help but to laugh. The woman was a closed book and she was clearly going through the most. "Talking might help cause at this rate you're going; you might hurt yourself. I am not even sure I want you to continue training."

That snapped her attention back to Jamie full force, "I pay you to train me Jamie. Not to be my therapist. I want to train."

"You are not in the right frame of mind today sweetheart, and I am saying if you don't wanna talk and deal with the problem, then no session today. The bag was all you got." Jamie deadpanned. She wasn't afraid of Lesedi's murderous looks or sharp tongue or even her impressive fighting skills.

"You're forcing me to talk? It's none of your business."

"I am not forcing you talk; I am saying if you don't wanna deal with it so you can get your mind in the game then you can't train. I won't have you hurt yourself in my gym, no thanks." Jamie was co-owner of the gym.

"I let a boy kiss me." Lesedi mumbled. She reckoned if Jamie wanted to play a free, unqualified therapist, she'd let her. Maybe she'd allow her to get in the ring and have a boxing match.

Lesedi loved the gym.

She was so invested in the beauty market for so long, wishing to own her own salon one day but when it all changed after that fateful day, she found love and pleasure in the gym. She found peace in the thrill of beating people up. Felt more alive on the treadmill, in the boxing ring or on the self defence mat where they got to beat each other up.

Mason was right when he said she'd enjoy the type of life he was living. Glimpse by glimpse he opened up to her and she found herself very excited to be a part of his operations.

"I don't understand." Jamie did not expect that. "You let a boy kiss you... oh are you lesbian?" She whispered the last part.

"No, I am not a lesbian, I date men... I fuck men. I am attracted to men... was attracted to men.. arg." Lesedi regretted opening her stupid mouth cause now she'd have to tell Jamie why she hated men and she couldn't do it. She wasn't going to.

"Girl, you sound like you have too much going on. So, I am just gonna pick an angle to work with here," Jamie had a sheepish smile on her face, "so you let a boy kiss you because you are done with men. You swore to yourself that you're done with men, and here comes this boy who kisses you and you let him... and you enjoyed it, now you are angry because you went against your vow?"

Lesedi stared at Jamie, blinking. The woman summed it up very nicely even without knowing all the jazz. "Sounds about right. And I told him, I told him he mustn't flirt with me, or ask me out or to even kiss me." She needed the punching bag. "Jamie I need to punch that bag please. I don't drink alcohol and I need to blow off some -"

"You don't drink alcohol? Girl how in the fuck are you doing this life thing sober?" Jamie couldn't believe her ears. She was one gym instructor that believed in the supremacy of vodka.

"That's why I need the bag." Lesedi pouted.

Jamie laughed, "Sorry babe, no. But on the real though, you don't want to have fun with this guy? I mean if he has riled you up this much, the kiss must have been magical."

Magical.

Magical my ass, that kiss was everything and beyond.

She groaned, further entertaining Jamie. "Girl, do you want him?"

"No, look I am not... I don't want a relationship and I know he doesn't either because he doesn't live here, he just wants to fuck... and I am done fucking around."

"So, you are done fucking around and also you don't want a relationship. So, what you are telling me is you're waiting for the day you die, and you are not going to try and get some orgasms while at it?"

The things Jamie said did not suit her physical appearance. She seemed tough as nails, like she was vegan and drank water all day every day, even at parties. She looked like she'd beat up a man for looking at her wrong... Lesedi wasn't coping. She thought Jamie would back her up.

"Those orgasms you have to work for them. It's not like they care about you enjoying yourself." She rolled her eyes.

Jamie snorted, "Well that was some bad sex you had, but how sure are you that this guy won't care about you getting your orgasms? What if he's those men that are attentive, mhm?"

Lesedi thought back to how deliberate Mason's touch was. It felt calculated, like he was gauging her reaction and doing more of what she loved. Had Milo not called him and disturbed their fucking make out session, she'd have creamed and soaked her fucking panties. That orgasm, she felt it from the pit of her belly, and it was going to trickle down her fucking thighs.

"Mhm you're thinking about it aren't you?" Jamie teased her.

"No, there is nothing to think about. Men are terrible... and they should stay away from me." Lesedi looked around the gym, people were coming in while others are going out. She no longer had the desire to do anything. Jamie was right, she wasn't in the right frame of mind to do anything. She was too pissed.

"Babe, you are already doing this life thing sober, go get some orgasms..." Jamie patted her on the shoulder and checked her rubber wrist watch. "I have to go check some supplies since our session is officially over. See you Monday?" Jamie offered a smile and Lesedi couldn't help but to roll her eyes but flashed a small smile.

She picked up her water bottle and short towel and left the gym.

She arrived at her place and took a shower. Draped her body with the fluffy black towel and sat on her bed. She took her phone from the charger and found two missed calls from Mason and a voice message.

'Hey Les, uhh shit I came by, and you didn't answer the door. I don't know if you're mad at me, I'd understand if you are. I want to apologize but say what? That I am sorry for kissing you? I am not, I probably should be sorry cause I know we said not to go there... anyway I hope we can put this behind us because I need you to be ready for the big meeting with Gregory tomorrow. He is off today, so you can attack him tomorrow and hopefully be employed by Monday.

And by the way, those fucking lips are too damn soft, I apologize if I am gonna fantasize about them for a while. But I'm kidding, I can be a good boy!
He chuckled before cutting the voice message.

When he said he could be a *good boy* Lesedi groaned. Mason was a bloody fucking tease.

She opened her WhatsApp and shot him a quick *'I was at the gym, and I will come over to discuss next move later'* text.

She thought back to that moment when she was in the hospital and he helped her to drink water, all the problems started there...

How he looked into her eyes, how he caught the water that trickled down her chin... the root of her problems sprouted that day.

Now she didn't know what to fucking do, but one thing is for sure, she was never to be alone in Mason's presence.

So, she called Mbali.

"Can I finally come to see your new place?" that's how Mbali answered her phone.

Lesedi smiled, even though she was inviting Mbali over for her selfish reasons, talking to the girl and seeing her will just be as nice.

"Yes."

CHAPTER SEVEN

Sunday came by and Lesedi found herself in the driver seat of her car, journeying to Soweto, Pimville.

She played soft music on her way there to calm herself down.

She kept thinking of the plan she and Mason came with. And as she had hoped last night, Mbali served as the perfect barrier between the two of them. She took Mbali with to Mason's place and by luck she found Milo there who couldn't help but to give her knowing, stupid looks.

She was irritated but managed to contain herself. She was cold towards Mason though. Responding where necessary and keeping quiet most of the time while Milo entertained Mbali in the lounge.

Now the actual work commences.

She wondered how long it would take for them to be able to have their hands on the stupid hotel and Mason told her it could take about three months. She didn't know if she'd be able to work for that pig for three months.

She just wished she could sleep, and all of this would be over.

Arriving to the hotel, she asked to see Gregory and he asked for the receptionist to bring her up. The nice doorman wasn't on duty that Sunday, another stoic one was.

Every time she came to this hotel, she couldn't believe its beauty. It was so refreshing and to think it was operating in the middle of a township... Mateo did something here. Even though she hated to pass him any compliments. *That fucktard.*

"Ms Phiri." Gregory welcomed her in his office. He had very vivid memory of seeing this woman Friday night but nothing about how the night ended.

He woke up alone with a killer hangover yesterday that he nursed the whole day.

"On last names now... come on Greg, you and I are way passed that." She smirked in his direction, a very sexy smirk. She was dressed in simple jeans and button-down shirt and her boots. She didn't feel like dressing up to see the man. She came here to fight and threaten him.

"I am not sure I am following..." Gregory was trying so hard to remember what happened between the two of them. He just hoped and prayed that she wasn't here to accuse him of anything. He was once down that road, never again.

Lesedi sat down and smiled sweetly at him. "I mean after the fun we had, I thought you'd call me..."

"Yes we met at the club... had a few drinks..." Greg recalled. "We left to my hotel isn't it? I didn't do anything stupid did I?" He asked.

Lesedi giggled, "No silly. You were the perfect host. You promised me a job though, said you will call me yesterday, but you didn't, so seeing that I was in the neighbourhood..."

"A job... yes, yes but the job I have for you is only for month end."

"Oh no. You mentioned needing an assistant. You said I will be perfect for it." She lied. She knew he had forgotten all about what happened at the hotel thanks to her drug.

Gregory was surprised he actually offered this girl the job of being his assistant. He had sworn off female assistants after the last one. And why would he do that when it was clear as they sky that Mateo Molao did not like dark-skinned women...

"Ms Phiri -"

"Lesedi, call me Lesedi please. It's not hard to pronounce is it?" she asked.

"Uh sure, Lesedi, I am sorry that I made you that promise, clearly I was too drunk. I had a killer headache yesterday; I obviously drank more than I should have. I can't give you that job."

"Oh, but I think you can."

"I can't. I'm sorry, I will just make sure that we pay you well at the event just to apologize. It will come out of my own pocket." It was cute how sincere the man sounded, but unfortunately she wasn't here for the sincerity party. She had a vendetta she needed to see through.

"Greg... you can do better than that. I work hard, I mean I really want this job, I will be a fantastic assistant you will ever have." Those words did nothing to him. He did have the best assistant who seduced him then cried sexual harassment after. *She had wanted him damn it.*

"I am sorry the best I can do is the waiting job at the new year function."

She stood up and walked around the man's desk with her phone in her hand, "See Gregory... I think you want to give me the job..." she told him.

"Yeah... why...why's that?" he asked. He hoped to God that this girl had nothing on him. He couldn't go through another scandal; Mateo gave him one last chance after the last incident. He couldn't ruin things now.

Lesedi leaned over his desk and showed him the video. It was in HD. You could clearly see him and somehow his dick appeared smaller than before. The charming works of Milo.

Gregory was at loss for words. "Turn it off, please." To say he was embarrassed would be an understatement. He couldn't bear to look at his drunken self-act in that manner. To a total stranger. How sloshed was he? Why in the hell did he drink so much?

"I mean that was fun though don't you agree?" Lesedi was enjoying this a little more than necessary. She was grinning like a Cheshire cat while Gregory Muller was red and seemed to be losing more hair.

"How... why... I was drunk!" he argued.

"I mean I know that... I do. Which is why I did what I did. I need the job." Lesedi moved back to her seat. "And you promised me a job. I asked you how will I be certain that you will give me the job... and you said, 'take a picture of my cock!' and so I did." Lesedi was a smooth criminal. The lies were so smooth because she and Mason went over them over and over again. And the green-eyed man told her to say cock instead of a dick.

"I don't know why white people lean more towards cock than dick, so I think a man like Muller would call his junk a cock, so go with that." Mason had said to her, and she wanted to laugh but only did so when she got to her apartment. She wasn't going to relax around that man anytime soon. *He was a kisser.*

That man was training her on how to tell a lie while looking like the most innocent woman ever.

"You sneaky little bitch!" Muller hissed. He couldn't delete the video out of his mind, and he wished to. It was embarrassing, no one should see him like that, not even the person who took the damned video.

"Desperate, desperate bitch Mr Muller. I need that job and you're going to make sure I get it." Lesedi pocketed her cell phone.

Muller wiped the beads of sweat that had formed on his forehead. He couldn't possibly imagine what Lesedi would do with that video. He didn't even want to think about it. It was clear that she'd share it on social media, *oh Facebook!* His family and relatives were all over Facebook, they'd see it and see him for the bum they think he was. The cheating bastard they all call him behind his back.

"Look, I can pay you good money if it's money you need. Mr Molao wouldn't agree to me bringing you as my assistant."

"You make a plan about that. You're the operational manager around here, he trusts you, he trusts your judgement and you want to impress him but lately you can't because you are doing a two people's job."

Just how much did he blurb to this woman on Friday night? What he didn't know was that Milo had that information ready for Lesedi. He didn't even have to say a thing.

"He won't be impressed." He mumbled to himself. "How much do you need?"

"I am a woman of principle Mr Muller; you can't buy me off. I work for my money. So, I want to work." It was amazing how Mason knew he might try to pay her off and he told her what exactly to say. Clearly that man had a lot more experience in deceiving people than she gave him credit for.

"Principle..." Muller scoffed, "could have fooled me. Ten thousand rand... that's my offer."

Lesedi giggled, "Ten thousand rand? When you say you want to pay me off you meant that? You can't be serious."

"Well, that's how much as my assistant you will be earning."

"A month! Unless you're saying you will give me ten thousand a month..."

"No of course not. I am not that rich." Gregory was seething inside. This woman badly needed the job it seemed. He knew Mateo would only have an issue for a while, but he will soon forget. It's this woman's desperation that made him not to want to go through with this.

What was her agenda?

"Look, you have my CV, all my details are on it, if you don't want this video being sent to your wife and all your family members and all your staff, you will make sure I get the job and not just any job, the job of being your assistant and pay me a little better than ten thousand a month, are assistants a joke to you?" She asked, clearly displeased with the pay grade.

If the assistant to the operational manager earned ten thousand rand, just how much did they pay the cleaners and the waiting staff?

"I will give you a call." Gregory wanted the woman out of his office so he could think. She did look like a desperate woman. Her outfit was unappealing, not like the stunning dress she wore on Friday...

"Wait... did you set me up on Friday? Was that a ploy to get me drunk and alone?" He asked, his suspicions made sense.

Lesedi laughed, she stood up and looked at Gregory like he lost his damn mind, "Please, I was out clubbing, saw a familiar face and what do you know... fate happened. Call me with good news Muller you have until close of business tomorrow. I won't even negotiate with you if you don't come through, you will just get a call from Teresa."

When she called his wife by name, he knew that this girl... would stop at nothing to get what she wanted.

"Okay and you will delete the video?" he asked.

"Absolutely, I have no reason to keep it once I sign the contract moes? Bathong." Lesedi opened the door and looked back, "this isn't personal by the way." Then she winked and left him stunned.

**

"We invested fifty million in this business of yours Mateo. You told us this man will double it, indeed he did, so we re-invested it back so we can grow the hotel business... so we can set up for the future of our families so they never lack... hundred million. It all went up in flames?"

Thami Masoga, or the "The General" as everyone called him was sitting in Mateo Molao's home office, drinking coffee with his legs propped on the man's desk like it was his office. His physique and his stance in the police department gave him that power and of course his pockets.

He was The General commissioner of the police and also Mateo's partner in all sorts of crimes.

They were having one of their meetings that were always unscheduled. "I have done you so many favours that cost me a lot of money and now I have nothing to show for it. You tell me your guy is dead, he's being eaten by worms

underground, his house burned down, and my money is gone?" The man laughed. He had a boisterous laugh. Fair complexion, tall, big belly, great physique... he looked important.

Mateo scratched his eyebrow, not knowing what to say to the man that has pulled all kinds of strings so he and Morris Phiri can thrive in the drug business and make money. Sure, the hotel brought in a lot of money, but they needed to acquire more hotels. That was always the plan.

There were too many shareholders to the hotel and neither he nor The General liked that. They needed to make more money and Mateo promised to do just that.

They had met during Lekau Singo's first political affiliations and from there, an illegal bromance was born.

The commissioner, Thami, gave Singo a life line. He was the one that assisted in his name change and laying low for almost eight years.

"I am sorry General." He had nothing to say for himself.

Thami laughed, "Sorry is not going to bring my money back and I want my money back." He was a very calm and yet a deadly man.

He had all kinds of ammunition, all kinds of resources to make a person disappear without a trace. Mateo did not want to be at the receiving end of the big man's wrath.

"I have my boys investigating the Tiger Six, as you have said that they are the ones who killed your man. I will make sure they dance to my music."

"I had a lead with some boy, but he was moved to the Eastern Cape. He used to work for Morris." Mateo remembered how he couldn't get his hands on the boy, but maybe The General could. He was a resourceful man and if

anyone didn't know yet, Thami had the other police officials eating out of his hand as he was ranking higher than them.

Thami waved his hand off, dismissing him like he would dismiss many, "I don't want more problems, let's follow up with these boys and if they did take my money, they will bring it back. I don't care what they have to do but I want it back." Thami was not the least interested in whatever else Mateo wanted to say. He didn't even want to hear about the supposed lead.

"Have you started looking into new hotels we can acquire? Either by crook or book, make it happen. The new year has started, let's end it off with opening of another paradise." The man stood up, placed the now empty cup of coffee on the desk.

"I will be in touch. In the meantime, find another way to make some of my money back. I don't care what is it that you do." He then buttoned up his blazer and left Mateo's office.

He didn't need anyone to walk him out anywhere, he knew this house like the back of his hand because he bought it for Mateo when he was running for a ward councillor in Soweto.

* *

"We have our offices up here, mine, Mr Molao's, the security room, the boardroom where we hold our meetings. We don't have HR office, however, we outsource the services. We also have our own accountant, he has his office right here, he also lives here at the hotel so most of the time he won't be in his office." Gregory was giving Lesedi a tour of their offices and also letting her know what her duties were.

She was officially hired. Mateo did not have any issues with Gregory hiring the girl that embarrassed him just a couple of weeks back. In fact, he couldn't even care less that Gregory had a new assistant, he just told him to keep his hands to himself this time around and moved on about his day.

"Does Mr Molao come here every day?" Lesedi asked. She was dressed in a loose fitting, long sleeved black pencil dress and white tennis shoes. She couldn't for the life of her bring herself to wear heels. She was not going to torture herself on her first day at a new job.

"No, he doesn't. If he did, there would be no need for me and no need for you." Gregory was a little snappy, but Lesedi didn't give a damn that he didn't want to hire her. He will come around eventually.

"His office is at the corner, has his names outside you won't miss it, and under no circumstance will you even go in there in his or mine's absence. You will have the key in case of emergency but only if the hotel is on fire or anything of that nature occurring will you go in there. Understood?"

That sparked her interest, now she was more eager to work for these stupid people. What were they hiding in there? Did they sell drugs, and the hotel was a legal front? She was more than curious now.

"Why? Y'all hiding dead bodies in there?" Lesedi half joked as she leaned back on the chair in front of Gregory's desk.

The man cast her a bored look and opened his laptop, "I don't know what you think this place is, but since you're so blind, we are running a luxury establishment, we are not the mafia." He rolled his eyes.

"Oh, lighten up Greg... I was just... joking."

"Ha-ha." The man was moody as hell. "I have sent your contract to HR, and you're officially employed, they will process everything and will send you a link to your email with everything you will need to equip yourself to be able to work. Let's start off with introducing your duties shall we?"

And just like that Lesedi was thrown into the deep ends of employment with a moody ass boss that didn't even spare her. Gregory was clearly still angry at her as he dumped all work upon her.

She was in charge of making sure the cleaning ladies were following schedules, the restaurant was running well, she was basically doing his job while he sat behind his desk and made calls to source out new suppliers.

By the time knock off time rolled over, she was ready to shut down.

She had her own office which 'lucky' for her was right next door to Gregory's one. The man called her through the intercom the whole day, sending her to do useless things.

She realized that the useless things she did, were in fact necessary in making sure the running of the hotel was smooth sailing.

She closed off her laptop and took her bag, locked her office and went to Gregory's office. "I am off." She gave him the laptop bag, she was not allowed to take the laptop home, it was company property, and it shall remain at work.

"How did you find your first day?" Gregory asked, smiling inside as he looked at her solemn face.

Lesedi looked at him, contemplated on telling him the truth but she wouldn't give him the satisfaction, "I must say... as tiring as I thought I'd find it, it was actually great. I will see you tomorrow at nine." She grinned. Faking it for the gods.

Gregory pursed his lips together and took the laptop from her and locked it in his drawer, "Tomorrow then."

Lesedi picked up takeaways on her way back home, it was quite a drive but luckily for her, she drove against traffic. While most were coming from the city back to Soweto she was driving out.

She received a call from her sister on her way up to her apartment. "Hey... I have been meaning to call but I am helping out Kyle at the office and since they were off for Christmas ... I am hardly touching ground." Tracy informed her sister.

"Mhm, so are you officially back as his assistant or just until he finds someone?" Lesedi asked.

"By the looks of things, I might stay on for a while. Loraine is pregnant, she gets sick randomly, Greyson suggested she takes indefinite leave, so I am barely coping, even now, we are still at the office. I am fucking tired."

Lesedi felt for her baby sister, "Did you think about the salon thing? Not that you have to think about anything because I have made up my mind." Tracy asked.

Lesedi sighed as she reached her door and searched her bag for her key, "I haven't gotten a chance to go over the papers yet. But I will, soon as a I get a chance."

She fiddled for a while with her keys before finding the correct one, "I also have a job you know, and I am so busy with other things." Lesedi finished.

She walked in her house and felt a presence behind her, she quickly turned and found Mason *The fucking Lord* Pierce, texting on his phone. He

looked up and found Lesedi staring at him. He smiled. She scowled, the dimple on her chin deepening. Just what he liked to see.

"Okay but you need to hurry up with it okay? So, you can take over salon, so I don't have to stress a lot." Tracy said to her as she still had her phone pressed to her ear.

"Yes, I know. I will. I have to go, will chat?"

"Okay, love ya."

"Love you too." Lesedi then cut the call and walked inside her house, knowing Mason was following her.

"I am very curious as to how you fucking knew I'd be home. You're such a creep." Lesedi placed her bags on the kitchen.

Mason followed her all the way to the kitchen, texting furiously on his phone, "I am coming here for the second time actually. So, a lucky guess." He answered, typed something on his phone then put it in the front pocket of his cargos. "How was your first day at work?"

"Goodness gracious!" Lesedi exasperated, "Mason, I just came back home, I haven't even taken off my shoes or this goddamn dress and you already want an update?"

She was however glad that he was here to discuss their operations and not what happened between them Friday night. She has been making sure to stay clear of the man by going to the gym and just driving out when she was waiting for Gregory to get back to her.

"Geez, someone had a bad day." Mason looked at her, his lips were in their pouty natural form. She has seen Kyle look like that, she wondered who they took after.

"I am okay, I had a fucking rough day. That man... that man is a fucking slave driver." Lesedi took only her handbag and went to her bedroom, took off her shoes and the dress and wore her tracksuits.

Something Mason never understood. It was January, the weather was not even warm, it was hot as hell, but she was always covered up. Even the dress she wore today, it did not tightly hug her body and it was long sleeved.

"Is he still mad about the video?"

"I think so. Anyway, can I please have just a couple of minutes before we talk about Gregory and his mood swings? I am hungry." She mumbled as she walked back into the kitchen and fiddled with the takeaway bag.

"I brought some veggies and some lamb shank; didn't think I'd have the energy to cook. Joining me?" she asked.

"Uhh no, I don't eat lamb thanks."

"Veggies? I won't feel right if I am eating and you're not."

"I actually had a snack after gym and I'm still alright."

"Then go back to your place then so I can eat in peace." She exploded as she plated her food so she could warm them up.

Mason chuckled, "I left my beer here sometime, if you didn't chuck it out, I will have some thanks."

Lesedi rolled her eyes but pulled out a beer from the fridge and passed it to him. "I last ate breakfast you know..." Lesedi mumbled as she kept checking the timer on the microwave. Those two minutes seemed like freaking eternity.

"Why didn't you have lunch? He doesn't allow you to have lunch?" Mason asked concern marring his face.

"Mhm-mhm, I was very busy." Lesedi cut the microwave when forty seconds were remaining, she was that hungry. She went to sit on the couch and felt all her bones relax. "Ahh! Man. I never slaved like this at the salon damn."

"You want to tell me that being an assistant at a luxury hotel is a worse job than being a hairdresser in the busiest parts of Joburg?"

"Okay, maybe I'm being a little dramatic." She smiled as she dug into her food. As she dug in, Mason drank his beer while watching her from the side.

She felt his eyes on her and wanted to scream at him, but she was too hungry and needed energy. But as she carried on eating and he carried on watching, she couldn't take it anymore.

"Get out."

He was startled by that. He was just about to sip his beer when she blurted those words out, "What do you mean?"

"I can't eat with you staring at me like that. And I don't want to argue with anyone today, I am tired."

"I don't wanna argue..."

"Then what do you want?" She didn't mean to ask him that, hell she didn't even want to know why he was staring because chances are, he'd want to talk about the damn kiss.

"Are you not feeling hot?" He asked.

"What?"

"Yeah... you're always wearing tracksuits or sweatshirts and long pants and boots... and long sleeved dresses and now you're in the comfort of your own home, after a long day and you are wearing tracksuits... why?"

Lesedi could have taken him talking about the kiss instead of what he just asked her. Mason was too observant, and she found that trait annoying. The people she worked with at the salon stopped asking her the first summer she spent with them because her answer had been 'mind ya fucking business' but this was Mason, he made everything about her his business.

Lesedi looked at him briefly and found those pair of green eyes staring at her. She focused on eating her lamb shank with mashed potatoes and green salad, ignoring him.

"Are you gonna tell me?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"It's none of your damn business."

"So, you aren't feeling hot?"

"Why did you kiss me on Friday night?" She turned to look at him, eyes scorching, and eyebrows knitted together.

Mason's brows shot up; he didn't think she'd wanna talk about that. Ever since it happened, she had been avoiding him and even bringing strangers to their meetings. He figured he had overstepped the mark once again and she was not going to talk about it, and he wouldn't either.

But clearly talking about why she wore long stuff in the hot weather was way crucial than the kiss.

"I was... curious." He responded after a thought. What could he possibly say? That he had been dying to do that for a while? That'd be a lie.

He seldom thought of Lesedi in that way, maybe the first time they met and when they worked together during the Christmas operation he wanted to

fuck the stubbornness out of her, but as time went on, he realized that she was a ticking time bomb that could slit his throat open in a blink of an eye... and he was better off.

Then to seeing her vulnerable side, even if it was just a glimpse... he started to have those crazy thoughts again, but now instead of fucking the stubbornness out of her, he wanted to kiss her and caress her. Only for a little while.

"Okay, I know that you and I are going to be working very closely together, but let this be a fair and last warning to you Mason, you dare kiss me again or touch me inappropriately... I will slice off one of your balls."

She proceeded to shove a huge piece of meat in her mouth, chewing slowly while her eyes were trained back on the switched off TV.

Mason looked at her and smiled, he took a sip of his beer and rearranged the front of his pants because damn if that didn't arouse him.

"Got it. Eat up so you can fill me in about your day..."

CHAPTER EIGHT

Two weeks lapsed since Lesedi was employed at the hotel and everyday her curiosity peaked. Mateo came to the hotel, had hush-hush meetings with Gregory and Samuel, the accountant, and she was not included in any of those meetings, nor did she ever get to see the minutes or know what the meetings were about.

The meetings were held in the Mateo's office and even when she tried her luck by bringing them coffee in order to snoop, Gregory had opened the door and sent her back to the kitchen with her coffee.

She was so frustrated, annoyed but curious as to what was going on in the hotel that she wasn't supposed to know.

Friday rolled in and instead of knocking off earlier, she still needed to finalize things as she was now assisting with the planning of the year end function and judging by the pictures of the last function, the event was one for the books.

This hotel was big on attracting tourists, the services and extra activities they offered were the very best. So, every year end function, they celebrated the hotel staff, celebrated the hotel milestones in terms of finances and introduced maybe new activities they will be offering the guests.

At the moment they were renovating the pool to give an imaginary beach and that was taking too long, and it made Mateo anxious. He was forever complaining about the renovations and in turn made Gregory snappy and that made Lesedi's job a little hard.

She has never worked as an administrator before, but she did take computer lessons sometime back which was why she was not doing all too bad except her excel skills were very poor.

And Gregory made her life living hell for it since she forced his hand at hiring her.

When she finally decided to leave, it was seven at night and Gregory was still in the office. "Do you ever go home to your wife and kids?" She asked as she walked into the man's office to give back the laptop.

"I don't see how that is a concern of yours" He responded by opening his palm for her to place the laptop in. "Please avail yourself tomorrow to oversee the pool renovations, I won't be here and Sunday too."

Lesedi wanted to protest but thought against it. The more she complained about certain things, the more Gregory made things worse for her at work.

She was dressed in casual wear on Friday. She wore an olive overall with white sneakers and was happy to go home to sleep. Not that she will be enjoying a weekend off since she will be working but going back to her apartment was always the highlight of her days. She still couldn't believe she was living in Fourways with her own apartment.

She arrived at her place to a text from Tracy saying that she was in Mason's apartment with Kyle, and she should pop by when she returns from work.

So much for wanting to get home to sleep.

She dropped off her handbag in her house, took a quick shower to smell fresh at least. She wore another overall, this time a sunset orange in

colour. She loved these overalls; they were so chic and gave her comfort in how they covered her up but still left her feeling great.

Her hair was parted in the middle, she couldn't believe that the weave was still in such great condition weeks later. She indeed knew how to take care of hair but also the hair dressers at Tracy's salon were fantastic.

She popped some mint in her mouth from her sweets bowl that she kept in her kitchen and took the stairs to Mason's apartment.

She had just taken her last stair up when she looked up to find one of the tenants throwing garbage. The man was good looking, he had a fair complexion, nice and big eyes, big lips...and he was smiling at her.

She pursed her lips and passed him a nervous smile.

"Hi..." He decided to talk to her.

"Hey..." Lesedi wanted to sprint but didn't want to seem weird, so she walked in slow motion.

"I have been seeing you around hoping that one day I'd catch a moment with you alone." He started walking towards her.

She was getting uncomfortable, strange men that wanted to talk to her alone made her anxious. She looked between him and Mason's apartment. She couldn't even see the damn unit because she had to round a corner first.

"Are you okay? My name is Siphso by the way." The man introduced himself and offered his hand for a handshake. Lesedi looked at it. He was not armed, he was alone, if he tried anything she could easily push him against the wall and strangle the living daylights out of him.

"What do you want?" She was almost breathless. She was trying to control her emotions. She was trying to calm down. "*Im not in a tight spot. Im not in a tight spot.*" She chanted slowly to herself.

Sipho looked at her like she had lost her mind. He had been seeing her run up and down these stairs, saw her at the gym and he just wished to have a moment alone with her. She was a beauty. A stunner of note.

But at that moment he was starting to wonder if all pretty girls behaved in such a strange manner.

The lift dinged and Mason walked out of the lift with Greyson and Loraine in tow. He saw Lesedi breathing strangely while looking at the man he's frequently met in the lift and at the gym.

"Hey Les... hey man..." Mason walked over to them and touched her shoulder. That's when she snapped out of her trance and looked into Mason's familiar eyes.

"Mason!" She grabbed Mason's hand tightly and looked at the man and started dragging Mason away.

Greyson and Loraine looked at each other with questioning eyes. They followed Mason and Lesedi to what they hoped was Mason's apartment. They left the man hanging next to the lift. He didn't know what the hell had just happened either.

The second Lesedi opened Mason's apartment and Tracy came into view with her cute face, smiling at Kyle who was in the kitchen chopping up some lettuce she relaxed.

She relaxed the minute her eyes met Mason's outside but seeing her baby sister made her feel all calm and sound.

The group was soon joined by some of their other close friends. Some they had met at the New Year crossover. "So, how's work sis? How is it working at the hotel?" Tracy was aware of Lesedi's new job. The two sisters were in the kitchen making cocktails for the others.

Virgin cocktails for Loraine and Lesedi and alcoholic cocktails for the rest. "It's boring for the most part." She answered.

"Mhm, and working with that man?"

"I hardly see him but when I do, my blood still boils I won't lie. But I keep cool cause he doesn't know what's about to hit him." She smiled.

Tracy loved seeing her sister smile, but it quite often bothered her that Lesedi smiled a lot when she spoke of this revenge trip she and Mason were embarking on.

Earlier when they entered the apartment, Loraine told her of the situation they witnessed outside, and Tracy didn't want to ruin their Friday night by asking her why she had seemed freaked out. What did the other guy do to her? But that was the question none of them dared asked.

"Are you off this weekend? I was thinking of visiting mama and Sofia."

"I am working unfortunately. They are making big renovations at the hotel and apparently I have to oversee the whole thing." She rolled her eyes while taking a sip of her cocktail. It wasn't so bad, tasted nice and gave the illusion that they were part of the alcohol drinking crew.

They were playing some music, mostly South African house music to lighten up the mood and everyone was in favour including the pregnant Loraine who was dancing while her husband kept his eyes glued on her. If she

wasn't already pregnant, Lesedi would say the man was going to knock her up that night.

It was so beautiful to watch. How Greyson looked at her with stars in his eyes, and how he took care of her as pregnant as she was. It was cute. Maybe when she was their age she would have loved that, but that ship sailed a long time ago, she didn't care about such things anymore.

Tracy took the drinks to others and Mason stood up and signalled for Lesedi to follow him.

She sighed, wondering what he wanted now. She wasn't making a lot of progress at work and Mason told her to be aware of patterns which could come in handy one day.

She followed the man to his bedroom, "Close the door behind you please." He told her.

"Now why did you want me to come in your bedroom?" if Mason was anyone else, her guard would be fucking up. But a part of her trusted this man.

Mason ignored her and opened the curtain that hid the sliding door of his bedroom balcony. He didn't switch on the light, and it was dark, she couldn't see how his bedroom looked like but one thing she could say was that it smelled like him. And that smell was just too damn nice.

She followed him to the balcony, and he had two seats around a table. He sat down and she followed him. He had a glass of whiskey in hand while she had her mocktail. She placed it on the table to give him attention.

"This is sending out a wrong message." She said to him. "They probably think we are in here doing only God knows what." She was not impressed.

"Who was that guy outside the lift?" Mason cut to the chase.

Lesedi sighed, she had forgotten about that little incident already. "I don't know him."

"I worry about you okay; you were spacing out. Two things could or would have happened if I didn't show up," he was looking into her eyes. "One, either you would have ran like a crazy woman who isn't being chased or two, you would have beat the crap out of that guy and I think I know you well enough to know that had he took a step closer, you would have beaten his ass."

Lesedi smirked, well as annoying as Mason was, the man was right.

"Don't fucking smile, you're dangerous Les. Not every man is out to get you."

"I can't help it okay? I just... he moved in on me and I started overthinking. I could have walked past but I didn't want to be rude. Every time I ignore people who greet me I get told that I am rude or that someday I might need their help and they will refuse to help me because I was once rude to them... but when I stop to talk to them I just..."

Mason felt for her. It must not easy being her right now. He so wished they could trade places. "Don't you want to see a therapist?"

"No."

"No? They might help."

"I am okay, you're right... if I just remind myself that not every man is out to get me, I might not beat them up."

Mason chuckled; this woman was damn stubborn. "What did he want?"

"I don't know... all I know is that he looked happy to see me and he walked closer to me."

That irritated Mason. For some reason, knowing that the guy was interested in her annoyed him. "And that bothers you? When a man looks at you like he wants you?"

She nodded, "See I am trying okay? I am working for the devil that hurt me in the worst way possible. I don't see much of him but every time I think of him, I want to hurt him, and then I start to hate men all over again." She confessed.

Mason pulled his chair in front of her and opened his hands so she could put hers in them, "Do you want out? I can get Milo to get someone to work for us at the hotel. I don't want you to live in fear of every man. Yes I know, men are fucking lunatics and not every man you will meet is a danger as much as not every man you will meet will be a saint."

"No, I don't want out. I just... I don't want to fear men."

"I honestly don't know why... because you took down two men by yourself, you lived in the craziest part of Joburg. You can protect yourself if a man tries to be smart with you."

The feeling of his warm hands over hers calmed her down. She was in such a peace bubble and did not want to get out.

"I did, didn't I?" She smiled. Thinking back to her first physical fight brought a joyful smile on her face.

"You are sadist, I can't deal with you." Mason joked, "But really, just don't lose yourself in your head like that. It could give someone power to hurt you. Just know that should a man try anything.... It's their fucking heart beating out of your hand, and you call me to clean it up okay?"

She couldn't help but to laugh and nod, "Okay."

"Good, now... what's happening? Do we have anything? Any access to the security room or Singo's office?" He asked, leaning back in his chair, letting go of her hands.

One thing about Mason was that he was a care-bear. Doesn't matter if he never wanted to get married or be in an exclusive romantical relationship, he will still care about your well-being.

"Nothing, I am not allowed to even bring them coffee in the stupid office when he's there." She felt great that their conversation didn't take an awkward route but still, the warmth she felt when the man held her hands brought an indescribable feeling within.

"But tomorrow I'm working alone, Gregory says he's off...Sunday too. Maybe it will give me time to snoop around." She smiled.

"Yeah... check if he also leaves the 'company property at work', if he does, let me know." Mason referred to how Gregory told her the laptop was company property and wasn't allowed out of the hotel.

"Even if he does leave it at work, I don't know the password." She shrugged.

"As long as it's there... I can work my magic." He smiled.

His smile was infectious, Lesedi found herself smiling back.

"Orange is a nice colour on you... also I dig the fit." He rolled his bottom lip in his mouth and Lesedi swear she felt herself clench.

What was happening to her right now? Simple compliments made her horny? She'd be damned.

"Thanks..." She knew she had to leave and go join the others, but she couldn't bring herself to. She didn't want to seem obvious that his careless compliment was affecting her.

"Does that bother you? Me complimenting you?"

"No..." she lied, "yes." then she decided to be honest in the same breath. Arg this guy was doing her head in.

Mason laughed, he loved toying with her. Yes her mental state sometimes worried him, but he kind of enjoyed how she wasn't so guarded around him. She tried but after a few minutes, she'd give up and let loose.

Mason looked at her, they were sitting in the dark, the outside lights of the building around illuminating them and he was just observing how really gorgeous the girl was.

She looked up at him and found him staring. His eyes were so dark, but man, the way he was leaning back in the chair, his big thighs, the shirt that clung to his body, how he held the glass... the hair on his forearms, his five o'clock shadow... his damn bushy brows, his plump pouty lips...

Why was she now seeing this man how Sofia saw him?

They were staring at each other, each having down-right dirty thoughts about one another.

Lesedi was thinking about the kiss they had once shared, how he held her, how her body moulded into his. Thinking back to the guys she's been with; she was always in charge. The only time she let them lead things, she wasn't satisfied, she never was.

She'd be angry that she let her guard down only to be left even more frustrated.

The guy she met earlier... it always started like that for her. She'd be wary of them, think of the different ways she could beat them up if they tried to hurt her, gauge how they react to her before she lowers her guard and let them chat her up.

She thought she was getting better but clearly she wasn't. Working for the man that she loathed sent her back to the dark place she often found herself in but Mason, Mason had the ability to pull her right out...

And now she couldn't help but to admire him. Forget that she's never been with a white person before, or that she said she was only attracted to black men, forget that she said she was done to the finish with men... this man right here... this man right in front of him...

...was moving in on her.

She realized that he had gotten up from his seat and was slowly moving in towards her. He had crouched so his face was almost level with hers...

"Mason..."

"Tell me to fucking stop." He whispered, his breath fanning her face. She wanted to taste that. "Tell me you don't want to kiss me."

That would be a damn lie. And she didn't feel like lying...

When he didn't hear her object, he leaned in and captured her lips in a sensual kiss. She sighed against his lips as if she had been working in the field all day long and only getting a chance to relax now.

His tongue found its way into her mouth, and she seemed to be appreciating that. The kiss was... Lesedi couldn't explain how the kiss was but she could explain how warm it made her feel. How wet she started to feel.

She was forty goddamn it but her body, her body was acting in a strange way. She didn't even feel like she need a chance to breathe, she'd breathe though the kiss because it was that good.

A knock resounded on Mason's bedroom door, "Uhhh not hearing any weird sounds so imma take it you guys aren't fucking, food is ready."

That was Kyle outside the door.

Mason pulled away and Lesedi whimpered at the loss of his warm presence. "You wanna head out?" His voice was husky as hell and if she wasn't turned on during the kiss, she was hella turned on right now.

"Uhh yeah... I think that's best." She stood up and he stood straight...

Their bodies were touching, the heat between them was scorching. She looked into his eyes, then at his lips... And their lips found each other again, Lesedi tangled her hands in his hair, loving the silky feeling of it. Series of moans escaped her throat as Mason played with her boobs... His hands moving from her boobs to her ass. He was caressing but with so much pressure.

He was pulling her hard against his body. Wanting to feel all of her. And she enjoyed that. She enjoyed how his body felt against hers.

The kiss was taking a dangerous route and she had to stop it. So, she pulled away. "Let's go." She was almost breathless... Probably dizzy too.

"Uhh you go ahead, I'll be right there." He had a dazed look and Lesedi looked at him with curious eyes.

Mason held her gaze and then looked down his crotch... Lesedi followed and *damn...*

"Oh! Uhm...okay...uhh... okay..." she bolted off the balcony, into his bedroom and out the door to join others and left Mason chuckling to himself.

The group had a great time together even though it was hard to get Lesedi to engage but she did engage here and there. Sitting next to her sister, Tracy, she spoke more with her in low voices and only ever gave one worded answers to anyone else that spoke to her. In reality people were afraid to talk to her, she had a permanent resting bitch face. But it worked for her.

"So, is there a thing between you and Mace?" Tracy asked, she was far too curious and wondered if she and her sister were going to officially date brothers. It would be so weird but somehow she was excited about it.

"No, no." Lesedi couldn't answer fast enough, "and we were not fucking or anything, he has appointed himself my therapist." She rolled her eyes.

Tracy couldn't help but to giggle, trust her sister to say that. "So, you were just talking... in his bedroom?"

"Yeah, on the balcony actually, he wanted to know what happened earlier on and *arg* he's annoying to be honest. And he also wanted to an update on work." There was no way in hell she was going to admit that she kissed the man and felt alive. Nope. That fact was even shocking to her. Every single time they kissed or almost did, she'd threaten to harm him physically but this time around... she couldn't.

She had wanted the kiss, badly.

"Well, that's a good thing isn't it? I am seeing a therapist too, three times a week during my lunch hour, you can join me if you want."

"I am fine, Mohau. If I want help I'll go to church or something." She sighed with a roll of eyes.

Tracy giggled some more. With the alcohol she had consumed, she couldn't help but to find her sister strange and hilarious. "Well, I think maybe

you should ride that gorgeous stallion once again and maybe, just maybe he will be this church you need."

Lesedi kept quiet because when she realized that Mason was hard earlier on and that's why he came out of his room a couple of minutes later, she had wished they were alone...

She rarely felt this way, well she never allowed herself to feel this way but now here was a sexy man, who was helping her in more ways than one and found her gorgeous, maybe, just maybe...she could have her cake and eat it too.

Some of Mason's friends left, Loraine and Greyson too... they all lived in Pretoria and didn't want to drive back too late in the night.

Kyle and Tracy had remained behind because at some point Tracy wanted to see her sister's place with a promise that she'd come for a sleepover.

They were now gearing up to leave. "I don't understand though, how are you two living in the same building after this crazy one threatened to slice you up with a knife?" Kyle asked his brother.

"She did what? Why? When?" Tracy couldn't believe what she was hearing, it was the first time she heard of the story.

Lesedi rolled her eyes, trust Kyle to be this kind of person. "It was nothing."

"Nothing? This guy refused to come with to your house because of that. Is that what y'all do? Threaten to kill each other and then fuck?"

Mason chuckled, "Hey, that's water under the bridge."

"Lesedi you carry a knife around?" Tracy asked. She was a little disturbed by that new knowledge. Something Lesedi didn't want to happen.

"Akere wa bona..." (Do you now see...) She was annoyed with Kyle. "It was Mason's knife." She smiled coolly.

Mason looked at her but backed her lie up.

"Yeah... It was mine and we were... role playing." He smiled.

"Strange but I love you anyway." Tracy said before pulling her sister into a bear hug, then hugged Mason and took Kyle's awaiting hand as they left Mason's place with Lesedi right behind them.

She was not going to stay behind. Not after what happened. She might do something crazy like strip for the man.

* *

Saturday rolled up and Lesedi found herself clocking in at work. She was dressed in jeans, combat boots and a short sleeved yellow SpongeBob t-shirt. She had tied her hair at the back and her face was out in the open for all to see.

She felt confident, she felt pretty.

And it was because of a certain someone who kept telling her how gorgeous she was and how she must look in the mirror and see the beauty he saw.

Mason was just too good for her. Even though sometimes she was a little harsh on him, it was because she couldn't allow herself to loosen up. She wasn't ready to.

She walked into Gregory's office through the adjoining door as she didn't have the key to his main office door, not that it was necessary, as long as she could access her office, she could access his.

She walked over to his credenza where he kept her laptop and noticed his laptop was also there... she thought back to the conversation she had with Mason. She took both the laptops to her office, luckily the cameras were only outside and not inside the offices.

She sat down on her desk and texted Mason that she had Gregory's laptop. And Mason responded by saying he will be dropping by during lunch time.

She didn't know what else the man did while she was trying to gain access into the security system of the hotel.

A knock resounded on her door and Samuel walked in. He was dressed in sweat pants and an oversized t-shirt. The man was scrawny and didn't look like he was well.

"Sam..." this was one man Lesedi was never afraid of from the get-go. She just took one look at him and pity overwhelmed her.

"Hi, uhh Greg is not here?" He asked, he must have tried his door first.

"Nope, it's only me, how can I help?"

"I don't think you can help. He was supposed to send me an email yesterday and I didn't get it, so I wanted to him to resend it." Sam looked stressed out. He didn't look like he slept well.

"Uhh I have his laptop, you can check.."

Relief washed over the man; she could see it in his eyes. "Do you know his password?" She asked, testing the waters.

"Yeah, yeah... I know how they are big on privacy and security here. So, if you have his password then he trusts you, bla, bla..." Samuel rambled, and she could thank her lucky stars because he just gave her what she wanted.

"It's also not smart to put your child's name as password in any case... but at least he leaves it here so no one can access it but us." Samuel smiled as he took the laptop and punched in the password, "Alissa Muller, with a capital A...and double S..." he spoke to himself as he did.

Lesedi wanted to climb on top of the table and blast '*sister Bettina*' by Mgarimbe. Samuel was... she wanted to say stupid but nope, he was godsent. He was those type of people that said things out loud, so they don't forget and that to her... was jackpot.

"I know right?" She responded him, sounding like she also knew the man's password. Initially she was going to ask him not to lock the PC but turned out she didn't have to. She took out her phone and opened her notes and texted the password before she'd forget it.

"Ahh, see it was stuck in the outbox. These people are misusing the hotel funds with the pool renovations, I just hope that Mr Molao won't be screaming at us at the next meeting because it's his fault." Samuel thought Lesedi was in the loop of things but shame, poor man, how would he know she wasn't.

Samuel was a light skinned black man with a bald haircut. He had big curious eyes, a cute bubble nose and medium sized lips. She wondered if he was that skinny by nature or he was stressed out about his job.

"Are you on duty Sam?" She asked, typing gibberish on her laptop as to seem busy.

"Yeah, I have to be. Things are going crazy here... financially we aren't doing too well as you know, and it's my job to make sure that we stay afloat."

"Right, right... but are you not stressed out? I mean I don't envy you at all."

Samuel laughed, as he gave back the laptop, "How could I not? I don't even eat well. My girl even dumped me because apparently I am more loyal and committed to my job than her." He looked sad when he said that.

Lesedi felt sorry for him, but she couldn't do anything about it. "Sorry.."

"It's okay, I'm just gonna go back to my room and see if I can cut costs on anything..." He smiled before ducking out.

Lesedi leaned back on her chair, thinking of what Samuel revealed. So, the hotel was facing some financial crisis because of the renovations? This was a big hotel, and they just came out of the festive season, it should have been swimming with guests.

But she couldn't dwell much on that as she actually had to go out of her office and oversee the renovations, check progress and check the restaurant and everything else that made part of her duties.

By the time lunch time rolled in, she was annoyed and exhausted. She had to deal with a difficult hotel guest that was complaining about the cleaning and the room services. The man wasn't pleased with anything, Lesedi told him to pack up his shit and leave then.

If Gregory ever catches a wind of this, he will surely have a stroke and fire her on the spot, but the damn guest was near impossible to please.

She ordered her lunch to be sent up to the office and soon after reception called and told her she had a guest. Mason was screened at the door just like every hotel guest and he was led up to her office.

"Mhm! Look at you having your own office." He teased as he entered, closing the door behind him.

"What can I say? I roll with the best." He loved it when she joked around.

He sat down and made himself comfortable, "I haven't had lunch yet, can I also place an order from the hotel kitchen?" He asked. And Lesedi ordered for him.

They had their lunch causally talking about the difficult guest she dealt with earlier on.

"Guess what?" She was smiling.

"Whenever you smile it's nothing good."

She rolled her eyes, "Well it's good for us. Sam was here earlier on... and he mentioned how the hotel was facing some financial crisis. He has been working hard on trying to cut costs to keep the ship afloat but somehow Mateo keeps on taking money." She was so excited that finally, they were getting somewhere.

"Mhm.. So they are having financial issues... Where is that laptop?" Mason was now also having hope that things will start to move in the right direction. The thing about their operation was that there was no need to go out and fight, they just had to be strategic about it, have patience and pull it off.

Lesedi gave him the laptop, she hadn't noticed that Mason had brought his own in a brown leather sling bag.

He started connecting his laptop with Gregory's one. "Okay so, any chance that you might know his password? That might save me a trip."

Lesedi broke into a grin, "What's my name baby!" She texted Mason the password whose grin matched hers.

"I like your work ma'am." He complimented her, after she told him how she got the password.

"So, I am just going to install a rootkit on his laptop, and I will be able to access his files on my PC."

"What's a rootkit?" She asked,

"Err just...uhh how do I put this in simpler terms... it's a programme sort of a virus that gives me access to this computer without me being detected. If they have an IT team that often checks for malware, and they are as good as I am then they can find me, but only if they are looking for me... otherwise, I am just going to be invisible while I have knowledge of whatever it is Gregory does on this PC."

Lesedi was blown away. She liked Mason's mind. He was a smooth criminal, a numbers guy, a tech guy with a very sharp and dangerous mind. And he was fucking good looking.

"You're staring..." He commented without looking up.

Lesedi cleared her throat and looked at her plate and picked up a riblet that was left, feeling a blush creep up her neck. She didn't mean to stare but damn it... she was taken by his brains.

Growing up as a teenager she found herself attracted to the street-smart guys. She loved how they hustled, how they manoeuvred through life in the township. In the hood.

That has never actually changed until she met Mason. Now Mason was street aware but book smart. He was an intellectual that was also rough in the

streets, a mean combination. The man was never afraid to get his hands dirty, but he needed a good reason to.

She was charmed. And she was fidgeting in her seat because with that conclusion of how she viewed this man, she started to wonder how he was like in bed.

Was he dominant, or was he relaxed and went with the wind or was he the type to let the woman be in charge...?

Mason couldn't help but to feel the woman's eyes on him again, so he looked up. And their eyes locked. Now he was no fool, he could read people very, very well... and right now, Lesedi was fucking undressing him with her eyes...

He could tell when someone wanted him, well when someone wanted to fuck him and this girl right here... she was having downright dirty thoughts about him, and her breathing had changed, and she kept shifting in her chair.

"When are you gonna be done?" She asked, she sounded pissed, she sounded irritated, and Mason caught the gist.

Baby girl was horny, and she was getting frustrated.

Mason stood up and walked to the door and turned the key, locking the door. He turned back to find Lesedi looking at him with confusion in her eyes.

She found herself standing up and in Mason's arms with his lips on hers. She couldn't think rationally. Forget this was her place of work, she was down for whatever Mason had in mind because sitting there with him in the room was torture.

Their lips locked in a very demanding kiss. Lesedi wasn't afraid, she wasn't holding back, she was giving it back as hard as he gave her.

His hands moved from her waist to her boobs, to her her ass... Then to the front of her jeans. He popped the button open, let the zip down and received no protest from her.

His lips moved to her neck, he couldn't help but to inhale her scent... she smelled so good, he loved her apple scent..

Her moans filled his ears as he sucked and soothed the skin on her neck with his tongue. She was getting wet, and the man was only just kissing her.

When she felt the button of her jeans pop, she didn't stop him, she wanted to see where he was going with this.

She felt his hand sneak into her pants, over her panties. He didn't shoot for her pussy that she definitely sure was wet.

Mason made an approving sound from the back of his throat and it fuelled the fire brewing between them. Their lips locked again, and Mason rubbed her clit over her panties.

She was losing her mind. She grinded against his fingers, needing more of that friction, dying for more of that. "Touch me please..." She begged him.

Lesedi was totally out of her mind, she begging for a man to pleasure her? A first!! No one has ever been this attentive or kissed her for this long while toying with her.

Those two guys always kissed for five seconds before clothes were off, condom on and then they were huffing and puffing on top of her for twenty seconds.

Mason moved his hand up and went inside her panties. The woman was bare and fucking wet. He sucked in breath and continued kissing her,

coming up for air by kissing her neck to allow her a chance to breath too before getting lost in the kiss again.

They were both lost in the heat of moment. It was so hot, where Mason touched her she burned, she loved his hands touching her.

When she felt his hand touch her bare mound, rubbing her clit in slow, tantalizing motions, she lost herself.

Her moans were getting more frequent and louder, so Mason swallowed them with a lethal kiss.

He inserted a finger inside her hot channel while his thumb was rubbing her clit, he slowly thrusted inside of her, feeling her clench around his fingers. He made pleasing sound in the back of his throat, loving the feeling of her around his fingers.

Her hands tightened around his arms as he increased pace, going in and out of her, listening to her pussy make wet sounds. That was such a beautiful sound accompanied by her glorious moans.

He increased the pace of his thrusts, going a little bit faster than before... and she fell apart, she came undone on his hand.

Her eyes rolled back, and her fingers dug into his forearms, and she rocked the wave with Mason's fingers still inside of her, still fingering her.

Her moans were mused in his mouth. As he kissed her to quiten her. But Lord, he wished they were at their place... So he could hear her cries of pleasure hit off the walls.

The office phone had been ringing for a while now and just as she opened her eyes, coming down her high... it stopped. They were in such a

zone, that they both didn't allow to be disturbed, not even by a ringing work phone.

Mason smirked while looking at her, he pulled his hand out of her pants, noticing his handywork on his hand. It was wet!! "You might wanna call someone back." He whispered, his forehead pressed against hers and Lesedi didn't move a single muscle.

She couldn't believe what she allowed to happen, but most importantly couldn't believe how freaking good she felt.

And that was a problem.

**

Wrong day to be absent from work. Lesedi was super annoyed that Gregory took a day's leave, leaving her to oversee everything like she has been doing during the weekend. Well, everything except the exclusives. The Monday meetings he always had with Samuel and Mateo; she was not invited to.

Mateo held the meeting with his brother, Zacharia Singo and Samuel alone. And once again, she was instructed not to come into the office unless she was called in.

It annoyed her that Gregory wasn't available so Mason couldn't spy on what it was that they will be talking about, because as always, Greg typed the minutes which she never got to see. And Mason now had access to Greg's laptop which was sitting perfectly in his office, waiting for its owner to get back.

After her early morning routine, checking the cleaners, the restaurant and the pool renovations, she went back to her office to check hotel guests queries.

She had just closed the door when Samuel came in knocking. "Mr Molao is asking for you in his office." He said and walked out.

Her heart skipped a beat. Where the hell was Gregory and why was he off? Mateo never asked for her when Gregory was present at work which made her working days bearable. She hated the man. She hated the man with all she had.

She did her breathing exercises and then walked to the man's office. Luckily he only found his brother, Zakes. She soon learned that Zakes was Mateo's right-hand man. He was always where Mateo was, or out doing what Mateo wanted.

He clashed a lot with Gregory which was why she knew he was his brother's lackey.

"You called for me?" Lesedi walked inside the office. Noticing how spacious it was. It even housed a rectangular table with eight chairs surrounding it at the corner. Probably where they held their meetings.

"Yes, uhh please organise breakfast for us. Full English breakfast with coffee. The milk must be hot too."

Lesedi was glad that's all they wanted. So, she rushed out of the office and back to her desk. She made the phone call to the kitchen and told them to bring the food to her instead.

She had an idea.

Once the food arrived, she pushed the cart to the man's office. Mateo was now back, sitting on his chair. *Look at him with his big belly, he can't even button the suit jacket he was wearing.* Lesedi was seething inside but seemed calm on the outside.

"Breakfast." She said to them, she didn't know what else to say.

Mateo didn't even look at her twice, just once when she came in. Zakes thanked her and took the cart from her. "We will call you when we are done." She was dismissed.

She walked out the door, tested her earpiece and smiled when she could hear the conversation. Mason's handy gadgets were a life saver.

When she realized she was never going to be invited to the exclusive meetings, she asked Mason to hook her up with his listening devices. They were so small, barely noticeable and she put on in a cute sunflower pot that she placed on the food cart. She was going to drop it inside Greg's jacket or something but since he didn't come to work, she had to improvise.

She went back to her office, locked the door and sat on her chair to listen in.

"This looks good." Zakes was talking, he loved the hotel food, loved it better than home cooked meals. If he could, he'd live in the hotel and live off room service until the day he dies.

"I hired the best, of course the food will always be nice." Mateo snapped.

"And then? What's wrong now? What did I say wrong?" Zakes asked as he sat back down with his breakfast, digging in without even praying.

"Eish... General is on my case." Mateo sounded very stressed, hell he even looked stressed. After the morning meeting with Samuel, his mood was deteriorating fast.

"Is it the money issue?"

"Isn't it always the money issue? Don't ask me stupid questions."

"Hey, I just want to know what's wrong, is there something I can help with?"

"Do you have twenty million lying around for me?"

Zakes's jaw slagged, "twenty million?" he spoke with food in his mouth. He doesn't even have a mere million in his account and now his brother is asking for twenty. He must be high; he doesn't pay him that much.

"Phiri fucked me over, I wish I could wake him from the dead and beat the shit out of him."

Zakes laughed, "What's worse is that you even hired his daughter to work for you. Isn't she the girl who was accusing you of silly things? The one whose place I had to trash?"

Mateo sighed and leaned back on his chair. He didn't have an appetite. "Don't get me wrong, I don't hate Phiri, besides his kids lost the businesses he gave them. So, they are in the similar situation as me."

"I didn't know you can have a heart."

Mateo scoffed, "neither did I. I was just so taken by her that's why I offered her the job, besides, Phiri made me some good money. The least I can do is make sure his daughter doesn't go around accusing people for her family being broke."

Zakes nodded in understanding. Initially he thought Lesedi was here to cause problems, but ever since she joined them, there hasn't been a single complain about her, not even from Gregory.

"So, what's this twenty million story?"

"Eish, so... we gave Phiri money, to get the product, sell it, clean the money and repeat. So, he has been doing well until we got fifty million rand, so

the cycle continued and the last time we spoke, and I visited him, we had a hundred million in profits plus his cut. So, the deal was to clean that money and invest it back in the hotel.."

"So, you can get another hotel." Zakes finished for him, and he nodded.

"Yes, but we never got to see that money and Phiri is my guy, well was my guy. And the money is missing. Now General wants his fifty million back because the deal was that we would split it."

Zakes whistled, one thing was for sure, you never ever double-cross The General. Not Thami, the man was brutal.

"So, he wants his money?"

"Yes, I have already taken five million from the hotel, Samuel says he can't help me again because the hotel can't afford to loan me some more cash... it's a fucking mess."

"And you don't have this money? Savings? Investments?"

"No, the drug business was my investment. A lucrative one. Now my kingpin is dead, the money we made gone with him... General is investigating the Tiger Six, if they did kill Morris then they should know where the money is... and they will work for it. But until then, he wants twenty million as an apology."

"Apology? Twenty million rands for apology?"

"Hemuhn, he says we wasted state resources with transporting the product in and out of the country. We have to compensate him. He was supposed to get seventy million rands... and I get thirty."

Zakes whistled again in disbelief, "So we can't find another dealer to work for us?"

"We need start up capital. I gave the general five million the other day, I don't know where I will get the fifteen. Zama doesn't want me cashing out the twins' trust fund... so I am just here hoping for a good month with the hotel, so I can loan more money."

Lesedi was listening attentively until she was called to come and clean up their mess. She put the flower pot back in her office and took the cart back to the kitchen. She needed to make a phone call anyway, so she didn't mind playing waiter.

She had to call Mason, another problem in her life. Ever since he made her orgasm in her office on Saturday, she has been super freaking horny. That man pleased her with two fingers, brought her a nice, drool-causing orgasm and she hadn't been able to keep him off her mind any chance she was alone and relaxed.

She didn't know what to do with herself or what all of this meant. Were they going to fuck each other? Did she want to fuck him, well yes but afterwards, then what?

A relationship wasn't on the cards, she was too old now for them and he lived in another continent, it just wouldn't even work.

"Les..." his voice, his sexy voice brought her out of her head. She lived there quite a lot.

"Hey... so finally I got to place an ear in that office... and don't I have news for you."

Lesedi couldn't fill him in as the moment she started talking, one of the cleaners came to her, there was a bathroom situation in the restaurant that she

needed to check. "Sometimes I hate this job." She mumbled as she cut Mason's call.

Mateo and Zakes left a while ago and she couldn't wait for knock off time. She was far too excited about what she heard. Clearly the man was having problems, but who the fuck was 'The General' the man sounded like he didn't play any games and they were afraid of him.

She finally knocked off and was happy to leave. She instead drove to her mother's house just to check if it was still standing and no nyaope boys making it their new lair.

She was surprised to see a car in the yard. They left their grandmother, Tapiwa and Lucas there after the funeral and couldn't care what they were going to do with the house.

She walked in to a nice beef stew smell. Tapiwa was in the kitchen, cooking while Yvonne was drinking wine on the kitchen table.

"You guys live here now?" She asked,

Tapiwa looked her up and down and clicked her tongue. "What are you doing here Lesedi? Didn't you and your mother and sister turn your backs on us?"

Lesedi narrowed her eyes questioningly, finding that question ironic. "I am not following." She didn't sit down as yet; she wanted to check every room and assess the situation.

"Hi to you too Lesedi, and yes they are staying here now. Who's going to look after my uncle's house when you and your family left it without a care?" Yvonne snapped.

Lesedi wasn't really following, these people have been gone for so many years and now suddenly they care? "Koko okae?" (Where's my grandmother?)

"Watching the news... why do you suddenly care?" Tapiwa asked.

"Y'all haven't left?" Lesedi was very confused.

"No, we didn't, this is still a Phiri home in case you forgot, so we will leave when we are ready."

"You don't have a job to get back to?" she was very confused. Tapiwa couldn't talk enough about how she wanted to go back to their mansion in North West and now they were staying in the four-roomed house?

"I don't know owe you any explanation, but my job has been to take care of rakgadi, so I am doing just that."

"Mhmm I see." Lesedi went to check her mother's room, they had taken out everything Daisy owned before shipping her off to the hospice, so now the wardrobe in the bedroom housed her grandmother and Tapiwa's things.

Lesedi & Tracy's bedroom had some kids' clothes and a lot of other things she had no idea what they were. She greeted her grandmother who was falling asleep on the couch. She didn't even stay long. After talking to her grandmother, she said bye to Yvonne and walked out and drove to her place.

She called Tracy on the way to inform her of the situation. "Hai wena, do you think they are broke?" Tracy asked.

"I don't know, maybe? Koko didn't say much except that they will be living there until rangwane Lucas comes to get them."

"Yoh, things must be rough moes. Shuu, I kind of feel for koko though."

"Hai why, she didn't raise that man called our father well... she must bear the cross."

"Yoooh, I keep forgetting how rude you can be. She's an old woman man, have some heart."

Lesedi did have a heart but what was she going to do for her grandmother? The woman was old, and she seemed comfortable where she was. Tapiwa was taking care of her, so what did Tracy want her to do?

She pulled up to her place and went up to her apartment and once again, Mason was just coming down the stairs, phone in his hand.

"Seriously... are you tracking me?" She asked. Not at all buying his whole 'coincidence' story.

Mason smirked, "Dude I hack stuff for a living, of course I am tracking you."

Lesedi opened her mouth for a smart come back but she decided to choose her battles wisely, "You don't have cameras in my house... right?"

"Nope, I am not a creep. Open up."

Lesedi unlocked the doors and they walked in. She brought Mason up to speed with everything she's heard.

"Mhm who is The General? Any idea?" He asked, drinking a beer from the pack he had left in her fridge.

"Nope, nothing at all. But all I know is that my dad was selling drugs for them and that this man called The General uses state resources to make it happen."

Mason chewed on his bottom lips, his fingers tapping on the bottle in his hand, thoughts racing in his head. "I have checked the emails between Greg,

Samuel and Singo... there is something shady going on there. Funds being transferred but Samuel cooking the books to make it look legit... I'm thinking that ever since Morris dipped, Mateo has been taking money from his own hotel to try and pay some people off."

Lesedi couldn't believe that their plan was throwing them into the deep end. She didn't even know how they were going to steal the hotel, but Mason was convinced if he could tap into Mateo and Samuel's files, it will be all over for them.

"Mason..." Lesedi called out to him, she was in the kitchen taking out ingredients to make dinner.

"Yeah.." he was still sitting on the couch. He couldn't be next to her. Not after what happened. He was hanging on by a thread. He wanted nothing but to grab her neck and kiss the shit out of her. Then bend her over that kitchen counter and make her a moaning mess.

"Do you think... do you think that we will succeed in this?"

He stood up and walked over to her, "I promised you, didn't I?"

"Yeah but this is one promise you can't guarantee. It's getting weird and sounds messy. State resources are being mentioned, what if the cops are involved?"

He rounded the counter and she wished she had kept her mouth shut because now the look in his eyes was super intense. "This is one promise I am going to fucking keep. I will bring the whole country down if I have to. But that man... that man is fucking going to pay for what he did." By the time he finished talking, his hands were around her waist and her eyes were locked with his.

"You got that?"

She looked at his lips when she nodded. And he got the message.

He dipped his head and stole a kiss. The sigh that left her mouth propelled him to go in for a serious *adult* kiss...

* *

Finally, she had an off day and Gregory was back in the office at the hotel and that means Mason was live with snooping in people's businesses.

Lesedi was having a crazy day, being on her periods and suffering mild period pains, she wasn't really in a good mood, but Mason didn't know that when he called her and told her to come up to his place.

Once again, like the Saturday they spent in her office at the hotel, and their little kissing in her place didn't go any further than that. She had pulled back and told Mason she needed to take a shower and start cooking; told him they will talk. But she knew, she was afraid that if she didn't stop kissing him, it will go further.

Now Mason wasn't going to push her to do anything else that she didn't want. So he left.

He left her alone and she regretted kicking him out. But when she realized that her menstrual cycle was starting, she was relived but it also made sense as to why her horniness felt unreal.

She was frustrated and it was all his fault. She hadn't felt like this in a while. There was no man who evoked the feelings she had buried. She didn't even allow men to come that close anymore but this one, this one who was supposed to just help her get her revenge made her horny.

If she could just stab one of his cute eyes, damn it.

"Hi again." Lesedi almost jumped a mile into the air as a voice boomed behind her.

"Jesus Christ, are you trying to kill me?" She was hella annoyed.

The man was coming out of the lift she had just passed as she always took stairs up to Mason's floor. She didn't think anyone would be coming behind her, so she was a little relaxed until the fucker that spooked her the other day called from behind.

The man smiled, "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to."

"Whatever." Lesedi turned to walk away but he called her out again, causing her to roll her eyes.

"What is it? What do you want?"

"I want to know you; I'd like to know you." He said. He was a little too cheesy for her liking to be honest. The way he smiled, showing off his nice teeth, his nice smile. She was annoyed.

"Why?"

He chuckled, pocketed his hands in his jean pockets and walked slowly towards her, maintaining eye-contact. "I find you beautiful, I am single man... so this single man would like to know you, hoping that you're single yourself."

Lesedi groaned. Every time the guy walked towards her, she moved back too. "I am not single, thanks." She turned around to walk away but the man grabbed her arm.

"Come on, I have been watching you..." he had this look in his eyes, that he wasn't going to let go until she agreed. And that look, she did not like. Not at all.

"If you know what's best for you, you will let me go." She had done so well into making sure she didn't disappear inside her head again. Mason warned her that if she allowed fear or past trauma to take control over her, she'd be in a vulnerable position and risk being to be hurt.

"Feisty I like that."

In one swift moment, Lesedi had turned around and twisted the man's arms behind his back locking one arm. It was probably one in the afternoon and Lesedi was busy snapping arms.

"What the fuck!" Siphos was thrashing around trying to free himself from a possible arm dislocation. But his cries of help fell on deaf ears, so he screamed, he screamed very loud and two people opened their doors to find Lesedi looking murderous wanting to break the man's arm.

Some tenants were at work, and some were home, so they came out to see what the hell was going on. Mason too heard the scream and people screaming for someone to let someone go, so he went to see what the hell was going on and what do you know... miss firecracker was angry at someone.

Mason ran to where Lesedi was, wrapped his arms around her and pulled her back. The four other tenants were just screaming, pleading for her to let him go but none of them thought to actually pry her off the poor man. Maybe because they were women... he thought.

"Are you okay there champ?" Mason asked Siphos, still holding the angry woman in his hold. Siphos turned to look at Lesedi, tears in his eyes, he almost, almost lost his fucking arm.

"You crazy bitch." He spat angrily. "I am going to get you arrested for this."

"Now-now pal, I don't think it should get to that. I am sure she was defending herself." Mason told him.

"Defending herself from what? All I did was just grab her arm so she can hear me out..." Siphso was livid. He kept stretching his arm, trying to make it feel better.

"Yeah... Uhm... Don't ever do that again. If she was walking away you had no right to grab her, now you almost lost your fucking arm cause you couldn't take no for an answer. Let that be a warning that next time, she will break your fucking arm and maybe your neck too." Mason then pushed Lesedi in the direction of his apartment.

He still had his arms wrapped around her waist and she was just walking, her mind miles away. She was doing so well; she was doing so well until he touched her. How dare he touches her.

Mason made her sit down and noticed she wasn't herself. He wasn't well equipped to deal with this.

She looked dazed, her body was present, but her mind was not there. This girl fucking needed to see a therapist. This, this couldnt carry on this way.

Mason sat on the coffee table and stared into her eyes. She looked at him, the green eyes... green eyes... "Mason..." she breathed.

He cracked a smile, "Hey gorgeous." He broke into a grin when she rolled her eyes. And Lesedi was now in the room. "You okay?" he asked.

She sighed, "Did I break his arm?"

"Nope, he's just going to feel some discomfort for a bit, but he will live."

"I should have broken it. I should have dislocated it."

Mason chuckled, what was he going to do with this girl? Like Kyle said, she is a fucking ticking time bomb that goes off at weird times. "Tell me, what made you snap?"

"He touched me." Lesedi today was wearing a short-sleeved Garfield printed t-shirt with jeans and all-stars and that man touched her bare skin. "I told him I am not interested in what he had to say, I walked away and he grabbed my arm. He touched my skin."

Mason nodded, "where did your mind go when he touched you?"

"I was... I saw Singo's face... I could swear I was breaking Singo's arm."

He heaved a sigh. "What that guy did was stupid, dangerous for him... but not every man is out to hurt you. It's broad daylight in a safe building, you scream, someone will come out."

"It was broad daylight then too. Did that help? No, it fucking didn't! There were people there, it was a fucking day party, it was supposed to be safe, but he was there and he still..." she stood up from the couch, shaking with anger. Remembering the dark day that stole her joy.

Mason realized what she was talking about. Maybe her working at the hotel with Singo wasn't such a great plan. Even though she insisted that she would do it, even though he wanted her to do it so she could get some of her power back, psychologically it didn't seem to be such a great idea.

"You need to resign, I will step in. I will find a way. I will. You need to get away from that man because it seems to be doing more harm than good."

Lesedi looked at him, "You don't understand Mason... I am starting to feel again..."

Mason corked an eyebrow, maybe he should have gone to school and majored in psychology or something. At this point he was so confused.

"I have anger issues okay?" She chuckled sadly, "I do, and I know this. But now, now that I have found that man... now that I can be in the same building as him, I am starting feel more than just anger. And sometimes I find myself getting familiar with the old me."

"And that's good...?"

"I don't know, but I feel like it is."

"But... you hurt someone today."

"I know, and I will keep hurting men who touch me without my permission... I don't want you to pull me out of this job. I want to keep working there until we win. I know I lost it; I know I thought of him... but I can be better."

Mason knew Lesedi will never go and see therapist. So, he will have to think of another way to help her out.

"Are you sure? Are you sure this isn't hurting you?"

She looked at him and nodded. "I am sure."

Mason nodded, "okay then... I have something for you."

"Yeah..."

"Mhm, I found the minutes of the meetings they have, and you won't believe. Mateo is borrowing money from the hotel, Gregory is there to make sure they always have cheaper suppliers of whatever it is that they need supplied for the hotel, and Samuel fixes the numbers."

Lesedi sat down and looked at the pages Mason had printed out, "I don't understand..."

"So, he borrows money from the hotel, Greg finds cheaper suppliers so they can put higher prices on their side to make sure the hotel makes more money than it spends. Samuel then cooks the numbers so the board members will think they are using high end products for their luxurious hotel. So that way, when they make more money, Singo can dip into the accounts and use the money for whatever.

"Now these board members are legit, they are people Mateo needed when he bought the hotel. So, they can never find out what is going on and they only get dividends once a year."

"Okay... is he managing to pay off the dividends?"

"Yes, in December they got paid off... but that left the hotel shaking. The hotel is soon going to go under. The guests that are coming in aren't as many because it's beginning of the year but they are hoping that they can recuperate the money to at least pay staff, keep the hotel running and also pay shareholders."

This was music to Lesedi's ears. "So, he has hope that they will be able to get by if they get guests during the course of the year which is why they are doing pool renovations in order to attract more customers..."

Mason nodded, "But I need to make sure they never do recover from this."

"Okay, how?"

"If I can get into Samuel's laptop... it's game over. I will milk that cow dry and force them to sell."

Lesedi looked at Mason, a small smile on her lips... "You want to buy the hotel?"

Mason chuckled, "Not with my money gorgeous." He winked.

Lesedi tilted her head to the side, thinking what Mason was saying, "No..." she gasped. When she realized what Mason's plan was.

"Yes!" Mason grinned when he saw that Lesedi caught on to what he was saying.

"No way!"

"Yes way."

"If you pull that off... if you do that and we come home scot-free, I will lick your feet."

Mason burst out laughing, he really enjoyed seeing Lesedi being playful and free. He loved all sides to her but this one, this one got him good.

"Imma hold you to that." He winked, "Hungry?"

"Starving..." she leaned back on the couch. She loved his food. Mason was a fantastic cook.

CHAPTER NINE

The hotel 'beginning of the year' function was almost here, and it was chaotic!! To the hotel guests all was well but to the staff it was hell.

Gregory was driving Lesedi insane and she may have said some few colourful words to him, and he promised to fire her which made her to snap her mouth shut.

"I am going to kill this man." She chanted to herself as she walked into her office to sort out the guest queries on top of finalizing things for the party.

Her cell phone rang, and it was Mason, a smile graced her face. She has been smiling a lot where this man was concerned, and it wasn't freaking her out as much as it used to.

"Mason..."

"Firecracker."

"Why do you keep calling me that?"

"Because you are a firecracker Les..." he chuckled, "look I need a favour."

"Yoh, I have run out of favours to spare."

"Crazy day?"

"You have no idea, I am barely touching ground and if Greg walks in here and find me on my personal phone and not running up and down this bloody hotel, I might just get fired."

Mason chuckled, he sounded so relaxed but as always the man was always relaxed. Even when he was stressed, he appeared and sounded relaxed. "I need you to get me on the guest list at the party."

"What?"

"Yup, I need to be there."

"For what?"

"I'll fill you in later... Just get me in there." He then hung up. Lesedi looked at her phone, surprised at how he abruptly cut the call. He clearly didn't want to hear any excuses.

Luckily Gregory trusted her with the guest list, so she just had to make a new one to give to security with Mason's name on it.

Why the sudden interest in coming to a party, she had no idea.

When knock off time arrived, Lesedi rushed out to go to her salon appointment, she needed to get a new weave same as before, long straight black hair, get waxed and prep herself for the stupid party. She also had to pick up a dress, Tracy hooked her up with an expensive yet elegant evening wear boutique in Joburg.

When she arrived back to her place, Mason was right at the door the second she took a seat on her couch, just as she kicked off her shoes.

She groaned and opened up for him. "Grab your shoes and let's go."

"What?" She was confused.

"Put on your shoes and let's go." He walked out.

Lesedi looked at the opened door, then back at her shoes. What the hell was wrong with this man. She put on her shoes and locked the door behind her. She found him waiting by the lift, tapping on his phone.

She even forgot hers. The only thing she had was just her house keys.

Mason was rather quiet; he didn't even say anything when they got to the basement, he opened the passenger door of his car and waited for her to enter.

"Where are we going?" She asked, not entering the car.

"Out for a drive." Came his curt response. Lesedi couldn't locate her feelings about this. Something was off, but she trusted Mason. She just had to trust him... right?

She got in the car with him, and they drove out. It was late at night, and she didn't know where the hell he was taking her.

"Can I borrow your phone?" She asked.

"No, I am expecting a call." Mason's eyes were trained on the road ahead.

She looked out the window, reading road signs, trying to see where they were going in case something happens. She also wanted to text Tracy to let her know, should she go missing, Mason was the last person to see her.

They drove a little out of town and her nerves were running short. Mason was like a stranger now. "We meeting Ginger."

She started to relax. "Is there something wrong?"

"Yes."

She realized that she wasn't going to get answers right away, so she kept quiet. Mason drove into some forest if she could call it that, it was so dark, there were no lights except the car lights. But she wasn't as jittery as before, but she still wasn't all relaxed.

They pulled to a house surrounded by the trees, it was made of wood and there were two cars parked outside.

"Let's go." He opened his door and she followed him close. The house was dark, there were no lights coming from inside.

She looked behind her and could only see the car and make out the silhouette of the trees. At least there was a full moon providing some light.

"Where are we?" She whispered.

"I don't know... let's go inside. We chose this life didn't we?"

Lesedi looked at him, looked at her surroundings and then followed Mason through the door.

The minute she walked in, she wanted to grab Mason, but two figures just appeared out of nowhere and attacked Mason.

She let out a scream, but a hand covered her mouth. "Shut up!" It was a man; he had a deep angry voice. He held both her hands behind her back with one hand while the other hand covered her mouth.

Her eyes were enlarged, she watched as two men dragged Mason away. Three figures walked over to her. The place smelled like paint and oil, a very nauseating combo. Her heart was beating wild.

Her mind was racing wild.

This couldn't happen, not again.

She felt one man approach her, touching her breast. "So, he came with a woman." The man who was touching her sneered. He had a hoarse voice, like he has been chewing razor blades all his life.

She was thrashing, she wasn't going down this road again. History will not repeat itself; she will be damned.

The man who was touching moved his hand to her stomach. Her t-shirt had risen up, exposing her stomach. "He wasn't supposed to come with you... but maybe he wanted us to have some *souvenir*." He snarled.

She was wondering who that is, was it Mason or Ginger. Who the fuck were these people?

She felt his hand travel down to the top of her jeans... her blood ran cold. Her mind... she was fighting not to think about the night Mateo took her up in a dark room and had a way with her.

The night he pinned her down with his body and had a way with her while her mind and body were fighting for dear life at what he was doing to her.

She was not going to allow that to happen again. She felt the button of her jeans pop. That, that was enough to fill her body with rage and strength.

She was beginning to see these people, even though they wore balaclavas, but she could make them out. The moonlight was shining into the room. It was spacious and there was a little door which was where they took Mason.

"Don't fight us... we will be just quick. Need to teach your little boyfriend a lesson to not mess with us."

Her boyfriend *who*, what the fuck was going on!

But she didn't have time, she didn't have time to waste by thinking about what the hell was going on, she was about to be raped by probably four men and she wasn't going to have that.

She started with the one who was touching her, a kick to his balls sent him crouching and yelping in pain. She hit the one behind her with her head, she felt mild pain but the adrenalin coursing through her body fuelled her on.

The two other men charged at her, and she ducked before one could grab her and she pulled him back by his neck, dragged the other with her other hand and clashed their heads together. Her gym and self defence skills were coming in handy. Jamie was better than her last instructor. Jamie's self defence classes were more realistic. She was now used to the pain of fighting. Unlike that first time.

The men were groaning but she had not time for that. She snapped the button of her jeans closed again and dealt with the men.

She picked up a half empty tin of paint and knocked one of the men on his head with it and he collapsed to the ground. One grabbed her from behind and threw her against the table.

She felt pain on her abdomen, but she wasn't stopping now. She jumped over the table and grabbed a metal rod that was leaning against the wall and started whipping every person that came into her view with it.

There was blood, there were grunts of pain. Two men were now down, two more left. The other one was badly bleeding, and one was still a little stronger.

She swirled around and sent the bleeding one flying into the wall with a kick. Three men down, one more to go.

She positioned herself like a karate ninja, fists coiled, eyes trained on the man, "Come get these..."

The man charged at her, but she ducked and the second he passed her she turned around and kicked his back and sent him to the floor. He was the one that tried to touch her... that wanted to rape her first.

She kicked his head while he was down, turned him over and started stomping on his genitals. The man was crying in pain, and she only stopped when he was defenceless.

She looked around, there was blood and four fucking men down.

She heard noise coming from the room they dragged Mason in and next thing she heard a gun go off and then Mason walked out, his gun in his hand, holding a bleeding nose.

He looked around, "what the fuck happened?" He asked.

"You fucking tell me, what the fuck? Who are these fucking people Mason?" She asked. Adrenaline was still pumping through her veins, and she was hella happy, hella excited.

"I don't know but we have to go." Mason grabbed her hand and walked towards the door in a rush.

She was... happy!!

Mason couldn't even fucking believe this, but Lesedi was excited about what had just transpired. "Four men... and I didn't black out?" She was so thrilled. Mason was stunned.

"Are you okay?" He asked.

"I am better than okay. I am... I will probably have nightmares... or beat myself up about not killing them, but I am okay." And she wasn't lying.

The adrenaline wore off on their way back to Fourways and she was reciting what she did to those men to Mason. She even shocked him when she asked if they could do a McDonalds drive thru. That she was hungry.

He bought them food and has since been quiet all the way to her flat. "Les... are you sure you're good?" He asked, after they cleaned up and were eating.

"I am Mason, I am. I am not that scared anymore. I feel free... I feel like if any man would come near me, I'd eat them alive."

Mason gobbled up his two burgers and fries, didn't touch the drink though, opted for water instead. "We just got ambushed by God knows who. I don't even fucking know what the hell happened, and you feel *free*?"

"You're the one who took us there okay... it's not my fault it freed me from the shackles of my past traumatic experience."

Mason just blinked. "We were supposed to meet Milo and Ginger there... I need to find out what's going on. Are you sure you're fine? That's not normal."

Lesedi just giggled. She felt free. Those men touched her, and she reigned herself in. She was alert, she was alive, and she took charge. She didn't give up her power. She had power, she was strong, she was fearless.

She has been working towards this day for so many years... and it finally happened. And it didn't happen how she thought it would. She came out a fucking warrior. She beat them at their own game.

She beat them, she was in a dangerous place, with men she didn't know, the man who was supposed to be by her side was also taken... and she fended herself. She defended herself and did it so well.

She was giddy. She couldn't stop grinning, "I did a spin kick Mason, I kicked that fucker and he collapsed into the wall. Jamie is going to freak out

when I tell her what happened." She was grinning, couldn't stop raving about her fighting skills.

Mason looked at her hands and they weren't that bruised, she'll live. It was amazing how she didn't even suffer much pain.

"Okay... look I need to find those two assholes so they can fucking explain to me what the fuck happened." Mason stood up, his eyes never leaving Lesedi. She was like a fucking kid, all excited about Christmas.

"Okay... I have work tomorrow anyway. The party is happening tomorrow, and I got you on the guest list by the way."

Mason nodded, "Sweet, goodnight."

"Goodnight Mason."

"Wanna give me a kiss?" He took a chance... and she looked at him, bit her bottom lip and nodded. They met halfway.

The kiss was... it blew his mind. she was into it. She was touching him, she relaxed when he grabbed her ass and brought her closer.

When he pulled back, she was dazed. He saw it in her eyes. This little minx was happy. She was alive.

And it was all because she fucked up four men by herself in a warehouse in the middle of nowhere.

"I'll see you at the function right?" His voice was hoarse. And his dick hard as fuck.

Lesedi grinned, "Yes you will." She locked the door after him.

Mason took a chance when he asked for the kiss, he was gauging her reaction. She was far too happy for him, she didn't even kick him out right

away. She didn't tense up, she moulded herself against his body and God, didn't that feel great.

He took the stairs up to his floor two at a time. He arrived at his apartment, opened it and found Milo and Ginger playing FIFA.

"How did it go?" Milo asked.

"She whooped their fucking arses." Mason was still in disbelief.

"Pay up homeboy." Ginger was grinning, his palm opened for Milo to pay him. They had made a bet.

"You made a bet out of this?" Mason was annoyed as he walked over to his fridge and took out a beer.

"Yup! Homeboy here said she can take out maybe one or two, but you'd have to help her out with the rest, but I told him Les is a fighter at heart. She got this." Ginger spoke as Milo slapped five hundred rand in his palm, clicking his tongue while he did so.

They paused the game and looked at Mason. "What?" He asked them.

"Are you straight?" Ginger asked.

Mason sighed, "It could have gone wrong."

"But it didn't..." Ginger said.

"Those people were going to hurt her."

"But they didn't..." Milo offered too.

"It was dangerous." Mason was feeling a little guilty.

"Okay, okay... how is she?" Ginger asked, "Is she rattled? Did we make things worse?"

Mason sat on the barstool and faced the guys, "She's fucking happy bro. She says she feels '*free*'. I don't even know what that means. She even kissed me..." he angrily took a swig of his beer.

Milo looked at Ginger, "Boss man, you said we needed to do this for her. We did, she's happy. It worked. It always works... so what's wrong with that? You even got a kiss!" Ginger shrugged.

"I guess..."

"You helped her out, she wasn't going to see a therapist, so we needed to put her in a tight spot so she can start believing that she can fucking beat anyone who will try her. You helped her out, don't feel bad about it. If she's happy then why worry about it? And if it will make you feel better, watch how she is tomorrow... Then you'll know for sure if you fucked up or not." Milo said to him.

Ginger cracked a smile, "Yeah I agree with Oprah Winfrey over here. This is one of the best things you could have done for her."

Mason chuckled at the name calling and when Milo jabbed Ginger in the ribs.

Yeah maybe hiring a group of thugs to hurt her so she could be able to defend herself was a bad idea, but it was fucking very necessary.

And it worked... He thought.

**

The pool renovations were completed, and the pool area was magnificent, even if Lesedi had to say so herself. The party planners went wild with the decorations, and she was excited that she pulled all of this off with Gregory a little of no help.

She hasn't seen Zakes or Mateo in a while and she was happy with that. She was also a little nervous about tonight. Mason was coming to the party as a guest, and he said he was going to need her help later on. She wasn't sure if she will be able to, as she still had to be on duty, while in a dress and heels.

The whole thing about Mateo not liking dark skinned women at the forefront wasn't a lie. Every waiter hired for the event and those from the hotel restaurant were light skinned. The dark skinned people were behind the scenes, scrubbing and cleaning toilets and washing pots in the kitchen.

It wasn't so hard to miss, so much so... they talked about her. They wondered how she was an assistant to the manager, countless times she was asked, and she didn't even know what lie to sell.

After doing her rounds, she went to change as the night had fallen upon them and guests started arriving. She did her makeup, at least she knew how to, dressed in the orange evening dress that hugged her torso, it was long sleeved with a daring open back. She was not afraid anymore, if any man so much as looked at her the wrong way, she will cut out his tongue.

The dress had a slit but only visible if she raised her leg. The slit was perfect for her thigh knife holster on the thigh that wasn't exposed. She had a thing for knives.

A knock resounded on her office door just as she finished putting everything away. She had done her makeup in the bathroom and got dressed in her office.

She opened the door, and it was Gregory. "I need your laptop please." The man was in a grey suit. He still didn't look the least bit attractive. Just a bored man who doesn't know what else to do in this life.

"Okay..."

"Yeah, whenever there is a party of this calibre, we put all our laptops in Mr Molao's office. He only has the access, that way we won't lose anything valuable. You just never know who is lurking." Gregory was very generous with information sometimes.

Lesedi nodded, walked around her desk and packed up her PC. "You look nice by the way." He took the laptop and left without waiting for a response from her.

She smiled, that meant she looked good. That man would rather mop the N1 than to compliment her, not after what happened between them. Sometimes he grew a little shy or embarrassed whenever he catches her looking at him during their meetings. He'd be so uncomfortable wondering if she was thinking about him dancing for her naked that night...

The pool didn't look like any ordinary pool, it mimicked an ocean. A lagoon they now call it. With white sand around, palm trees and just an exotic feel to it. It was beautiful. It should attract more guests.

Lesedi was walking around the ballroom, making sure everything was running smoothly. She didn't talk to anyone except the staff cause the guests didn't know who she was and she didn't even know them and quite frankly, she didn't care. She was a nobody in a room filled with investors, CEO of this and that company, politicians and just people with deep pockets who were mingling, enjoying the finger foods.

"That colour... my, my aren't you looking daring Miss Phiri." She felt fairies erupt in her belly.

She turned around and saw Mason looking dashing in a navy suit and a crisp white shirt, no tie. He had trimmed his beard, and gotten a fresh hair cut with a nice fade. He always had a boyish haircut, with the hair falling into his eyes but now he styled it back and damn if he didn't look like a GQ model.

"You're checking me out, have some shame." He teased her.

She playfully punched his arm and couldn't stop smiling at him. She didn't lie when she said she now felt free. After what happened at the cabin in the middle of nowhere, she felt powerful. "They didn't hassle you at the door?"

He shook his head, "Not at all. I went to see the pool renovations... I am impressed. I can't wait to vacation there when you're the owner." He winked.

Lesedi grinned, "what are you doing here, exactly?" She was looking into his eyes, and he grew serious.

"I need to have a word with Singo. Where is he? I want to introduce myself." He asked, looking around the ballroom, but he couldn't see anyone he knew.

"At the bar last I checked..."

"I need him to introduce myself to him... Get the ball rolling, let's hope he'll buy whatever I'm selling." He kissed her cheek and left.

She didn't know what to do with herself, so she went at the dark corner in the room, dragged a chair and sat there, looking at people have fun.

This was once her life, going to parties with friends, drinking, mingling with strangers without a care and really just enjoying her youth.

She missed that time. She never thought about having kids or getting married, just having a partner who will always be there, enjoying life,

experiencing new things together and traveling together. That was the dream, while she had people run her salons.

But there she was, working at a hotel she was plotting to steal because the owner of it raped her. He sexually assaulted her and made sure the case disappeared while using her father's money to climb up social ladders.

She was not going to allow him to keep flourishing. She had to put an end to that and maybe, she will use the money to now travel and see the world. Maybe meet someone with green eyes and fuck them in every city.

Her train of thought disturbed her. *Green eyes?*

Mason?

Of course, she'd imagine Mason because she has been thinking how good he was in bed. He looked like he could pleasure a woman until she was sated. She wanted a taste of that.

Mason found her in her little corner and gave her a task to do. She was nervous but she had to do it.

Mason was a very smart man, he met Mateo, introduced himself as Mason Lombardi, CEO of Lombardi accounting consultants. When Mateo searched him as it was the first time he heard of the company he was impressed. The man's company was doing great and of course Mason dropped of how he actually makes his money, and how helps others to make money... left a card with him and walked away.

Not only did Mason manage to do that, but he managed to steal the man's office key as well.

Lesedi was now in the possession of the said key and was walking towards his office to plant Mason's rootkit in Samuel's laptop. She had briefed Mason earlier on where their laptops were kept, hence he had to steal the key.

Mason had a plan, that man's plans were always crazy but brilliant. Every camera in the hotel had to catch her that night, she made sure to walk in the direction of the cameras all the time, except when she went to change her outfit in a hotel suite under a Jessica Mayor's name.

She opened Samuel's laptop, she didn't need password for it this time, the USB was encrypted and would copy every single thing that was on that laptop in five minutes.

Time was moving slow. Only a minute had passed, and she was pacing up and down the room.

Three minutes, it was now at sixty percent.

"What are you doing in here?" It was a security guard, "No one should be in here." He walked inside the office.

Lesedi thought by the time anyone realizes someone else was inside the office, she'd be long gone but no. "I just needed to get something." She didn't anticipate this. But she kept her face hidden with the blonde long wig that had a very ugly and long fringe. Mateo had hired a new team of security guards and they were clearly briefed on how no one was allowed in the man's office.

"And what is that?"

She couldn't think fast enough, her eyes darted to the computer screen, *seventy percent*. Damn it. The man's eyes followed hers and noticed she was working on one of the laptops, they were not briefed about this.

He took out his radio so he could call for other security guards to come. "You don't want to do that pal." She warned him.

But he ignored her and next thing, a fight broke out between them. She broke his radio by throwing it against the wall, then grabbed his head and smashed it against the wall. He fainted. This was not how this was supposed to go but she had to do that.

She looked at the computer screen, *eighty percent*. She could tell more security guards were coming and the damn thing was not moving fast enough.

Two more guards walked in and found their colleague on the floor, so she took care of them too, but one managed to call others as well before collapsing to the ground.

She looked at the screen, *ninety nine... hundred... finished..* she unplugged the USB in a hurry put it in her bra, took off her shoes and bolted out of the office.

More security guards chased after her, but she was a runner, she was a fucking track star.

She still had her access card tied around her wrist as she needed it to access main doors. She took the fire exit and was rushing down the stairs, got to the second floor, entered the lift with her hair in all kinds of directions, her shoes in her hand, panting.

She ran towards the cold room, which was in the basement there, she knew they wouldn't find her. She tapped the card there and walked in. She was supposed to go back to *Jessica's* room, but she had to run.

Luckily Mason had disabled the lobby cameras because he didn't her want to be seen on any of the cameras after she entered Mateo's office. The

only cameras he had no access to was Mateo's office. They used different monitors and Lesedi knew then that Mateo was a criminal, he thought and acted like a criminal.

What was in his office that was so important?

The cold room was where they stocked their beverages and meat. And it was cold. She was freezing.

She tapped on her earpiece but couldn't talk as there was a commotion outside.

"She probably went inside the cold room."

"No, she went outside through the exit, check the cameras."

"I will wait here in case she comes out of nowhere."

"Who is she!"

She heard male voices outside. They were definitely looking for her, and she was definitely screwed if they opened the door to the room. She just hoped none of the old security guards were called.

Leaving the unconscious men inside Mateo's office was not an issue, they wouldn't be able to know it was her. The issue was that she was now locked inside the cold room. How was she going to get out of this one?

Will Mason be able to finish the job? How was she going to dress back in her orange dress?

Mason started calling for her through the earpiece. His voice was frantic. "Les, where are you? Talk to me. Singo and Gregory just bolted out of the ballroom." He was whispering. Music sounded a little far away which told her, he moved away from the guests.

"Mace... I'm in the cold room." She whispered back. She went at that far back, behind the alcohol stacks. She was cold, she was numb. Her teeth were clenching. She couldn't feel her toes.

"Cold room?"

"Yes."

"Did anyone see you?" He asked.

"Mhm." She couldn't open her mouth anymore.

"Fuck! Did you fight anyone?"

"Mhm."

"Fuck! Did you leave anything in the office? Anyone?"

"Mhm-mhm."

"Fuck! Okay, okay... I'll fix this." Mason then disconnected.

After a while, Lesedi couldn't keep still anymore, she was shivering, teeth clashing. She was cold. Too fucking cold.

Mason came back again through the earpiece and told her to open for him. He had to subtly look for the damn cold room. It also took her a while to walk to the door. She was frozen.

"Fucking hell!" Mason was shocked at the state she was in, but he had no time, he had her orange dress in his hand. "Let's get you changed."

"I am going to touch you okay?"

She nodded, she didn't care, she wanted to be warm. Mason worked fast, he changed her into the orange dress she wore before, admiring the knife secured on her thigh, this girl was a wonder. He also removed the blonde wig off her head.

After he changed the dress, he bunched up her the blue one she wore as a disguise and threw it in the plastic bag and threw it in the bin, picked up Lesedi and went with her back inside.

He had wrapped her up with his jacket. "Just hold on okay, things are fucked up and I don't want that man to know it was you or suspect you."

Milo who was also a part of the charade and came in as a waiter, joined them in the lift going up. He was Lesedi's pretend boyfriend. She didn't even care anymore. She wanted to be warm. Mason didn't want to be associated with Lesedi incase Mateo proved to be a smart man, so he let Milo take the lead on this one.

So Milo & Lesedi went to her office, there was more security guards going in and out of Mateo's office. "Mr Molao!" Milo called Mateo. Milo loved his job. He loved pretending to be someone he wasn't just to see an operation through. Imagine calling this bloody rapist "Mr" with so much respect.

Mateo was confused as to who was calling him, but when he saw Lesedi in the man's arm he went forward. "Someone locked her up in a fridge downstairs. I was having a smoke and heard her yelling." He was in character. As a waiter surely that was believable. He had scored this job through Gregory who he met at his favourite bar. It has been the plan all along.

Mateo looked the frozen woman over, she didn't maintain eye contact, she just needed to feel warm, and Milo's body was just a little warm. She didn't want to let go of Mason's jacket or Milo.

"Who did this to my men? I need the security footage. What did they want because nothing seems to be stolen? I have unconscious men on my bloody office floor, and nothing is missing.."

"She needs to be in a warm place..." Milo ignored whatever else the man said.

"Of course, take her home or something if you don't mind, I have a crisis on my hands." Mateo dismissed him.

Firstly, how does he just ask a strange man to take his employee home? Does he care that little?

But Milo didn't care, as long as they didn't think it was Lesedi, then all was good. Mason had dealt with the cameras but even if they somehow manage to recover the footage of her walking in here, they wouldn't be able to tell. She hid herself very well while walking down the corridor.

Once they were out of the hotel, Mason met them outside, took Lesedi from Milo then called Ginger. "Bring the car and deal with the security on the top floor."

Mason had hired a driver for the night as he wanted to look like an important guest. Ginger and the rest of the gang were waiting outside for anything. And now they had to work.

The minute Mason and Lesedi settled in the backseat of his Range Rover, the hotel lights switched off, courtesy of Ginger and his handiwork. They were going to deal with the security footage of the hotel.

"Turn up the heat please." Mason instructed his driver. The car was hot, the driver was sweating, Mason was also hot but Lesedi... she was super, super cold.

Mason took off his shirt remaining with just a bare tattooed chest, "come here, let me warm you up with my body heat." He didn't know what else to do. Even with the heat turned up, she was still shivering.

He helped the woman straddle his lap and Jesus, for a split second his mind switched off. This was a very intimate position; he knew they were heading there but he didn't think it would be this soon. But there was no time for his perverted thoughts, he wrapped his arms around her, and she wrapped hers around his naked chest.

He was warm, Lesedi snuggled into him, her head resting on the crook of his neck. She was seeking warmth, couldn't think about anything else except being warm.

Mason cradled her head with his large hand and involuntarily kissed her forehead.

She sighed, and he knew she was comfortable.

He couldn't believe he put her through that. How did she get caught, five minutes wasn't that long...?

But at least he thought of bringing his team over, just in case something happened.

When they got to their building, they went to his place because she forgot her bags in her office. And there was nothing they could do until tomorrow.

He took her to the guest bathroom, ran her a hot shower, placed a black bathroom gown on the toilet seat, lotion, and his size ten sleepers, unzipped the back of her dress and left her alone.

Lesedi covered her head with the shower cap and stepped under the hot spray and felt her body begin to melt.

Mason was in the kitchen, making a quick chicken noodle soup with some hearty spices to give it much, much desired flavour. His kitchen was smelling good, he was enjoying himself.

While the soup was busy cooking on low heat, he turned his couch into a mini bed, put on some pillows, a thick grey comforter and switched on the TV and went on Netflix to check out some movies. He wanted her to relax and enjoy her dinner when she was done with her shower.

She didn't come out of the shower even when the soup was ready. So he decided to take a quick shower himself. Wore grey sweats, a grey shirt and walked barefooted to the lounge.

He found her settling on the couch, watching TV.

"You're done... how you feeling?"

"At least warm. Thank you for this." She patted the comforter on the couch. He made a fortress for her on the couch, and she loved it.

He dished up for them with garlic rolls because the little miss said she was really hungry. "This soup is soo good. I didn't picture you as the cooking type."

"Yeah... what you picture me as?" He asked. He was sitting a little further away from her.

"Mhm... like you just order food and don't even know how to boil an egg." She said to him and Mason chuckled.

"I thought the same about you, actually I am still thinking the same. Every time I am at your place you kick me out before you start cooking. Who knows, maybe you order food as soon as I leave."

Lesedi picked up a toss pillow and threw it at him. "Fuck off."

Mason wanted so bad to share that blanket with her, to have her lean her head against his chest but he wasn't going to push. Not yet anyway. That moment in the car had fucked him over and he wanted her.

Lesedi shared the same turmoil.

Why wasn't he sitting next to her?

Didn't he want her like she did? She wondered.

"Are you good? You want more?" He asked, breaking the silence.

"Yes please..."

Mason placed his bowl on the side and went to take hers, "I don't want more food." Her voice was just above a whisper.

Mason quirked an eyebrow, "Okay, what do you want?"

"I want more heat..."

"More heat... okay I can turn up the aircon..." He was about to go when she reached for his hand.

"Body... body heat will be perfect."

Mason was lost for a hot second until he realized what she meant...

"Oh!"

Mason's heart skipped a beat. There was a moment of heat that washed between them... But he didn't want to rush things or overstep the mark.

So he picked up his own bowl and sat next to her, bringing her closer to him so he could warm her up as requested.

"You smell nice..." She whispered. She remembered just how much she loved smelling him on their ride back home. The position she had been in, well it wasn't what she would have liked, but she had no complaints. She had accepted that she found this gorgeous green-eyed man sexy and attractive.

"Thanks..." he didn't know what else to say. Her eyes told him one thing, but past experience told him the other. This woman was unpredictable.

This has been a long time coming and if Mason wasn't going to take the punch, she was going to. She was too fucking horny to play hard to get or check her moral compass. She wanted this.

The movie on the screen seemed interesting, she had no idea what was happening, they both had no idea what was happening because one thing was on their mind, they needed to fuck each other.

Once they were done eating, Mason took the dishes back to the kitchen and washed them. Much to Lesedi's annoyance.

Mason was stalling on purpose because he didn't know what to do. He always knew what to do with the women he dated or chased, but this madam was a different kind. He had to thread carefully, not to scare her or anything of that nature.

He sat back down, pretended to be watching the movie while having a turmoil in his head. *Should he strike a conversation, should he touch her...*

But it seemed like he didn't need to do anything after all because the little miss, turned and straddled his lap. "Mason..." she more like breathed his name out...

She looked into his eyes; desire was written all over the man's face. Knowing she was naked under the thick robe she wore elevated the mood. She felt his dick grow and harden beneath her and she smiled. She didn't even know where the sudden confidence came from, but she was going with it. She needed to get laid.

His dick felt perfect, so perfect that she started grinding on it... and he groaned. "Kiss me..." She asked him.

It was as if he wasn't himself. He always took charge but today, when the moment he has been thinking of, hoping for arrived, he didn't know how to act. He had to be asked... she had to take initiative first...

But as soon as their lips collided, he took control of the kiss, took control of his body and mind. His hands went to unfasten the robe belt and it pulled apart, revealing Lesedi's boobs. This was the first time he was seeing her fully naked. And goodness, she was had a beautiful pair of boobs.

Lesedi's head fell back when Mason's lips covered one nipple while the other hand was kneading the other boob.

Series of moans left Lesedi's mouth as she was grinding on Mason's sweatpants covered dick and wetting the spot. She was getting wetter as he kept playing with her boobs and he loved how freely she was allowing him to touch her.

Mason took off the robe completely, turned them around and lay her on the couch and got on top of her. He kissed the shit out of her while his fingers skilfully found her wet mound.

The kiss was hungry. It was a '*I fucking want to devour you*' type of kiss.

He slowly rubbed her clit, swallowing her moans with a kiss and then inserted a finger inside. Lesedi's back arched and Mason waited, he waited for a sign that she wasn't comfortable, but she just opened wider for him.

She's been holding off. She couldn't do it any longer. She's been teased enough, the stolen kisses were preparing them for this right here. And damn it,

she wasn't going to go back. She wasn't going to stop. She wasn't going to go chicken out.

Mason loved the feeling of her bare mound...he cupped her sex and looked into her eyes, "you sure you want this?" he asked. His thumb slowly and deliberately rubbed her swollen bud.

Lesedi looked at him with hazy eyes and nodded with a smile on her face, "I do, I fucking do." She breathed, her horny voice was so fucking pleasing to listen to. "Do you want it?" she asked him... Her eyes never leaving his. The heat dancing behind those green orbs only ignited the fire in her belly.

"Fuck yes!" his clothes came off and Lesedi was mesmerized.

His body was sculpted for the gods. The time they shared a bed after New Year's Eve, she didn't even bother to appreciate his body. She was just so annoyed, angry and all kinds of negative emotions. She had been bothered by the fact that he joined her in bed with only a pair of boxers that night. She wasn't ready to see beyond Mason being just another man that time... But that has changed hasn't it...?

Now she was going to admire it his body... this man had an amazing body, she knew he worked hard for it at the gym, and she ran her hands over his chest, pinching his nipples as she glided down to his impressive dick.

It looked good, it looked enough to suck which was shocking because she wasn't the kind of girl to want certain things in her mouth, but it made her salivate.

Mason was watching her, he was kneeling on the couch, watching her touch his body, watching her hand circle his dick... "You don't have to..." Mason wasn't going to force her to suck his dick even though he'd love that.

Before she could say anything else, he cupped her face and kissed her, the kiss was sloppy, it was hot, and it left her panting.

Mason gently pushed her back, she had just showered, her pussy was bare, he was definitely going to feast on it.

When his tongue made contact with her bare silky folds, Lesedi yelped. No one has ever eaten her pussy before. She didn't know if she was going to like it, if she should let him... but the man didn't seem like he was going to stop so she lay back and gave him the platform to do as he pleased.

Lesedi was a moaning mess, turned out, she enjoyed being eaten out. She loved it so much she showered Mason's face with pussy juices.

Mason only groaned in approval; happy she came on his face. A woman's pleasure was his pleasure. He enjoyed it when they lost control and let the waterworks out.

But he wasn't done with her, he inserted two fingers now and kept his lethal tongue on her clit. Her toes her curling, her hands were pulling his hair, pushing his head in... she couldn't believe that she was enjoying herself that much.

Jamie was right, Mason was attentive to her body language. If she made a different sound other than moaning in pleasure he stopped to check if she was alright.

"I am not going too fast right?" He asked.

"Oh I need you to... I need you to do it fast."

He smirked; he loved a vocal girl. Not every woman could be pleased the same. He increased pace with his fingers and the wet sounds her pussy

made him to look at her face, her eyes were closed, her back was arched, a sign that she was almost there...

"Right there Mace... just... I'm right..." she didn't get to finish the sentence because Mason pulled his fingers out and pulled back.

She felt empty immediately. "Why? Why did you stop?" she asked, her eyes searching his.

"I want you to come with me inside of you, hold on." He winked at her before jumping off the couch to his bedroom.

Lesedi was confused as to what just happened but when she saw him return with a box of condoms, she relaxed. *Good boy.*

Mason suited up and crawled up Lesedi's body... "Les..."

"Mhm?"

"I am gonna fuck you..." he told her, and something flipped in her stomach. Why did that fucking sound hot?

"Okay." she breathed in anticipation.

"Okay." He was looking intently in her eyes. Nothing but lust was showing, and he could bet with his last hundred rand that his were the same.

When he entered her wet and warm channel, he closed his eyes and groaned. Fucking hell, she was gripping him a little too fucking tight. His face was just inches away from hers with both his arms on either side of her face.

He was watching her, and she was looking at him. "You need to let me in, love." He told her. He wasn't all the way in. He was holding off, waiting for her to relax because she was too tight, and he didn't want to push through and risk hurting her.

"I got you baby... you need to relax for me." He was looking in her eyes and she trusted him. She did. So, she took a deep breath and relaxed her muscles.

She moaned with her eyes closed as Mason slid in until he hit the tilt. She opened her eyes and gasped. Mason looked at her like he was seeing her. Like he could see beyond the hard exterior she has kept up.

Mason was hanging on by a thread. But he wanted her to relax fully, so he took her slow. Slow thrusts, kisses in between...until Lesedi wrapped her legs around his waist.

"Fuck me Mason..." She gave in.

He didn't give in immediately he just increased the pressure of his thrusts. Slow and powerful. Her moans were hitting off the walls, filling his ears. The TV didn't even make a sound to him, all he could hear were Lesedi's moans of pleasure as he looked at her.

His slow thrusts were driving her crazy because she could feel the orgasm coming, it was close and yet so far away. Like she could reach for it and pull it with her hand. It was frustrating her.

"Mason please..." she begged him, but he didn't give in. He liked torturing her. She's always so feisty, giving him hell... he was going to punish her for it. With his dick.

He picked up pace, he rammed into her, eyes closed, savouring the moment. Lesedi's eyes were closed too, and the two were lost in total bliss...

Then he slowed down again. "I am gonna kill you." She warned him.

Mason chuckled, his chest vibrated against hers and she came. Mason was surprised, that was unexpected. He had to hold on as she was spasming underneath him.

"Maaaceee...." she clung onto him as the wave took over.

He kissed her, swallowing her cries and moans, "that was hot." He commented.

Lesedi didn't even know what happened, one minute she was plotting to murder this man for not giving her what she wanted next thing she came from the vibrations caused by his laugh.

Mason pulled out and flipped her over, ass up, face down... what a fucking sight.

Mason entered her and there wasn't much resilience from her this time, and he also didn't think he could keep holding himself off. He wanted to make her pleasure worth the while, she already came about three times... he needed to let go.

Lesedi's moans were muffled by the pillow her face was pressed in as Mason rammed relentlessly inside of her.

"Fuck Mason!!!" She couldn't keep up with him anymore. She gave in and let him pound into her as he wished.

His hands were on her hips, one leg propped up and he drove in, feeling his own climax nearing soon.

She was growing tighter, or he was growing large, what he knew was that he couldn't hold off anymore.

He let out an animalistic sound as he emptied his sac into the condom. With his last thrust, Lesedi came once again.

"Fuuck!!" Mason growled. He closed his eyes and kept still. After a couple of beats, he pulled out and threw the condom on the floor.

At that moment he couldn't give a flying fuck about how was gross it was, he needed to calm down.

He slumped on the couch besides her and pulled her to his chest. It was a good thing the couch was pulled to make a make-shift bed. It was comfortable, a great convenience.

They were both trying to catch their breaths.

Lesedi was sated. Mason made her orgasm four times, *four*. Her pussy muscles kept clenching and unclenching. And she kept twitching every now and then.

"You good?" he asked... Feeling her twitch as she lay on his chest.

"Mhmm." was her only reply. She was sated. She was... The sex was so amazing, she had no words.

"Okay." He didn't know what else to say. He just had some delicious, awesome sex, he had no words.

Lesedi was happy she did this, she was happy she let him in. Because that... that was mind blowing.

And she fell asleep to those thoughts. That she just had amazing sex.

Lesedi woke up the next day needing to relieve herself. She was incredibly pressed. She opened her eyes after having such a goodnight rest to find Mason buck naked on the other couch, with his laptop on the coffee table.

The man was very confident in his skin, but why wouldn't he be? His body was amazing, it was hot. And Lesedi felt all of him last night!!

She tingles between the thighs just thinking about their moment of heat.

The sex was incredible!!! So incredible that she was growing hot again and she didn't want to entertain that.

It should be a once off thing... But damn it her body and heart wanted it to be regular. Hell she'd have loved to waking up with him giving it to her... But he seemed busy.

Also him working and not working her body up might just be necessary, to avoid awkward moments.

They took from each other what they needed yesterday. All was well.

"Morning..." her morning voice was so groggy. She yawned and stretched, feeling her shoulder knots pop. She didn't know what else to say to the man.

She never slept over at a guy's place after sex. That was to avoid awkward moments and she didn't want any awkwardness between her and Mason.

"Hey firecracker... you slept good?" He asked, his eyes were glued to his laptop. He didn't even look in her direction and that kind of stung. What, did he not enjoy the sex?

"Mhm-mhm... I need the bathroom." She picked up the gown he had given her yesterday on the floor and draped it quickly around her body. She didn't wait for him to say anything else. She bolted to the bathroom.

She found toothpaste and a new toothbrush on the sink, and she was grateful because damn it, she didn't know what she'd would do if he didn't have a spare toothbrush. She peed, washed her face and brushed her teeth and finger combed her hair. It was a wild mess, but she managed to at least calm it down.

She had a smile on her face, a smile in her eyes. She was staring at herself... she could feel herself changing and that worried her. Was that a good thing?

She felt rejuvenated.

She started feeling this way the night she and Mason were ambushed by some men... speaking of those, she never found out what happened there because Milo and Ginger were at the hotel last night like all was well... She needed to ask ask him, that way they wouldn't be awkward around each other, or she be awkward around him. She was capable. This was a new territory for her. Waking up at the house of the guy she slept with.

Taking a deep breath, shoving whatever awkwardness was brewing inside of her to the curb, she walked out...

"Mason... the day we were attacked at that house we were supposed to meet Ginger at, what happened there?" She asked him.

She thought she and Mason will have an awkward encounter the next day after having sex but turns out, they had things they could still talk about instead of the *deed*. Which was perfectly fine with her.

Mason now looked up at her and cat took a hold of his tongue, he had forgotten about that. Damn.

"Uhh well... turns out we were at the wrong place. I mixed up the locations." He lied.

Lesedi narrowed her eyes at him, "You mixed up the locations... *you?*" She found it hard to believe. Mason was so detail orientated it was sometimes freaky. How was that possible?

"Yeah, shit happens."

"Not with you. Mason you care about the smallest detail. How did that happen? I was with you; do you know what would have happened if I didn't know how to fight?" She couldn't believe this. She trusted this man. She couldn't afford for him to mix things up.

Mason blinked, okay maybe he should have gone with a different lie. Her reaction was exactly how he'd react if any of his team members would tell him they had locations mixed up.

"I am sorry, okay... that was my fucking mistake, Ginger sent two locations, where I was supposed to meet with him and where these fucking goons were. They are some of his rivals that he needed to sort out. So, I mixed them up in that way." The lies were so smooth but fuck he hated lying to her.

Lesedi looked at him, she wasn't sure if she should believe him, but Mason hasn't done anything that would make her not to trust him. So, she let go. "Whatever, I heard a gun going off that night, did you kill anyone?" She asked.

He shook his head, "Just shot him near his dick. Tell me man, is that what you do in the gym? Learn how to fight?" He still couldn't believe how this woman fought so effortlessly. She did it with grace. It was amazing to watch.

Lesedi smiled and nodded, "I used to train in this gym in town. It was nice, helpful but not as hectic as Jamie's classes. I think that's why the first time I fought I got so lightheaded and passed out. It was my first time..."

"But Jamie's classes are crazy. You really fight in there; the defence classes are worth every cent. I beat up everybody in there... except Jamie. She and I when we partner up, we always tie." She was beaming talking about that. She enjoyed it.

Mason went to the gym to build his body, he never actually considered taking fighting lessons because that came naturally to him. He never even bothered to check what was it that Jamie did with the people in her class, but it sounded like something he wanted to see. Well he wanted to see someone in action.

"Mhm I might just sign up for a few classes. You are a great fighter. It amazes me." His eyes were trained on hers. She was standing far from him as she had just come out of the bathroom. The way he was looking at her made her uncomfortable. It made her feel hot actually.

She hated that she forgot her purse at the hotel, so she couldn't go to her place and run away from him. "Yeah... you should." The heat in the room rose to a new degree.

Mason cleared his throat; it was clear that looking at her made her uncomfortable which was why he didn't look at her when she woke up. But when she was talking about fighting, with her eyes glimmering with happiness, how could he not stare?

She also looked so fucking good wearing his gown, with her crazy morning hair. But he didn't want to make her feel awkward. He was treading careful so not to scare her.

"Please order us breakfast or make it... I don't know, but I need to finish working on this and I am hungry."

Lesedi started to move towards the kitchen, she could whip them some eggs and toast or whatever he had. "What are you working on?" She asked. They gelled so smoothly. It was incredible.

"Sam's PC. I am stealing money from the hotel, creating an offshore account."

"Mason no. You can't do that to Sam!" Lesedi shrieked. "Bathong wena, why?" Lesedi was just taking eggs out of the fridge when the man dropped that bomb on her. She liked Sam. He was just a poor scrawny man that needed to be shielded from the likes of Mason Pierce and Mateo Molao.

"What do you mean? I have to do this. If I want a job as that man's official accountant, I have to get rid of the competition."

"Mason, Sam is innocent in all this. That man has goons working for him. Zakes looks like he eats people for dinner, and have you seen Sam? They will crush his skinny bones to powder."

Mason was actually surprised yet pleased that Lesedi was feeling this way about someone that wasn't Tracy, Sofia or her mother. She was showing compassion for a complete stranger. That in his books was fantastic. She clearly wasn't so cold hearted.

He remembered the day he chased her down in Pretoria and they found a woman bound in the boot of Punch's car. He looked at her, hoping she will comfort the hysterical woman, but she looked right back at him and didn't even say anything to the woman. She was so cold and so detached.

But now... "Look, I will get Samuel out of it unscathed, Milo is working on that. He's meeting with him today to finalize a couple of things. By the end of today, Singo's head will be on fire." He grinned.

Lesedi took his word for it and fixed them breakfast. They ate and Mason went to ask Naison the building manager for the spare key to Lesedi's

apartment, she took a shower and changed her clothes and they left to the hotel.

Mason went to the jazz lounge down the street.

As expected, when she arrived at the office, it was crazy. Zakes was on the call with God knows who and Gregory was grumpy as hell when she went to check up on him. The only thing Lesedi managed to leave with last night was her access card and her office key as they were tied around her wrist. She had returned to take her stuff.

"You're late! We have a crisis, and you show up to work at eleven?" Gregory wasn't too pleased with her.

"First of all, I am not working this weekend did you forget? Secondly... I wasn't okay when I left here last night man. I didn't want to rush back here not knowing what was happening."

Gregory just huffed and switched on his laptop. Even though they were having a crisis, guests still needed to be attended to and a whole lot of other things.

"Nothing was stolen... last night we had a power cut and some of the footage was ruined. The only thing we have is a woman wearing a blonde wig and a blue dress. Everything after that... we don't know."

Lesedi just nodded, "what happened to the footage?" she asked, as if she didn't know already.

"I don't know but something went wrong. Maybe the new security guys messed up out of fear I don't know. But at least nothing was stolen." Gregory answered her then resumed his duties.

Lesedi left him alone, went to her office to pack up her bags. She needed to leave before they start comparing the woman on the footage they have with her. "Miss Phiri."

Lesedi turned around and found Mateo at her office door looking like the fat arrogant bastard that he was in blue jeans and a grey blazer.

"Mr Molao." It really burned her tongue to address him with respect when all she wanted was to spit on him and kick his balls into sunrise.

"Are you okay? Did you see the people who put you in the cold room last night?" Was that concern in his voice?

"No, I didn't. I'm sorry." This was the second time she's been in one room alone with this man. The weeks she worked at the hotel, she could count with one hand the number of times she saw and spoke to him.

But now, there he was... staring at her.

"Mhm okay. They didn't steal anything... but I have the police trying to see what could have happened. Security footage was ruined by the powercut, which is weird but hopefully the police will help."

"Okay... that's good." Lesedi didn't know why this man was here. She hoped to God Mason and gang really covered their tracks because she didn't want to find out what this man will do if he finds out she was behind it all.

Mateo didn't move, he was looking at her. Not even blinking.

"Is there something wrong?" She asked, feeling hella antsy.

"Tell me... do I know you? Have we met before?"

Was this man high? What in the hell was he talking about? Firstly, he claimed he couldn't remember her after huffing and puffing on top of her years

ago, after he helped himself with her body because she was out of it. Now he was asking her dizzy questions? What was his game plan?

"I mean before you started working here..." there was something about Lesedi last night when she was shaken and shivering. It triggered something in his head, he felt like he knew her or was supposed to know her.

Lesedi tensed. How does she even begin to tell him the truth? He didn't act like he knew her, even when he offered her a job at this very hotel, he looked at her like someone he has never seen before in his life.

He once made her laugh, made her smile, made her giggle uncontrollably... then shattered her world. He couldn't remember any of that?

"Uhh, no I don't think so." She responded. The way this man was looking at her made her uncomfortable. "I need to go...my... my ride is outside."

Mateo didn't say anything he simply nodded and walked out. *Creepy motherfucker.* Lesedi was shocked and pushed to the edge. What the hell was that? She needed to resign. She needed to quit this job, today!

She picked up her bag and walked out, went into the lift and down to the lobby. As she walked out of the lift, she heard a woman laugh, her laugh was quite familiar. It was very distinctive, that laugh... she'd know it any and everywhere.

She looked at the source and her world came to a halt. She was right, she'd know that laugh anywhere.

There she was, dressed in a red stunning body hugging dress. Her big ass and curves out for the world to see. On her feet were nude heels and on her head was a thick curly brown wig. She looked dazzling. She was smiling,

laughing with the receptionist until she turned to the side and noticed someone staring.

Her smile faltered, her eyes narrowed... and she gasped.

They looked at each other, brown eyes to brown eyes.

It was really her. The woman Lesedi once called a sister, her very best friend, Zuki.

"Sedi..." Zuki walked towards Lesedi in slow, unsure strides. She never thought they'd ever meet again. She left Gauteng province to Western Cape, and recently just returned to the city of gold.

Hearing her voice, seeing her... right after Mateo looked at her funny spooked Lesedi. What the hell was going on?

She didn't say anything, hell her voice was stuck in the voice box refusing to come to the party.

"Miss Ndaba, Mr Molao said he will find you in the restaurant, he is still held up." One of the receptionists came out of the lift and delivered the message. It was clear that Zuki had sent her up to Mateo but why?

Zuki saw the look in Lesedi's eyes, "It's not what you... we uhm... he's married to Zama." Zama was Zuki's sister.

Lesedi didn't want to know, she didn't want to talk to this person, she was just shocked to see her again after so long. Well at least Zuki remembered her, unlike someone.

"Lesedi!" Zuki called her back when she abruptly started marching towards the door. She didn't even wait or turn back, she just walked out through the doors into the streets.

She had to find Mason so he could take her home. This day was already fucking too much!!!

"What's wrong? Did something happen at the hotel?" Mason was just about to go get her when he saw her marching down the street. He waited for her to reach him before he threw all kinds of questions at her.

Her chest was rising up and down in alarming rate, "Talk to me Les, what happened?"

"He looked at me... and she was there."

Mason blinked; now how vague can someone be? But this was Lesedi, she was strange and fucking unpredictable. At least he knew how to handle her. He didn't even know how he has been able to, but he managed just fine.

He opened the passenger door of his car, and then closed it behind her and drove out.

He kept stealing glances at her as he drove them home. He was getting worried about her. How could he not though?

When they arrived at the estate, they went to her place. She went to her bedroom and left Mason in the lounge.

He thought she'd come back but when she didn't return after a while he went looking for her. He found her on the bed, hugging a pillow.

She was crying... her body was shaking, and his heart broke.

Ever since he met her, she'd fought tears in front of him. She never allowed herself to cry even when he could see she had unshed tears.

He closed the door and jumped behind her on the bed and wrapped his arm around her and pulled her closer to his body.

He didn't say anything, he didn't comfort her by telling her it will be okay... he just let her cry while holding her.

After a very while, Lesedi stopped crying, she was a lot calmer and in her heart she knew it was because of the warm body behind her. She couldn't believe Mason held her through it all. He wasn't even bothered, didn't even say anything to her. He just... held her.

Her arm was holding his secure around her body and that position was too intimate but for the first time, she didn't have any internal conflict, she didn't grow irritated, and she didn't want him to move. She wanted him just right there.

She heaved a sigh and closed her eyes; they were stinging anyway.

"Are you okay love?" Whenever Mason used terms of endearment like 'love', it just sounded so sincere and romantic. His voice was just so heavenly, and she hated to admit that it did things to her lady parts and her freaking heart.

She cleared her throat and nodded, "I think so." She whispered.

"Look at me..."

She sighed again and turned around to face him. She was sure her eyes were red from the crying, but when Mason smiled at her, all her worries dissolved. What was with this man and making her feel all alright? Was he a wizard?

She couldn't help but to smile back.

"What you smiling at?" He asked.

"What you smiling at?" She counteracted.

"You..." He admitted, "I know this is going to sound horrible or whatever..." he continued talking, causing her heart to race. "But you fucking look cute when you cry. How is that possible?"

She grinned, she actually showed all her teeth and giggled, "I thought you were going to say something else."

"Something like?"

"I don't know, something that might upset me or whatever. You're weird." They were facing each other, his arm still over her body and her arm over his arm. She enjoyed their proximity. Mason just had that safe aura around him, she felt safe around him... he calmed her down.

"Are you hungry?" he asked.

"Mason... you always want to eat," she playfully rolled her eyes. "I am not hungry."

"Okay... can I kiss you then?" They were whispering, and it was so strange but yet so cute. They were enjoying it. It was as if they were afraid to speak louder. As if the bubble they created around them would burst if they raised their voices any louder.

Lesedi's heart skipped a couple of beats, and she closed the gap between their lips. Maybe Mason did enjoy their sex last night. Even though she didn't want to talk about it, she at least wanted to know if he enjoyed it.

She tried to pull back, but Mason pulled her bottom lip with his teeth, cupped the back of her head with his hand and deepened the kiss.

She moaned into his mouth as his tongue tasted every corner of her mouth, teasing her own tongue. He wasn't touching her, just holding her and kissing the shit out of her and she grew horny.

They pulled up for air and Mason opened his eyes, they were hooded. A darker shade of green, Lesedi knew the look all too well by now. The man was horny... their kisses always led them to the state of arousal. They kissed each other like they have never kissed before... and it was both hot and scary.

"We should stop." He said to her. He knew if they didn't stop, he was going to have her naked and writhing underneath him.

"We should..." She responded before hungrily kissing him. He kept his hands to himself, but she didn't. Her free hand was roaming all over his body...going under his t-shirt and feeling him up.

Mason groaned when she pinched one of his nipples. And when her hand dipped inside his cargo pants, his eyes rolled. "Fuck baby... You're killing me here." He grabbed her hand and stopped her from toying with his dick.

It was semi hard, and as she kept stroking, it hardened to steel. "We don't have to..." Mason breathed when Lesedi snapped his pants open and unzipped them.

Her hand fisted his dick and all rational thoughts started to crawl to the back of his head. It felt too damn good. She was good. She kissed him, her tongue dominating his.

Mason wasn't sure if it was a good idea to fuck after she had just cried but her lips had looked so inviting that he found himself asking for a kiss. Asking for a kiss from a woman felt strange but asking a kiss from Lesedi didn't. He didn't want to just take from her, he wanted her to give freely...

And right now, she was about to give him more than he asked for. Their clothes came off and decorated Lesedi's bedroom floor.

She got on top of him... "Please tell me you brought condoms..."

"Check my wallet in my pants... I am not sure..." Lesedi jumped off the bed, searching his wallet and came back with it.

She rolled it eagerly on the man's length, came to his side and kissed him... then she straddled him and slowly sat on his dick.

Mason groaned at the warmth of her pussy. She felt so damn good, she felt... she felt like home. She closed her eyes, her boobs staring back at Mason, begging for him to touch.

Lesedi put up a performance, she let loose and allowed her body, her lust to take control. Mason was groaning and grunting, his hands digging into her hips. This woman was going to kill him. At the rate she was going, he was going to come way before she did.

Lesedi watched as his face conformed into different expressions, but she could see he was close to the breaking point while she was still way behind. But she wanted that, she wanted to shatter his world.

But Mason would have none of that. Wrapping his arms around her waist, he swapped their positions without pulling out. He had her under him and decreased the strokes while playing with her clit. His strokes were so slow but too strong, bringing her closer to the edge.

"Mason..." She moaned his name aloud, "don't stop..."

"Not planning to baby..." he breathed his response. Fuck she felt too fucking good. He enjoyed her moans. They fuelled his performance.

The man kept hitting the right spot and when she came apart, he increased pace, slammed himself in and out of her, losing control until he lost himself in total orgasmic bliss.

The session went quicker than he wanted, but when that orgasm ripped through, it was all fucking worth it!!!

Lesedi had a stupid, lazy smile on her face when Mason rolled the condom off and slumped next to her on the bed.

"You're a bloody vixen..." He said while trying to catch his breath.

She giggled, maybe she was. That was hot. That was stress relieving. She even forgot she was crying not so long ago.

Once they had calmed down, Lesedi went to pee and clean herself up, she returned wearing her silk red gown that was in her bathroom and then looked at Mason who was sprawled naked on her bed.

He grabbed a pillow to cover his genital area because Lesedi kept looking at it. Not that he was uncomfortable, it just felt odd to be watched.

Lesedi was leaning against the door frame of the bathroom door, chewing on her bottom lip.

"What's wrong?" Mason asked.

"Singo came into my office today, acting very strange.' She told him. "He asked me if we have ever met before... said he felt like he was supposed to know me or that we once met."

Mason arched his bushy brow, "really? You know, I never wanted to bring this up... but how the fuck did he forget you? Is that even possible? I mean at first I thought he hired you so he could keep tabs on you... or to try and make up for what he did, but he really just treated you like someone he has never seen before."

Lesedi agreed, "I thought so too. But today he was different, it was as if he suddenly remembered something. I had to get out of there and I am not sure I want to return there."

"Samuel will be resigning soon... well not really he's just going to go missing, maybe you can use that as an excuse to quit so it wouldn't look too much of a coincidence. I think you should really quit. That was strange. Is that why you were crying?"

She nodded, "Partly. I saw my best friend... well my ex-best friend. Zuki."

"Zuki? I have seen that name on Samuel's emails... I think she does their marketing. Zuki N-something..."

"Zuki Ndaba..." Lesedi felt a lump on her throat. "She's the reason that man raped me." Lesedi smiled, nothing about her smile said joy, it was a sad, heart-breaking smile. "My own best friend helped that man rape me."

Mason wasn't understanding and he wasn't sure if Lesedi was finally opening up about what happened that night... so he just kept looking at her with questioning eyes.

"That day... Mohau and I went to the mall, papa gave us money and we were over the fucking moon. We shopped, bought new cell phones... it was a crazy day. We met Zuki at the mall, she said there was a house party in another section..."

"If you know Zuki, you'd know she always chilled with the right people, the movers and the shakers. She's always been that girl. A go-getter like you've never seen." She smiled.

"So of course, she's my day one, if she says 'let's go to a party', then that's where I am going. I changed into a mini dress at the mall. I used to love short and revealing clothes, gave Tracy all my stuff to take home with... then went to the house party. House parties were a thing hey... I loved them. Getting drunk, dancing till our feet hurt? That was Zuki and I." It hurt to really think about the past. She didn't live there anymore, she tried so hard to forget about Zuki and the life they used to live.

"She was too forward sometimes, she always said she was going to marry rich. She was a beautiful girl, still is... and she could have any man she wanted. Messed around with politicians and they always, always used her and gave her nothing... one even left her pregnant." She rolled her eyes.

Mason just sat there and listened. He couldn't possibly say anything, Lesedi was in a trance.

"We aborted the pregnancy, I say 'we' because she was my day one, we did everything together. When she had money, she gave me, when I had money I gave her. We always hustled together but she was more into men than I was. I was into nice time; booze and music I am there..." she giggled. She was life of the party.

"So, we get there, it's another politician's house and of course, my girl is hooking up with him. Two, three drinks later they disappear... I am left with some people I don't know. I am getting drunk, this guy comes over to me, introduced himself as Lekau...we hit it off...not in the 'I like him and could date him' kind of hit it off, but like we could sit and talk.

"Turns out he was friends with the owner of the place. He starts hitting on me, I am not entertaining it. He starts accusing me of leading him on, but

we were okay. He kept telling me how gorgeous I was, how my dark skin actually radiates and makes me stand out. He was so full of compliments..." She walked to sit on the chair at the corner of the room. It faced the bed.

She leaned back and crossed her legs, playing with the robe belt. "So Zuki returns and Lekau says something to her. Then I hear her saying, she will sort it out. She comes to me and tells me Lekau wants me, him and the guy she hooked up with will help us get jobs bla, bla... but I am not with it. I am drinking and just dismissing her because she knows I didn't roll like that." She sighed.

"Do you need something to drink?" Mason asked when she grew quiet for more than a minute.

She shook her head, "No, it's just that... I've never really told anyone the whole story. Not even Tracy. She once asked where Zuki was, and I said she left the country with a sugar daddy. I wanted to say she was dead, but that would have been dramatic." She rolled her eyes.

"What did she do?" Mason asked. This was his chance to actually find out what happened that day.

"I don't know... one minute Zuki brings me a drink, the next I am being carried upstairs to some bedroom and my clothes are coming off. I could see what was happening Mason, but I had no power to stop it. I had no power to stop him, and you know what's worse? I was *horny* as hell."

Mason's brows shot up, "They roofied you?" his anger towards the whole situation tripled.

A tear escaped her eyes and she nodded furiously. Her hands were shaking. "Mason... I was... I don't know... I was... I was naked and conflicted. I

knew what was happening, I could see what was happening and I didn't want it... but I was so wet... and so horny. It was the most disgusting feeling ever."

Mason didn't know if he should go hug her or stay put because he was naked. And she was talking about something very sensitive. So, he decided to stay put with anger bubbling in his body.

"I lay there... and I couldn't fight. I lay there and he took and took from me. When he was done, he dressed me, and he walked out. And Zuki comes in looking for me... it took a couple of hours for me to feel okay, to gain control over my body. I looked at her and asked what she did to me... because I wasn't stupid, she gave me the drink and next thing I am out of it?" Hurt was showing in her eyes.

Tears fell freely down her beautiful face, the dimple on her chin deepened. "And she didn't deny anything, she said she did it for us. She did it for me. That we were suffering, we were young beautiful women who should be dancing on top of the world not carrying it over our shoulders." She let out a sad chuckle.

"My best friend helped that guy to rape me... she sold me out. She wanted the good life so bad; she'd do just about anything to get it. I spit in her face and left the room, I got downstairs I saw Lekau, the last thing I said to him was that he was a fucking rapist, and I hope he burns in hell. I was a mess. Dried tears, dishevelled hair, wrinkled clothes...

"I left and went home... to find so much blood on the floor at home. I was shaken by what happened to me, I was not okay, and I get home and there so much blood. And no one was home, the doors were unlocked... I almost

went crazy. Tracy found me just as I was about to lose my mind." Thinking about that day brought an ache to her heart.

"My mom got beaten up by our father, and that angered me so much. My father then slapped me so hard that I passed out. And life from thereon just became harder and harder. A bloody nightmare I tell you."

Mason felt for her. This was one strong girl. Fuck these have crumbled.

"I went to my father one day, and told him about the incident, he said he will help me... he said he will teach Lekau a lesson... but as soon as he found out Lekau was into politics and knows influential people that could help his drug business to run smooth, he ditched me." Lesedi wiped the tears angrily.

Mason's anger was at a threatening level. Morris Phiri should be happy he died before he knew about this.

"I went to the police, but the docket went missing, I was told there wasn't enough evidence. I just... I was alone. My best friend sold me out, my sister went to school, my mother needed to be cared for and my father was a piece of rubbish that endorsed the man who raped me. I had no time to think, or to feel... I was hurt but had to toughen up for my mom's sake." A sob left her lips. She was hurting.

Mason jumped off the bed, quickly wore his pants and went to where Lesedi was sitting. He pulled her to her feet and hugged her.

He couldn't take it anymore. He couldn't keep watching her cry like that. Not only did it anger him, but it broke his heart too.

"I am so sorry baby... I am sorry. You didn't deserve any of that." He kissed the top of her head as she wrapped her arms around his body.

There was no use keeping the armours up with Mason around. She surrendered and gave in. She went to that place she never thought she would go... and it felt so good to finally talk to someone about it. She has been bottling it all in and it turned her angry and bitter. She was just so fucking bitter.

"I tried telling my cousin, Tapiwa... I told her about what dad did, she didn't believe me, so I told her about what Lekau did, and she thought I was attention seeking. That... that crushed me. That was the day I decided to keep quiet and hope I woke up dead."

"Shhh." Mason couldn't bear to hear anymore. This girl went through shit all alone. It wasn't fair.

When he was going through shit his brothers, Gina and their father were there...

"It's okay baby... I got you."

Mason felt his eyes burn. He was going to cry with her if he didn't control himself. He was squeezing her a little too tight, as if he could squeeze all her problems out.

"You don't think I brought this on myself? I got drunk... I entertained a strange man. I should have left him alone when he couldn't take a hint... " Lesedi was confused at how Mason wasn't judging or condemning her. She's never wanted to relay this story ever again because she was afraid to be vulnerable and risk being judged...

"What, never! It was never your fault. It was Zuki's and that bloody bastard's fault. Never yours and don't even think that it was. If anyone thinks it was your fault... Beat them up." He kissed the top of her head, holding her steady in his embrace.

Lesedi chuckled softly. She was upset... Very upset. A lump was on her throat and Mason wished he could wipe all of her problems away and give her a clean slate.

"We are going to make them pay baby... we will make them pay for this." He never let go of her. Instead he tightened his hold around her.

That was a promise he was going fucking too keep.

Come hell or high water.

It felt really good to let it all out and to be believed. Hell, Mason believed her from the get-go. He has been in her corner even when he didn't know her from a bar of soap. Something Tapiwa failed to do for her. Tapiwa was her cousin-friend, they were close, she was supposed to believe her but nope... she thought with her ass and that killed Lesedi.

Mason had pulled her back to bed and they took a nap. Mason wasn't one for afternoon naps, but the day's events were just fucking too much, and he was damn sober. So, sleep was the next best thing.

When they woke up, it was dark outside, and Mason had crazy missed calls notifications all from Ginger and Milo.

"Fuck, I forgot to tell the guys I won't be available." He said as he called Ginger back.

Lesedi decided to go and order them food. By now, she knew what Mason liked and did not like. They often ate together.

She felt so light. She hadn't felt like this in a long ass while... and dare she say, she loved the feeling. She almost, just almost felt like her old self again.

"So, Samuel is on board, him and his girlfriend are officially missing." Mason came into the lounge with his t-shirt and shoes.

"Where are you going?" Lesedi asked. She was still wearing her red robe. She didn't want him to leave. It was funny how she always wanted him to leave but now tables have truly turned.

"Just my place... you don't want me to go?"

She shook her head. Mason dumped the shoes on the floor and the t-shirt on the couch, "Okay then, I will work from here." He had brought his laptop with from the car. He never left it in the car.

"Okay, so tell me what the deal is." If there was anything Lesedi appreciated with Mason was that he never dwelled on something that could potentially hurt her or make her uncomfortable. She told him her life story and he promised to get her justice and that's what they will concentrate on.

"Okay... so I found out Sam was cooking the books for Singo, I used that against him to work with us, I also showed him that money has been missing from the hotel and if he doesn't work with me, I will tell Singo he stole from the hotel. He agreed, so now we have a new identity for him, a safe house for him and his girlfriend took him back... so they will be staying together and laying low..."

"What I am currently doing now is that I am moving money from the hotel, into an offshore account, that should make Singo worry, and I will push myself into his direction once more, hopefully he will hire me, and then I will just end up making his life hell from there on..."

Lesedi looked at him and smiled, "You are a genius, somebody ever told you that? Also Mason, couldn't you have done this without me?" She asked. She still hated how she had to go work for him. Still couldn't forget about the look he gave her.

"Nope, I needed you to face your fears, to look the devil in the fucking eye... and also I needed someone to get me the inside scoop. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be having Gregory or Sam's files." He winked. "And thank you, of course I am smart." He poked his tongue out.

Lesedi just rolled her eyes and turned on the TV. They were waiting for their dinner to be delivered and Mason was busy on his PC trying to see how much he could move at once without creating quite the stir.

Mason was looking at all the accounts that were receiving money from the hotel. Luckily, he managed to hack into Mateo's emails. He used Samuel's email address to send the man a link, to Mateo it gave an error message but on Mason's side he was able to hack into it.

He had been trying that with Gregory's email address, but that punk just never bothered to pen the link, so with Samuel's details Mason was able to get what he wanted.

So now he had access to the entire hotel, and he was excited. This was going to be a breeze.

He was checking the accounts of people Samuel had to pay, mostly were suppliers but there was just one account that kept receiving more money randomly. Millions at that.

He made a call to one of his bank contacts, "Hey man... I need details of a certain account number. I need to know who the person is, there is no name on my side." He told his banker friend, Paul.

"Okay, you're lucky I am still at work, so give me the account number if you have it ready." Paul said to him. He always put his job on the line for

Mason because the dude paid well. Mason paid all of his contacts pretty well, they didn't mind breaking the laws for him.

Mason recalled the account number for him and was told to wait a few minutes.

"Pierce... what the hell are you working on?" Paul asked, his voice picking up a worried tone.

"Why? What did you find?"

Paul sighed, "Man...this is Thami Masoga's account... what are you working on Pierce?"

Mason was confused, Paul was never this inquisitive, "who is that? Are you sending me details or not?"

"This is the fucking general police commissioner Pierce." Paul harshly whispered. "Did he do something? Are you going after him? I suggest you abort mission." Paul finished.

Mason was shocked. The man's name wasn't on any of the board members list... but he was getting paid generously so from the hotel profits.

"No, I am not after him, but that account number is part of the list I am working on." Mason lied.

"Okay, you listen to me, I know you're a hot shot and can cover your tracks, but Thami can hire someone who's like you and Pierce, it won't end well for you,. Whatever you do, don't go after this man." Paul warned him.

Mason sighed, "I still need the details Paul. I won't go after him; I just need clarity."

Paul grunted but he sent Mason the details via email anyway. If the man was on a suicide mission, that was all on him.

"Food is here!" Lesedi jumped on the couch, she has been tracking the delivery ever since. Mason had even forgotten she was in the room. His problems just took a new direction.

"Check my wallet in your room to pay..." he said without even looking at her. He was just staring at his laptop screen, reading through Thami's bank transactions.

Lesedi ignored him and went to dress in more appropriate clothes to go and receive their food order downstairs. She already paid online but found it cute he wanted to pay.

Mason didn't know what to think now, as smart as he was, as well connected as he was, Thami definitely had better resources in his bag. That was certain. And he will probably help Singo with whatever he asked.

He already moved money from the hotel account into the offshore using Samuel's credentials... Samuel was too trusted, he didn't even need Mateo's official signature to make things happen, which was stupid on Mateo's part.

How could he be so careless, but then again, Samuel did mention how Mateo would threaten him all the time. So, of course Samuel alone without influence wouldn't betray the man, he was afraid of him.

Mason felt a headache creep in, he was usually the smartest person in the room or in the operation but now, he wouldn't be so sure. This was the police commissioner; they'd use all kinds of resources to their benefit..

"You look worried..." Lesedi said, returning with the takeaway bag. The smell of the food was soo good, Mason couldn't wait to eat. Also, he had a bad

habit of stress eating. He hoped to God Lesedi brought enough to feed an army, otherwise he was going to eat her too.

"Uhh..."

"Don't even think of lying to me." Lesedi deadpanned as she walked into her open plan kitchen. "What's wrong, what did Paul say about the account?"

Mason sniffed and told her the truth. There was no use in lying to her, he already did that, and he couldn't keep doing it.

Lesedi gasped, "Mason... that's why this man keeps getting away with everything. A whole police commissioner? What are we going to do?" She asked.

Mason shrugged and walked over to her and watched as she pulled out the food packages out of the bag. He was glad she brought enough food cause all this was doing his head in.

They sat in the lounge to eat. Each quite to their own thoughts.

Lesedi was thinking about it... thinking of a possible solution...

"Mason..."

"Talk to me..."

"Maybe...we should create a rift between Singo and this Thami man. Can we do that?" She asked.

Mason swallowed his food before he could speak again. His head was jumbled. "I mean that would be ideal but how? This man has crazy state resources at his disposal. He will see me coming."

Lesedi shook her head, "No, he won't see you coming. He might know you when you have arrived."

Mason was confused, what was this girl saying now...

"Listen... that offshore account? Create a paper trail that would lead back to Thami. We will say Thami was using Samuel to embezzle the hotel because Singo and my father owed him. He wanted to bring Singo to his knees. So, when you get the job, you show Singo the files... and tell him that's why he can't find Sam."

Mason was listening, and it was making sense. This girl not only was she a gorgeous, graceful fighter but she possessed a dangerous mind. She was amazing.

"That's it!" Mason cheered, "Okay, so I will make sure the paper trail begins from last month, to this month... and it's weekly payments... Mhm you're a genius!!" Mason was full of praises.

Lesedi wore a smug look and shrugged, causing Mason to chuckle.

"Okay so I will need to get this job one way or another. And when I do, I will poison this man's mind against Thami... but... shit what if Thami buys himself time to investigate against the accusations? Singo's will probably confront him first." Mason asked.

Lesedi pursed her lips together for a moment then said, "Well then make Singo kill him."

There was a beat...

Mason blinked.

Then blinked again...

CHAPTER TEN

Mason was dressed in a black suit and a tie. He was at a posh uptown restaurant in Joburg north, waiting for the man of the moment, Mr Lekau Singo, or Mateo Molao whichever you preferred.

Finally, their plans were coming together, Samuel sent in a resignation letter which was just Mason behind the keyboard but before 'Sam' resigned, Mason called Singo asking if he didn't need his services to which Mateo obviously said 'thanks but no thanks.'

Mason then proceeded to resign on behalf of Samuel and what do you know, Mateo panicked, looked at the hotel accounts, nothing made sense to him, so he called Mason back.

"Mr Lombardi." Mateo arrived at their reserved table in a black suit as well, it was just a shame he couldn't rock suits. This is the priest look Lesedi meant when she saw Mason wearing a suit the first time at her father's funeral.

Mateo looked like the priest, a dirty old priest.

"Mr Molao." Singo smiled at Mason's pronunciation. It wasn't bad but it wasn't something he was used to.

Their meeting began and of course, Mason had the man eating inside his palm.

"My services do not only come with the ability of hiding money from authorities and making sure your books are always up to date, but I can also find more for you... make sure that we are covered from all sides, even source more buildings

you can use your expand your empire at very low cost." Mason leaned back and sipped his water.

Singo was having scotch on the rocks, this was rather a formal-informal meeting. Mason had the job; it was just a formality really.

"I am sure a man of your calibre has many clients, why scout for a job?" Mateo asked. He needed Mason but he didn't really want to lay all his cards on the table.

"Power, Mr Molao, I know a powerful man when I see one." Mason was full of compliments and Mateo was leaping it all up. "And I like to rub shoulders with powerful men. They might help me step up too. I am tired of playing with the small fish. I want bigger things."

"I understand you very well, I like how honest you are. I may have a job for you, I am just going to throw you in the deeps ends and hoping you can swim Mr Lombardi."

"Please, call me Mason, Mr Lombardi is my grandfather."

"Okay Mason. I was checking the hotel files and there is something I do not quite understand. I need you to officially start working tomorrow. Come to the hotel so I can bring you up to speed." Mateo really carried himself like the almighty.

The way he spoke, the way he ordered his drinks... it all just annoyed Mason.

"We haven't discussed my salary as yet..."

Mateo smiled; he could afford this man any day. Mason took out a pen from his inner suit pocket and scribbled an amount on a napkin...

Mateo choked on his saliva, that was three times more than what he paid Samuel. "Now, now Mr Lombardi. Don't you think you're killing my bank here?"

Mason smirked, "I come with a lot of perks for you, Mr Molao. I am sure you have gone through my resume. I am worth every cent."

Mateo needed this man. He was even better than Samuel, he seemed to know what he needed before he could even say it. He took out his own pen and scribbled down his preferred amount.

Mason looked at it, looked at him and nodded. "I can live with that." He didn't really need the salary but he wasn't going to sell himself short.

The men shook hands and Mateo asked if he wanted to celebrate over dinner, but Mason shook his head no. He'd be caught dead naked before being caught eating dinner with the man that hurt his girl.

His heart skipped a beat. *His girl?* Lesedi wasn't his girl. She was just a friend who he casually hooked up with. Yeah.

They parted ways and he drove back to his place. Firstly, he needed to tell Lesedi the good news, she on the other side sent Gregory her resignation letter, stating that after being locked down in the fridge she didn't feel safe working at the hotel. Gregory wasn't pleased as it was short notice and things were going haywire at the hotel but he was also happy Lesedi was out of his life.

Mason turned away from her door after knocking without anyone opening and her phone ringing unanswered. But he stopped when he saw her limping towards him coming from the lift.

"What happened?" She was in her gym gear, so that told him she was from the gym, and the water bottle and towel over her shoulder were also a giveaway.

She sighed and shook her head. They walked inside her apartment and she threw herself face down on the couch with a loud groan.

"Are you gonna tell me why you're limping?" He worried a great deal about her.

"Jamie beat the shit out of me today." She groaned. "She handed me my ass yeses." Lesedi was in shock. Her gym sessions were always hectic but today she was on the receiving end of the wrath that was self defence lessons.

Is this how the other kids felt when they sparred with her? Because damn it, it ached everywhere.

Mason chuckled, sitting on the armrest looking at her. "How did that happen? You told me you were a pro in this."

Lesedi turned to look at him, "apparently I am 'happy', I am too distracted." She shrugged.

Mason could understand that. The entire week he spent with her, going over their plans, discussing way forward because he did not agree when she suggested that he should make Singo kill Thami... she has been happy. She never snapped at him or threatened him. She was a joy to be around.

All they have been doing is to eat, plan, talk and fuck. Almost every single night. She spent most nights in his place, and he couldn't have it any other way.

"That could be true. I mean, when you joined these classes, you were very angry at everyone but now you're smiling, you believe more in yourself, so it's possible to get distracted."

Lesedi just mumbled incoherent things causing Mason to laugh at her even further. "I got the job." He told her while walking to her bedroom to run her a bubble bath.

"That's good." She mumbled into the pillow. She couldn't even show her enthusiasm. Her body needed some rest.

Mason came to get her, helped her out of her gym clothes and into the hot water. "Ahh shit, that feels so good." She leaned back and soaked up.

"Got space for one more person in there?" Mason asked, she looked so happy in there... he wanted in on the fun.

Lesedi looked at him, man this man made her *feel*. She nodded and his clothes came off faster than she could blink.

She laughed when he splashed water as he jumped in behind her. He kissed her shoulder blades and leaned back on the tub pulling her to rest against his chest.

"Why haven't you accepted Tracy's gift?" He asked her. The gift being the salon. She has been avoiding Tracy and he saw the papers one day as he was looking for something in her drawers.

"I don't know... I feel like she worked hard to get the restaurant and the salon where they are today and that I will be sponging off her."

"She doesn't feel like that and if you keep giving her the run around, you will be hurting her in the process." His voice was calming.

Lesedi sighed, she didn't look at it that way. "You think I should take it??"

"Yes, it will make your sister happy. You didn't hear this from me, but Kyle is tired of seeing her being upset because of you. So, take it and free the poor girl already. She feels guilty."

"Alright... I will. Even though I don't think I am needed there, I will just... I will wing it."

They stayed like that, talking, relaxing and just learning more about each other. "So, you stopped drinking because you were once spiked?"

"Not right away, I actually almost drank myself into a stupor for five years and one day I woke up on the floor at home in a pool of my own vomit and Sofia witnessed the whole things. She just shook her head at me. The look of disappointment I saw in her eyes... I sobered up and told myself I will do better. So here I am..."

"You're so strong. You know that? I don't know how you just never realized this, you saw something wrong with your drinking and you stopped... You took self defence lessons... I envy that. I wish more women could be like you, take their power back."

Lesedi didn't know if she should consider that a compliment. She didn't want to be a strong black woman. She was tired of having to be strong. "I wish I was strong back then too. I prayed for death, I wished for death... it just never came"

"Hey... still gotta kick ass out there baby, can't die yet." Mason felt sad. Talks of death just made him remember his mother. He missed her, terribly so.

"Hey, you promised to cook pap and... what you say?" He decided to lighten up the mood.

Lesedi groaned, "chakalaka and wors. Arg Mason I am tired."

"No, I skipped dinner at a lovely restaurant because someone promised to make me some African delicacy."

Lesedi smiled, they washed up and she suddenly grew excited to cook for him.

* *

Lesedi finally accepted Tracy's gift. They met at her restaurant and were celebrating as Lesedi signed on the dotted line.

They were drinking non-alcoholic champagne in Victor & Tracy's restaurant office.

"I like this restaurant. I love the food too, very much the food." Lesedi mentioned. She was wearing a pair of boyfriend jeans which she folded around her ankles, a pair of heels and an off the shoulder white button-down.

She got another sew in wig, still black, still straight and still long. She loved the same type of hair. It mimicked her own real hair.

"I don't know if this will offend you... but you look so happy! You look way better than you did the past years, hell even better than December. You have always been gorgeous but now... it's like the first thing someone notices about you."

Lesedi smiled, she felt happy. She was healing. She was feeling more than just anger and bitterness towards people. She was slowly letting go of those awful feelings that dominated her space.

"Well... Mason was right about one thing, plotting revenge makes this girl happy." She sat down and sipped her bubbles.

Tracy looked at her sister, she was beaming. "Is that the only thing that's making you this happy?" Tracy was suspicious, but she didn't want to be forward. Rather Lesedi tell her first.

Lesedi looked at her, eyes narrowed... "Mohau what are you asking me?"

Tracy sipped her champagne, she even forgot it was non-alcoholic. "Mhm-mhm, I am just saying... you haven't stolen anything yet from that man, he is still happy going around... that can't make you this happy."

Lesedi giggled, she thought back to the real reason she's been over the moon...

Mason Pierce...

Last night he took her from behind in her kitchen. She almost burned the food. He couldn't stop touching her, and she didn't want him to stop. It was a miracle that the food didn't burn because he had time... and he took his sweet time with her.

Every time she neared her edge, he'd stop, pull out, turn her around and kiss her, then turn her back around to slowly fuck her.

When the orgasm washed through them at the same time, they collapsed into a happy heap on the floor.

Mason was an attentive lover. He knew her body, listened to her... and rocked her world.

"And that smile? Who is he? Mason?" Tracy couldn't help but notice the trance her sister was dissolved in and the dizzy smile on her face.

"Mhm-mhm, it's not Mason... and it's not a guy."

"It's a girl?"

"No, it's not -" Lesedi didn't get to finish her sentence as one of the waiters interrupted them saying there was a man out front wanting to see the owner of the place. Victor, the manager was out running a quick errand.

Lesedi and Tracy looked at each other... "Who is it doll and what do they want?" Tracy asked.

The petite girl shrugged, "I don't know him, he didn't give me his name. He just said he wants to buy this place." She smiled.

"We are not selling." Tracy was annoyed, Victor should have been here to deal with this whole mess. It wasn't the first time someone came around and tried to buy the place. What, did she plug '*For sale*' board outside the doors that she knew nothing about?

"I did tell him that, but he is adamant he has an offer you can't refuse."

Tracy sighed, "Fine, I will be there..."

"Do you want to come with for moral support? I am so tired of people coming in here, waving their money around thinking they can buy my restaurant. It's not gonna happen." Tracy was annoyed.

They set their glasses on the table and walked out.

"Oh no." Lesedi gasped, a second too late.

They came face to face with their sweet-sweet uncle.

Lucas Phiri.

**

Mason was on duty that very Saturday. He was enjoying his work, he was slightly pissed by Mateo's presence but enjoying his uneasiness as they went

through the financial statements. Of course, Mason cooked them to suit his agenda.

He was being assisted by Samuel, not that he didn't have abilities, he just needed someone who was in the know of hotel business to help seal the deal.

"So, you're telling me that we haven't been making profit? That's impossible, this hotel is doing very well." Mateo was smug in his speech; he was beginning to doubt Mason's abilities.

Mason put the papers in front of him, "Maybe the hotel is doing well, and someone is stealing from you because I have checked the financial statements, checked against the hotel expenditure... there is money unaccounted for, well you said you borrowed five million which I have taken into consideration but there is still money missing."

Mateo almost burned his tongue with the tea he was drinking. He took the papers Mason placed on his desk and saw the highlighted numbers... he skimmed through it and felt his temperature rise. "I don't understand... how did this happen?"

"Look, I need you to be upfront with me if I am going to protect your company. Here is a list of all the hotel beneficiaries, I need to know their stance in the company... from there I will be able to locate the missing money." Mason was very calm.

The two men were having a meeting without Gregory for a change. He always looked at Mason funny and it rubbed Mason the wrong way. Maybe Greg remembered him from the night he almost ejaculated over Lesedi... Mason hoped to God that it wasn't the case.

He was almost there... he couldn't let anything derail him or complicate things.

"Okay, I can do that. It's just that Samuel knew who was who."

"And Samuel is not here Mr Molao. He left. I am here and I need details." As Mason sat there, his phone rang. "Excuse me one second..."

He walked outside to answer it. It was Natasha Moore, "Tash." He answered, wondering why Natasha whom he left in New York was calling him. She knew where he was, so clearly she couldn't be needing his help. So what did she need now?

"Mace...hey, uhh are you still in South Africa?" One thing about Natasha was that she always cut to the chase. No use beating around the bush.

"Yeah... what's up? Are you okay?" Mason grew worried, the tone in the woman's voice was alarming.

"I got myself in shit, I am in Nigeria, but I am taking a flight to South Africa just now, please come get me when I am there, I don't know if this man won't set his dogs on me when I arrive to the airport, so I need you there. I need to run from this place."

"Tash what did you do? When did you go to Nigeria?" Mason was confused. He wasn't always up to date with what Blake's team was doing when he wasn't there. Natasha was one of Blake's girls. She was an astounding sniper.

"I will explain later... will you please come get me at the airport? I will send you my arrival time and everything okay?"

"Okay. See you then." Mason looked at the screen of his phone as the call disconnected. Now this was something he didn't need at all.

Her time of arrival was in six hours, so he had time before he would need to go pick her up. He returned back to Mateo's office and the man was done scribbling down who was who on the beneficiary list.

Some were silent shareholders and others were just names, made up names, which was very strange and weird. Should they be audited, shit will hit the fan.

Mason arched his brow, he didn't see Thami's name on the list, but his account number was there, under shareholders... Mateo was lying to him. He put Zama on the man's account number.

"Mr Molao... I will be verifying these accounts with the banks."

Mateo looked up at the man and scrunched his brows, "Is there a need for you to do that?"

"Yes. Unless you want us to let go of the money missing but even so, I just want to do my own research so that I am well aware of who everyone is. And I'd like to see your shareholder's agreement please. Need to make sure everyone is paid accordingly. Don't worry if there is anyone earning more or less, you will just take me through it. I want to be thorough with this job."

Mateo cursed the day he gave this man a job. He made motions for Mason to give him the papers back with his hand, he then wrote the correct names and told the man who was who.

Mason was pleased. "Now, this Zuki N ad agency, why do we pay them hundred thousand a month? What do they do for the hotel that requires such a large amount of money?"

Mason wasn't going to let Zuki slip in all of this mess. She was guilty like the rest of them, and he was going to make sure she feels the pinch.

"They advertise for us. They are very good at their job."

"This hotel is very well known, doesn't need crazy marketing gimmicks to sell. Word of mouth already does half the work. You can get same services for cheaper. A hundred thousand a month is a lot." Mason wasn't looking at Mateo as he said this.

He was mainly ticking off lists he made in diary making sure he gets all his points across. He appeared to be so professional yet ruthless in the boardroom. Mateo couldn't believe the man.

"Zuki is my sister-in-law. I can't cut her off."

Mason looked up at him, he looked at the man through the roof of his lashes, "are you running a charity organization or a business?"

"Watch your tone, this is my hotel. I can do as I please." Mateo sneered.

"Let's take this matter to the board, let's hear if they will agree with that. Because if you ask me, you could save around fifty-k a month just on marketing and maybe put it to some good use." Mason wasn't afraid of this man. The contract they signed was watertight and also, if he were to be fired, he'd clean Mateo's account faster than he could blink.

Mateo's eyes hardened. "Don't threaten me with the board, I know I hired you for the interest of this hotel but at this rate you're going, you will be out of a job before this week ends."

Mason stared at him. Clearly this man didn't know who he was. "Understood." He was going to have to find another way to punish Zuki for what she did to Lesedi. One way or another.

"And I trust Samuel did a good job, go and find where the missing money went instead of giving me advice on how I should run my hotel when I didn't ask, Mr Lombardi."

After that Mason was dismissed.

He went ahead and transferred more money from the company into the offshore account and dated the transaction back. The great thing about his work was that he could hack into places and had friends in higher places too that could make things work for him.

He has been doing this for a very long time, it was easy-peasy.

It took him longer hours to actually get the wheels rolling but by the end of the day, he had done a little damage to the hotel's finances, and he send an anonymous email to one of the board members to rat out how much Zuki was making from the hotel.

Mateo was going to flip but he wouldn't know it was him.

Which was the beauty of it all.

Mason cleared out his desk, like the rest of the employees, laptops remained in their offices with new locks and new passwords. Mason didn't even need their stupid slow laptops, he had all he needed on him.

He hadn't heard from Lesedi the whole day, he knew she went to see Tracy and he missed her. He didn't like how he felt when they spent the whole day without talking and that alone was alarming.

He loved to hear her cute laugh when he compliments her, or just watch her as she chops onions in the kitchen or even snap at him. Those things made her who she was, the snapping, being rude sometimes without intending

to... he found that ridiculously cute and he was afraid he might be leading her on or falling into a pit.

He normally tells girls first-hand that he wasn't the relationship type... but he hadn't said anything to Lesedi, he assumed she knew that... but he also didn't want to say it, for whatever reason.

She knew he was going to return to New York after the job, which was what actually gave him a peace of mind that she knew this was just a fling, a nice, exclusive fling.

God he enjoyed fucking the woman. Everything with her was just better. He couldn't wait to see her later on. He missed her.

He had a meeting with Ginger and Milo and as usual, they met at random places with unnamed roads. He had knocked off from one job and onto the next.

He looked at the time and a reminder popped in his head that Natasha was arriving in thirty minutes. "Shit!" he cursed as he exited his car, rounding it to lean against the bumper.

"The Lord!" Ginger was the first to greet Mason.

"G my man." They did their boyish handshake and he moved to Milo, "Milo."

"Okay, bring me up to speed..." Mason leaned against his car. Ready to hear what the boys have been up to.

"Now that we know about The General... it's easier to get information form inside The Tiger Six gang. They were questioned and as stupid as they are, they took blame for Morris's death because it gives them stripes, whatever the fuck that means... so we are home free." Milo informed Mason.

"And now, they will be taking over Morris's turfs, selling drugs but not for themselves, for The General. I am not sure if Mateo is in on this one, but I think he's being iced." Ginger finished.

Mason's phone rang as they were talking, it was Lesedi. He didn't answer, he will see her when he gets home. "I need to pick up Natasha from the airport." Mason informed them. "Thanks for the update but I need to know if Mateo is also back in the drugs game or not."

Ginger nodded and watched as Mason ignored the call again, "you don't want to get that?"

Mason shook his head, "It's Lesedi... I will see her when I come back from fetching Tash."

"Where is Tash coming from?" Milo asked, he was in the know of Mason's overseas teammates, especially Tash, they have worked with her before.

"She's gotten herself in trouble in Nigeria, so she needs my help. I am gonna fetch her just now. She will kill me if I am late." Mason informed them.

Ginger chuckled, "Man, you're bringing Natasha to your place? With Lesedi just a floor below you?"

Mason shrugged, what was wrong with that. "I mean... what could happen? It's just Tash."

"Lesedi could kill you?" Milo spoke in a duh tone.

"Man, Lesedi and I aren't that exclusive. We are just hanging... with benefits." Which wasn't a lie, but it didn't sound nice to say that. Lesedi was a fucking dime. She made him feel important, made him feel seen, appreciated

and made him laugh and... he was not going to admit the last part, not even to himself.

"You think that's going to stop her?" Ginger asked, wary of the whole situation. Lesedi called again but the call was cut short. "Just answer her and tell her you're busy."

Then Ginger's phone rang. "It's her."

The alarms in Mason's head went off, "okay answer it, don't tell her you're with me. Maybe something happened." Mason instructed him.

"Ice queen..." Ginger answered, a smile on his face that quickly vanished. "Whoa, whoa... wait... where are you? Are there cops? Have you been spotted?" Ginger fired all kinds of questions at her.

"I don't know where he is either but send me your location and drive away. I don't care Lesedi drive away and send me your location, send both locations." Ginger then hung up.

"What happened?" Mason asked.

"Uhh... she uhm -"

"Talk damn it!" Mason almost choked the words out of Ginger's mouth.

"You know how she likes saying she's in a bit of a jazz? Well, this time she's in a fucking shitty jazz." Ginger spoke. Mason narrowed his eyes; he didn't have time for riddles. "She was in an accident. She said she hit her uncle's car and he's bleeding. He's badly hurt." Ginger told the two men.

Mason just blinked. Now what the fuck was wrong with Lesedi? What the fuck was going inside that woman's head? How can one person be so damn reckless all the damn time? Jesus.

"Did she mean to hit him..." Milo asked, he couldn't really see Lesedi driving purposely into someone's car, but then again... Ginger informed him of what the woman was capable of. So maybe she did do it on purpose.

Ginger shrugged. He didn't ask for all full details. It was now a crime scene they needed to get to and extract her before shit hit the fan.

Mason looked at the time, he was definitely going to be late to the airport and Natasha needed him as much as Lesedi needed him.

"So, what are we doing boss?" Milo asked,

"Which one of these reckless women are we rushing to first? Your fuckbuddy or your wife?" Ginger asked with a playful tone.

This movie he'd like front row seat ticket please.

**

Flesh was slapping against flesh. A large man with a big belly hovering over a delicate soft and curvy woman. The sex they were having... well one was enjoying and the other couldn't wait for the man to finish already.

She loved sex, sometimes. Sometimes it felt good, sometimes she managed to get an orgasm, if she was on top and her clit rubbed against the pelvic bone. But not with this man, never once in the many years they have been doing this that she got an orgasm.

She always waited for him to get in the shower so she could finish the job herself.

Men who couldn't pleasure a woman should really last two minutes tops, but no, this son of a cat on top of her, huffing and puffing, sweating, groaning and growling, had been at it for at least five minutes now.

Her moans were so low, barely audible. At first she used to scream and moan loud, motivating him, but over the time, she just grew tired of pretending but not enough to be quiet. She just hummed and moaned lowly in his ear, scratching his back and counting the seconds till he was done.

"Baby, shit, shit..." the man growled as he emptied his sac into her. There was no condom in place, there never was. She gave up trying to make him use one. It was pointless. So, she just hoped to God she never catches anything that could put her health at risk.

As usual, he went to the bathroom, cleaned up, brought a towel back for her, at least he still was a gentleman even when he controlled everything. Even when he was the only one receiving pleasure.

"Mhm o monate maan." He complimented her. (You're delicious.)

She rolled her eyes, but a smile appeared on her face. He always says that, even though she never enjoys it, she loved the compliment because it meant money in her freaking bank account.

"And so are you." she lied.

The session wasn't over, he normally went three rounds at least to be sated before they could part ways, before he could go back to his job, or his family. He was after all a married man.

"Zuki... do you want to order room service? I told my wi... I told Mosima I will be held up for the most part of the day. So, you have me all to yourself baby." He told her.

Now that's not what she wanted to hear. Fucking hell. But it would give her a chance to talk to him about something that has been bothering her.

"Thami..." she got off the bed and wrapped a towel around her body. Her curves refusing to be hidden.

"What's wrong?" Thami was a great man in physique. He toppled over her. He had a strong voice, sharp eyes and a sharp mind, the problem was that he sucked in bed. He really looked like a dream husband, in looks... but Zuki knew he was far from being that. He was a thug in a uniform, a cheater and he sucked in bed.

"How good was that person who helped Lekau forget about what happened that day?" she asked, her voice picking up a low tone. Afraid to speak out loud about that.

Thami was drinking whiskey now, standing right next to the window as he smoked his cigarette. "Forget what day?"

Zuki sighed, "That day man. The reason why we now call him Mateo."

Thami looked at her and then realization dawned on his face, "Oh that. Very good... I mean if you look at the hotel, no dark skin women is in his face. Hardly sees them and he hates them. So, Aurora is good. She hypnotized my wife into forgiving me for cheating." Thami was smug about that.

"How does she do it?"

Thami shrugged. "I don't know, you just need to tell her what to help you with and she will. In Lekau's case, it was to forget the face and grow a bitter dislike for dark skinned women, so he doesn't fall back into a trap." He answered.

"And... could he relapse? Does it have triggers?"

Thami was confused as to why Zuki was now bringing this up. "I guess, but Aurora makes sure the triggers aren't the day-to-day things he could see.

She uses certain words only she knows to pull the trigger. Why? Why are you asking me these questions?"

Zuki didn't know if she should lie or be honest, but her life was at stake here... her money was at stake, her future... she couldn't play with that... "I saw her."

Thami looked at her, the two have known each other from way back in Soweto. They went through helping Mateo lie low. Zuki was paid a lot of money to be in the loop and making sure, she backed the right horse. Lesedi had told her in her face she loathed her, so since she lost her best friend, she decided to make money and run off to Cape Town.

"Saw her... the girl? Where?"

"At the hotel. I was going to meet Mateo and she was coming out of the lift. She saw me, she knew I was there for him... and the look she gave me... she found him."

Thami just looked at her... and didn't know what to say because it has been so long they had even forgotten about it.

* *

Lesedi was *reckless*. That was the perfect word she'd use to describe herself at that very moment.

The heels she'd been wearing were now super uncomfortable as she paced up and down the side of her car. She was waiting...

She had to do it... she kept telling herself that in her head, that she had to do it.

One minute their uncle was at the restaurant, caught them in a web of their lies and she suggested they go speak in the office.

They had to come clean. There was no use denying the truth that was right in front him. "Rangwane, we lied because you didn't deserve any of this money." Lesedi took a bite of bullet. Tracy was still in shock that he was actually there.

"You two are selfish. But I did come here to try and buy this place. But I shouldn't worry myself. We can still use this place." He told them. He was surprisingly in a good mood. He wasn't fighting with them, just damn disappointed that they really lied to him and the family.

"Use it for what?" Tracy finally found her voice and asked.

"What your father has been using it for. We are back in business, and we need a secondary location to clean the money. I was going to try and put in an offer to the owners of this place... but since it is my nieces, we can just work together."

Lesedi couldn't believe him. Just after what their father put Tracy through, their uncle wanted to do it too? Drug money was a lot of money but never again.

"No."

"No rangwane." They girls spoke at the same time.

He looked at them but smiled. "Well, I will speak to my boss and let's see if you will still say no when he comes here himself. He is the police, and he has proof of this place being used to clean drug money. That was the leverage I was going to use had it been some other people... but since it's you, he will come here himself. I hope you know... I gave you a fair, better choice...and you said no." then he walked out.

Lesedi saw the terror on her baby sister's face. She wasn't going to sit idle while Lucas messed things up for them. Not after what they went through, not after what Tracy went through with cleaning of the money. That's not happening again.

She picked up her keys and rushed out of the restaurant and followed her uncle.

He took off in a deserted road and one thing was on her mind, she couldn't let him go through with what he promised them.

So she stepped on the accelerator and held her breath...

Now she was standing in front of her car, well Mason's car that he lent to her, and it was badly fucked in front. It was a miracle she managed to drive away from the scene.

But before she left the scene, her senses came and she went over to her uncle's car and pieces of glass had cut him up, he was bleeding and unconscious. She was scared out of her mind. She couldn't help him, couldn't touch him without leaving much evidence that could implicate her.

She needed Mason.

When Milo arrived, she felt relief flood through her but still, that wasn't enough. "Take my car and get out of here." Milo told her.

She grabbed his keys, but she wasn't moving. "Get out of here Lesedi. You're too close to the scene and I don't know what will happen if someone else sees you. Go."

Milo was just about ready to pick her up and dump her in his car. "Please... keep me informed okay? Tell me if he's made it... if he's..."

"Okay, I will. But you need to go. I can handle this problem; I can't afford you going to jail at the same time. Fucking go." Milo grabbed her purse from the car and threw them inside his car for her.

Lesedi snapped into action. Her heart was pumping hard as she slid into Milo's car and drove off.

She drove to her place without knowing if her uncle was okay or not. She was worried, she was scared. Scared of the lengths she was willing to go through in making sure her family remains unbothered.

She arrived at her place, took a shower and draped her silk robe around her body. She was on the edge.

Mason hadn't called her, and she wanted him, no, she needed him. She needed him to hug her. She didn't need him to come at the crime scene and fix it all for her, that would have been greatly appreciated too but she needed him to get there and hug her and just... hold her.

Her train of thought was alarming. But Mason understood her. Mason made her feel safe that even though she was sometimes too reckless for him, he was going to ride with her.

But that didn't mean anything right? It couldn't possibly mean anything...

She went into her kitchen, opened her cabinet where Mason had been stashing his whiskey and vodka. She didn't know what to go for. She wasn't a much fan of whiskey... when she used to drink, she'd only have ciders or vodka.

So, she poured a neat single and downed it immediately, her eyes closing as the liquid burned her throat.

It has been a fucking while. She took the bottle and the glass and went outside on the balcony.

She didn't pour anymore, she just kept them close, in case she might want to get drunk and forget about the events of the day. But how could she? She checked her phone and had missed calls from Tracy. She sent her a quick text letting her know she's fine and will call her later.

She didn't trust her voice as yet. She didn't trust that she'd be able to lie. Because if Tracy finds out about her uncle's accident, she was going to have to lie.

She contemplated on calling Ginger, she didn't have Milo's number... but at the same time she didn't want to be annoying, but this was her uncle, and her mess... so she called.

"Hey Les... listen I will call you back, we are still handling it, okay?"
Ginger answered the call.

"Is he okay? Is he... dead?"

"No, he's alive. At the hospital. I will call you back." Ginger then cut the call. Well at least that was something right? Maybe she should call Tapiwa and just fake concern... but no, Tapiwa will be suspicious she knew Lesedi hated her.

Fuck.

She didn't want or need alcohol... she was done being a drinking girl. She needed something that will help her release endorphins... something like an orgasm. Damn it where was Mason and his godly dick?

"Firecracker..." she spun around and found Mason leaning against the glass door. He was looking too damn fine in his black cargos and black body-hugging t-shirt. "You should lock your door if you going to be drinking outside."

Oh, that explains how he was able to enter, because damn it her heart was beating on her throat, if she coughs, she will catch it in her hand. She placed her hand over her chest and just looked at him. Not believing that he was there just after she had sinful thoughts about him.

Mason was just staring at her. He had a lot to say to her, she had some crazy explaining to do.

"Do you want to tell me why I have four men out in the field taking out fires... you caused?" he asked.

Lesedi thought Mason would show up, and then hug her and make her feel better but nope, the mister was pissed.

"I... I panicked... I just panicked okay?"

Mason looked at her, his jaw ticking. "You panicked? When you panic you try to kill people? What did he do to you?" he asked.

Then Lesedi explained to him the whole situation of what happened when Lucas caught them at the restaurant.

"So why didn't you call me?" He asked after she was done telling him how Lucas threatened them with his cop connection that needed a money laundering machine.

"I did... I did call you, but you were too busy to take my calls."

"No, no, no... you called me after you crashed into him. Ginger told me what time you called and that's when you were calling me. Why didn't you call me when you got in your car?"

Lesedi opened her mouth but closed it. Mason was not pleased at all. "What were you going to do? If I did that."

"Well now we won't know, right? I would have thought of something that would have bought us time."

"This buys us time too! I didn't know what else to do, there didn't seem to be another solution Mason, I just wanted to... I don't know, okay? But I didn't want to kill him." She looked away. She couldn't stand the look in his eyes.

"Where were you?" She asked. Seeing that he wasn't going to say anything else.

He cleared his throat, "Had to go to the airport for something. It was a good thing you called Ginger because I don't know what you were thinking or what could have happened to you."

Lesedi was grateful for him and his team. "I needed you." she whispered.

Mason heard her, because he was already walking towards her when she spoke. He stopped walking, "what?" he asked, thinking he probably heard wrong. The tone in her voice was... Something he couldn't explain.

She turned around as she heard his voice closer, "I said I needed you there... I fucked up; I know I did. But I am not happy with myself. I don't want him to die...and I am scared... I... I needed you..." Her voice was breaking at the end.

Mason now understood what she meant when she said she needed him. "Come here..." He opened his arms...

Lesedi rushed into his open arms and hugged him. She buried her face in the crook of his neck and inhaled his scent. Damn he smelt good. She knew he was a fan of colognes and often didn't stick to one scent. She saw his collection in his bathroom, and she approved.

A man that cared about his scent... impressive.

Mason pulled back just so he could look into her eyes, he smiled... "Better?" He asked. He knew she needed a hug which to him was shocking because she used to push him away whenever he offered hugs.

She was actually being vulnerable with him and he... he liked that. He liked it a lot.

She shook her head a smile now present on her face. The worry she spotted moments ago, having vanished.

"What else you want...." He asked, his Adam's apple bobbing up and down as he swallowed. This girl made him feel all hot and bothered and he liked holding her.

"This..." she went on her tippytoes and kissed him. The thing with Lesedi was that she was tall, but not as tall as Mason, so she had to stand on her toes to be able to initiate the kiss. Mason smiled against her lips but kissed her back.

Lesedi sighed into his mouth when he took control off the kiss. It started off slow and cute, then Mason picked her up and put her on the table behind her without breaking the kiss.

Lesedi could live for this man's kisses. How was it always so nice to kiss him? She hasn't gotten tired of him yet, or his kisses, in fact kissing him always didn't feel enough.

"Fuck baby...you're killing me here." Mason said to her when they came up for air, his forehead resting against hers.

Lesedi's eyes were hooded, she was hot and wet. Hot and bothered. A wicked thought crossed her mind and she smirked.

"Uhh... what's going on in that pretty head of yours?" He asked, his voice so low and husky, complimenting the dark sky as they were outside.

"I want to do something to you... I've been meaning to do it... and I want to do it now..."

Mason's brows furrowed together in confusion, but soon that confusion dissolved and was replaced by lust. Uncontrollable lust.

Lesedi pushed him away from her, jumped off the table and went on her knees in front of him. He looked down at her and goodness, his heart was going to beat right out of his chest. He wanted her in the most sinful way.

With Lesedi he didn't mind waiting... he wanted to ask her if she was sure, but words stuck in his throat when he watched her circle her hand around his dick and giving his head a kiss.

He sucked in breath...

She looked up into his eyes, "I have never done this before... so if I don't do it right...tell me." Her voice was all but breathy.

Mason could only nod. This woman could bite his dick off and he'd still call it the best head ever.

Lesedi licked his base, sucked his head, got the man's dick all wet and nice, then she took him in to the back of her throat. Whatever thread of resistance Mason was hanging on, broke.

His hand was holding his t-shirt and the other went behind her head and pushed for her to take him as deep as she could.

The gagging sounds she made were all but hot. He loved the fact that he was doing that to her, that she was giving into him.

He whipped his t-shirt off his body as it was distracting him. He kept pulling out of her mouth to let her breathe and then back in again.

Now he had two hands cupping the back of her head, eyes closed facing up as he thrustured into her.

Lesedi couldn't believe she was doing this. She felt so... she couldn't put it in words, but she felt like a bad girl. She loved it except for the gagging, she enjoyed doing this to Mason.

Mason was almost going to orgasm right into her mouth, so he pulled out, breathing heavily... "Get up." He commanded her. She did as told...

Mason kissed her and untied her robe, exposing her boobs to the night. He kissed and sucked each nipple, driving Lesedi crazy.

He picked her up and put her back on the table...his fingers glided between her thighs and my oh my, boy oh boy, she was dripping.

"Do I do that to you baby?" he asked. "Do I make you wet?"

Lesedi whimpered when he pulled out his fingers to look at her, "Yes... yes you do." She was so needy, she needed him to keep touching her.

Mason tortured her with quick finger thrusts, then slow thrusts...then teased her clit until she closed her eyes tightly and begged him to get off. "Mason please... please get me off. Quit playing." She was on the verge of tears.

Her orgasm was just right there... right there... but he was denying her....

"Baby please..."

Mason stopped breathing, stopped touching her, and stopped kissing her neck when he heard her call him *baby*. In all the time they have been intimate together, she has never called him baby or any pet name. It was always Mason or Mace.

"Why did you stop?" She opened her eyes to find him staring at her, eyes dark with lust, lips a little swollen from her attack.

"Say that again..." He fingered her slowly.

"Say... what?" Lesedi was trying so hard to think, but she was in a zone.

"*Baby...*" Mason told her.

Lesedi felt her stomach flip with nerves. "You like it?" She asked. She knew what he meant; it was then where she realized she had fully let Mason into her life. Into her world.

Mason nodded and then kissed her before he could spook her and make her change her mind. Lesedi kissed him back with the same energy. Loving his cherry breath all the while.

Mason unbuckled his pants, fished for a condom and then entered her.

Lesedi clung on his shoulders, as Mason pushed himself inside of her, filling her up. Today it just felt a little bigger than normal. She felt stretched and filled to a brim.

"God baby!! That feels so fucking good!" She was a moaning mess, a mess full of compliments.

Mason rammed inside of her in some crazy speed and then pulled out, Lesedi whimpered at the loss. Mason was denying her an orgasm on purpose. But why? Wasn't she tortured enough?

His fingers slid in, and he went deeper, fucking her with his long fingers as he watched her face reflect all kinds of emotions. Pleasure presiding.

Lesedi couldn't control her moans, she let them all out and Mason kissed her, his fingers never stopping, "Shhh baby, you want the neighbours to hear us?" He asked lowly in her ear before he bit her earlobe.

Lesedi twitched on the table, her body jerking into Mason, his fingers picking space as she came undone. An orgasm ripping her so hard, she almost saw stars behind her eyelids.

"Fuck!" She cursed, Mason's fingers were so wet and still webbed inside of her.

He didn't say anything, his lips latched on her neck as he rammed two of his fingers inside of her. The wet sound her pussy made fuelled him to carry on with what he was doing to her.

Lesedi couldn't think straight, she didn't know what Mason was playing at but damn, it felt too good, too damn good.

Mason grabbed his dick removed the condom and threw it on the ground. He wanted to give her body attention, even when he was ridiculously hard.

Lesedi's body tensed, that was not just an orgasm threatening to break free, her toes curled, her eyes closed, and her lower body shot out in spasms as she squirted, wetting the table, wetting Mason's hand and exposed torso.

"Fuck that's hot." Mason commented as he watched her heave, coming down her high. He enjoyed watching her.

"I need you to fuck me... please." It's not that she wanted him to fuck her, she wanted him to finish because she couldn't take it anymore.

"I want you to beg me." Mason groaned in her ear, causing shivers to go up her spine.

"I am. I am begging you baby, please... please Mason, fuck me!" She looked so damn hot. What made it all hot was that Mason knew if she wasn't so horny and worked up, she'd kick his ass.

His lips found hers, and he slowly entered her. No barrier this time. He wanted to feel all of her. He started rocking slowly yet steady and Lesedi's eyes teared up with frustration. How in the hell was her body so ready after those orgasms?

"Please... Please Mason..." She begged.

Mason looked at her, and pulled out, "I think we can make you squirt one more time, what do you think?" He teased her opening with his fingers, two slipping inside, his thumb rubbing her wet and swollen bud.

"No... I can't do it; I can't take anymore..." there were moans in between every word she spoke.

"I think you can baby; I think you can take it."

And once again, his fingers went deeper and faster, and faster and he pulled them out and rubbed her clit in fast motion and Lesedi came again, moaning so loud, there was no way her neighbours wouldn't hear if they had their balcony door opened or their windows.

Mason didn't care, while Lesedi was still twitching from cumming so hard, he entered her. She was so fucking hot inside; he wasn't going to last.

He took her slow, to calm himself down but a few minutes later, a few hard and steady strokes later, his pace increased, their eyes locked.

Lesedi couldn't stop staring at him, he was such a gorgeous man. A very generous lover who cared about her orgasms before his own, even though some felt like a punishment.

Mason Pierce was... he was handsome as hell, she was attracted to him as hell... she was...

"Fuck baby!" Mason cursed out loud as he neared his peak, "fuck, fuck, fuck" he pushed his last stroke in and lost himself inside of her. He threw his head back and pushed again, while Lesedi kept moaning...

They were both sweating, panting so hard and yet still kissed each other like it was the beginning of their sexcapades.

"Let's take this party inside." Mason pulled out, pulled his pants back up and carried Lesedi around his waist, the bottle of vodka and glass in her hands.

Once inside, the lounge and kitchen lights were off they had lights from the passage on and the outside lights also helped them to see around.

Mason didn't waste time getting naked and making them cocktails buck naked. "Uhh so are you back to drinking?" he asked, as he remembered the girl didn't really drink.

"Not really... I guess tonight is an exception. I just want to loosen up." She accepted the cocktail and enjoyed it.

"I am a little sticky... so I am just going to clean up a bit." She said to him, a dizzy smile on her face.

Before she could go anywhere, Mason pulled her back and kissed her. He kissed her and pushed the robe off her body. She remained in the nude.

Mason took a shot of vodka and then bended her against the kitchen counter and entered her from behind.

She was still so wet... and still very hot inside.

Her moans filled his ears as he took her from behind, groaning like a wild animal as they found their release at the same time. "Now you can go clean up."

* *

Mason was in the kitchen, heating up the pizza they had ordered for dinner. It was now three in the morning, and they had been taking short naps in between their love making.

Now Lesedi woke him up and said she was hungry... the very said hungry woman was dressed in Mason's t-shirt and lying face up on the kitchen counter, a couple off feet away from Mason.

She was eating grapes from a bowl, looking so beautiful it was scary.

Mason looked at her from the roof of his lashes as he worked on plating their pizza and making them more cocktails. Well cocktails for Lesedi he had moved on to his whiskey. It was a good thing he spent time in Lesedi's flat that he bought alcohol over.

He couldn't imagine having to go to his place and retrieving these things while Tash was up there.

He had forgotten about Tash the minute he saw Lesedi on her balcony, in just a robe and her hair being fanned by the wind. She was such a dark-skinned goddess.

"You're quiet there pretty boy, what's up?" She turned her head to her side to look at him. She was so comfortable in her position.

One leg was straight on the counter, while one was bended at the knee. She wanted to pull both knees up, but she didn't want to flash Mason with her ass and vagina. Even after he had been eating her out like a starved man.

"Mhm-Mhm just thinking how nice this is." He walked over to her and kissed her.

Lesedi smiled, she was slightly tipsy and heavily drunk on Mason's dick. The man fucked her senseless and good.

"It is nice, isn't it?" Lesedi didn't want to think much about it. But every time she spent with Mason sharing bodily fluids just worked a number on her.

"Hey... what I did to my uncle won't ruin your plans right?" She asked, sitting up right as Mason pushed the plate of pizza towards her.

Mason shook his head and grabbed a slice and brought it to her lips. "Ha! Shit!" She rolled the piece she bit around her in her mouth, making 'hlw hlw' sound as it was hot.

Mason couldn't keep his laughter in. "Sorry baby." He kissed her pouted lips and took a bite.

"Yeah it is kinda hot." He blew some air before making her bite again. "No, actually I just need to find out if Singo is in on this, if not, then it gives me an opportunity to destroy his and Thami's relationship." He informed her.

She nodded, she didn't want to talk about Singo and Thami tonight... she wanted to talk about anything but...

They continued eating pizza, Mason taking a bite and then feeding her while they spoke about nothing and everything.

"So, Gina was that young when your mom passed?" They were now talking about his family.

"Yup, she's the baby of the family. And when mom passed, I just felt like now I needed to take care of her even more. I was scared for all of us. How the fuck were we going to carry on you know..." they were now on the couch, drinking.

"That's really understandable. When you're used to having your mom there...and one day she's just gone and never coming back? That shit is scary." Lesedi sympathised with him and really understood him.

"My dad lost his shit. I had to step in for my siblings. Kyle wasn't that much younger, so he helped me take care of Grey and Gina and the house, while my dad was drinking his liver away in his bedroom." Mason sounded so hurt. His mother's death was still a fresh wound. One he didn't know what it would take to heal.

"That was his life partner. They probably had plans of growing old together...having kids...watch the kids grow and create their own little families and then boom, she's gone. I'd lose my shit too." Lesedi commented.

Mason looked at her and scoffed bitterly before throwing his whiskey down his throat, "That's why I am never settling down with anyone. I don't want to grieve my wife. Same shit happened to Grey with his fiancé... what happened to them, dad and Grey... I don't want to experience it."

Lesedi looked at him, she understood him fully. Seeing your father spiral out of control because he lost his wife, and then seeing your little brother go through the same thing can make anyone really reconsider their decisions and wishes in life.

"I understand you... how did your dad come out of it?"

Mason shrugged, "I spoke with him... we had a very drunken conversation one day and I told him that we needed him. We can't lose both parents... we spoke about a lot of shit but the following day he told me to clean out his liquor cabinet and that I was right, he had to be a dad. And now if you know my dad, you'd know he's whiskey lover... had a crazy collection... but I didn't break the bottles, I couldn't do that to him, I just moved their location to the room in the basement which now became his cellar."

Lesedi smiled, "You're close to the man aren't you?"

"I was very close to both my dad and mom. I was their only child for a while before the rascal called Kyle came and then everyone else." He smiled.

"Rascal... don't tell me you were that sweet first-born child that helped mom to set the table, fold napkins and bake." Lesedi teased him but he looked at his fingers and blushed.

"No! I can't picture that... sorry" Lesedi giggled.

"I was, okay? If you could see videos of me growing up... and pictures... I was this sweet boy that smiled at any and everything. A late bloomer even. Grey and Ky experienced most things before I did." He blushed, slightly embarrassed.

Lesedi couldn't believe him, "Bathong are you serious? You're such a sexy hunky man... late bloomer where? You have bad boy written all over you. Your body, your work... the way you dress..."

Mason looked at her, drew his bottom lip onto his mouth, "A sexy hunk huh?"

Lesedi rolled her eyes, "is that all you heard?"

He nodded, "Come here... you sexy thing... enough about me." He pulled her to straddle him.

Her arms went around his shoulders, a grin on her face, "what do you want late bloomer?" she teased him.

He bit his bottom lip and thrust his hips upward, he was already hard and his dick was pressing into her mound.

Lesedi kissed him, now that was something she couldn't say no to...

CHAPTER ELEVEN

“Where were you?” Mason was greeted by Tash as he entered his apartment. The woman was dressed in very short - ass showing silky black pajamas. If there was anything about Tash was that she loved to show off her long-tanned legs.

She knew she was sexy and used it to her advantage most of the time.

"None of your business, did you need anything?" He asked. It had been hard for him to tear his body from Lesedi that morning. He wanted to snuggle into the sunset with her in his arms, but he had to work.

Tash's eyes held fire, but it wasn't anything alarming. "Mason, I don't know anyone here, what if something happened to me?" She asked, following him into the kitchen as he made coffee.

"Tash, you didn't know anyone in Nigeria but here you are, still alive and in one piece. You can take care of yourself." Mason snapped.

Tash was taken aback; Mason was always nice to her. Hell, this man would move mountains for her, but he has changed now. He wasn't the sweet Mason she met in New York that was ever ready to help and ready to take her to bed whenever she needed him to.

"Are you okay? Are you stressed by the operation you are working on? I can help..." She suggested. The man didn't look stressed, he just looked...pissed.

"Nope I am good, thanks. Look I am going to take a shower... did you even sleep?"

"I did. But I was worried about you."

Mason chuckled, "You've been here all five minutes and already worried about me cause I didn't sleep here? Well, I hardly sleep here... but when I do, it's not alone. Now I couldn't bring the person here because you're here now, could I?" He said to her. He was so snappy and it was all because he didn't want to leave Lesedi alone, not after the night they shared.

Tash nodded, folding her arms. Who the fuck was the new *bitch* in Mason's life? She called dibs on him. Mason was all she wanted in a man, she was married to him but only on paper to protect her and give him a green card in the states. But she's been using that to lure the man into her bed and she has been succeeding all this time.

But now there seemed to be someone in South Africa threatening her fantasy, she couldn't have that. Not after she got to him before the other teammates did back in the States.

"Should I order breakfast?" She asked, playing the sweet caring wife, well friend.

"Uhh sure, I will go get my card so you can be able to pay." Mason went to his room and returned with his card and left it on the counter, "I am going to shower."

After his shower, Mason couldn't get Lesedi off his mind. He felt something for her that he has never felt for any other woman before. Lesedi made him question some of the things he swore off. Could they be more...?

He joined Tash who was now also showered and dressed in sweats and a crop top. "What's this OP that has taken you away from New York?" Tash asked, she was a flawless woman with chestnut brown hair.

"It's nothing major... Tash you can't leave this building under any circumstance okay? If you need me, call me... if you want food, cook or order. Here is some money... I have to get to work." Mason left some hundred rands notes on the counter for her.

"What will I do here by myself? I will be bored out of my mind. Let me help you."

Mason turned and looked at her like she was insane, "Natasha, you're being hunted by some crazy drug lord from Lagos. I am not risking yours or mine's lives because you're bored. Stay put or go out at your own risk and if you dare go out of this building and something happens to you, don't call me." Mason then walked out of the apartment.

Tash groaned. He really wasn't feeling her. He didn't even notice her skimpy night piece that he used to love... or her boobs that he used to grab when they made love.

She was annoyed.

* *

Milo and Ginger planted a mole in the Tiger Six gang and the boy was delivering. In this long game of fixing what's wrong, they had to play and act like the criminals to conquer the lot.

The mole was working for two bosses, Ginger and Mason. For Mason it was information regarding their new relationship with commissioner of the police, for Ginger and his other boss, it was to lock up the gang in prison.

Mason had just found out that Thami had personally recruited Lucas Phiri and unfortunately the man was now hospitalized after Lesedi crashed into him, so Thami now went back to his partner in crime, Mateo Molao.

Mason had planted bugs in all the offices at the hotel and planted a listening device inside Mateo's phone pouch. The little thing was barely noticeable and thank goodness Mateo was still as old fashioned, carrying leather pouches that had a million pockets.

Mason sat in his office at the hotel and listened to Mateo's meeting with Thami. They were at Mateo's house, where they always met.

He wanted as much information as possible to actually nail this man. And he was going to, and he was going to make sure Mateo goes down with Thami as well.

But he needed to divert this man's attention from the hotel. He needed to give him stress elsewhere in order to cause havoc at the hotel in peace.

He called his trusted soldier, Ginger. "The Lord." Ginger answered.

"G my main man, How is he?" Mason asked about Lucas.

"Not bad, just a broken leg, dislocated arm... nothing hectic really. I was just about to call Les." Ginger informed him.

"I will call her; I need you to do something for me. I need you to organize the community to riot against something. I need Singo's attention diverted from the hotel. He's a ward councillor, so time he actually does his job instead of eating the tax payer's money."

Ginger chuckled, "Man you're really pulling all the guns out for this one aren't you." He was pleased, he loved a good challenge. "Alright... I think I will cut the water or something." Ginger said to him before they hung up.

If there was one thing Mason loved about Ginger, the man really enjoyed his job and he always thought on his feet and was always in tune with Mason's needs.

Mason then called Lesedi after Ginger, her sweet voice came through the speaker, and he grinned, leaning back on his chair.

"Mason..." her voice was so groggy, clearly she was still asleep.

"Hey love, still sleeping?" He asked.

"Mhm, someone decided it would be a good idea to sleep at five in the morning... what time is it?" she asked, "oh God it's eleven in the morning... good God." She yawned.

Mason chuckled, "I envy you, I am already at the office, slaving away."

Lesedi groaned on the other side, she sounded like she was stretching and damn if those sounds didn't excite him. He couldn't wait till he saw her again. "Sorry man... I will give you a nice massage when you return." She found herself promising him.

Mason smiled, "I'd like that...and more."

"Mason no... okay? None of that. You wore me out." She'd be lying if the thought of fucking Mason again didn't excite her, she just had to play cool and not sound needy.

"I don't think I did much..."

"Says who...you?"

"Yes, says me... there are things I wanna do to you that couldn't fit into one night... so I didn't wear you out yet."

Lesedi groaned, "okay stop, you getting me excited." She giggled.

Mason carried on flirting with her before the conversation picked a serious tone. "By the way Ginger says Lucas is doing well, just a broken leg and a dislocated arm."

Lesedi sighed, "Thank goodness it's nothing hectic. But shame, how will he now work if he has a broken leg?" she sounded sarcastic as fuck.

"Well, to be honest with you, he deserved that. You don't mess with drug dealers and think you can go around threatening people simply because you have the chief of the police on your contact list. You'll get hurt. He should relax and start a legit business and leave the two of you alone." Mason was slightly pissed at what Lucas was trying to do. He will not allow him to torment the women the same way Morris did.

"I guess so. I guess I am forgiven for what I did, for being reckless?"

"I forgave you when you went on your knees last night baby..."

"Masoon..." Lesedi groaned. Jesus this man was on a mission to make her feel all wet and bothered and he wasn't even in the building to help her out. "I am gonna hang up."

Mason chuckled, man when did they get here? Not so long ago, she'd have insulted him or better yet, hung up on him. But now she was engaging in his flirtatious ways, giggling like a schoolgirl and even calling him baby during their love making...

This was one fling that was gonna be bittersweet when it ended.

It scared him to be honest. How he was feeling about her. Hell, he has been scared since the first day he kissed her. He has worked with a number of vulnerable women that needed his help and he has helped them without feeling anything for them...

What was the problem with Lesedi? What was she doing differently that had him acting this way?

"I'm sorry... look I need to get the ball rolling; I will see you at home?"

She sighed, a happy sigh. "Yes... I will see when you come back. I think I will drive to Pretoria... I don't have a car shit."

"You have Milo's car... use it. He won't mind."

"Okay, if you say so. Just let him know that I am using it okay... I don't want him to flip on me. He has quite the temper."

"Just like someone I know..." he teased her.

"Shut up if you know what's good for you."

Mason chuckled and then hung up shortly. A smile was on his face, and he couldn't even wipe it off.

Lesedi did that to him. It felt so good to feel like this again. Well not that he has ever felt so helpless and at a woman's mercy before, but the feeling of being with someone was that exciting and Lesedi was a rare kind of exciting.

He was so overprotective of her even when he knew she could handle herself very well.

It was time to do what he did best... ruin lives to save lives.

He planned to move money again... tuning in to listen to Mateo and Thami have their meeting. His bugs were recording so if there was anything he missed, he'd just replay them later.

He was surprised when he heard a woman's voice now in the room.

"Thami, I think you need to take him to see Aurora again." The woman spoke in harsh whispers.

"Why? Did anything happen? Did the girl make an appearance again?" Thami asked.

"No, but Zama tells me that he has been talking about feeling like he was forgetting something. That he saw someone that triggered something in his

head, but he doesn't know why or what's happening. What if he saw her at the hotel and he starts remembering what happened? That's a chapter that should remain closed, otherwise... we will have problems. All of us." The woman finished.

Mason was confused as to what they were talking about. But his gut was telling him that it was something he needed to know.

"Zuki... even if he remembers the girl. What can he do now? It has been ten years. He has cleaned up, changed his name and the girl... even if she remembers him or he remembers her... she won't do anything that she hasn't done before, and we will deal with it." Thami spoke.

Mason's spine chilled, there was no way they were talking about Lesedi right? And the woman...her name was Zuki... Zuki, Lesedi's once upon a time best friend. She did mention that Zuki was Zama's little sister...

And who the hell was Aurora and what the hell did they do to Singo's memory?

"I am just saying, when he denies this, it's better for everyone. You know he tried to have her killed the last time right? He can't afford to kill anyone... and she also can't have a confession out of him. It's a mess... just call Aurora and have her wipe his memory again."

Thami sighed, "She doesn't wipe memories. She uses therapy to lock them away. But fine, I will see what I can do. But I just think it's been too long now. Even if he remembers... so what?"

They were definitely talking about Lesedi and Singo's ordeal. So... Singo really didn't remember because they had hypnotized him...?

Now Mason was mad... now he was going to make sure all of them pay for this and when he's done with them, he's going to hunt down Aurora and make her make him remember what he did.

So, he again, worked on transferring millions out of the hotel account but this time, he will send it to a different account than the one that will point to Thami...

This will point from Thami to Zuki. He was making it to seem like they are in cahoots to bringing his empire down.

They were going to be very sorry.

**

The week came and passed, and Mason's plans were going smoothly. He had managed to run the hotel's finances under, and Mateo couldn't even get to it.

The shareholders requested for a meeting once they received an accidental email from Mateo with the actual financial reports of the hotel.

Not only was Mateo dealing with that crisis but there was a serious water and electricity outage in the area and the community have been rioting outside his Soweto home and outside his hotel, needing attention. Much to Mason's satisfaction.

On the other part, Lesedi has been living in Pretoria for the past week, taking over the salon and actually putting in an effort to owning it. She was working on expanding the building, and creating a spa within the salon, so she booked into a hotel in the city, leaving Mason lonely in Joburg.

They spoke every day on the phone as he kept her updated and wanted to know about her days, but it wasn't the same. He wanted to smell her, to hug her and to fuck her... senseless.

"Hey Lombardi, the shareholders are here waiting... heard from Mr Molao yet?" Gregory barged into his office. The man had no sense of respect and just because Mason was another white person, he treated him like they were best buds from primary school... and Greg looked way older. Mason didn't like that, but he liked the idea of Mateo not being present at the board meeting.

"He said he was sorting out some crisis... I will handle the board."

Mason, sneaky as hell... he sent Mateo the actual reports of the hotel, then accessed Mateo's emails and sent them to the board. Now Mateo couldn't blame anyone but himself and he was so stressed out, Mason reckoned he had lost some weight in just a week.

"You? No, I will handle the board." Gregory objected.

"Yeah? You have the knowledge of the company's financial situation? The financial reports that landed on their table?" Mason asked, packing up his PC and notes to take to the boardroom with.

Gregory kept quiet. Even though Mateo kept him in the loop, it was never in the inner circle.

The two men went to the meeting and Mason told them the truth. Of course, they were scared about their investments.

"I promise you; I am working very hard to find where the money went." Mason kept a straight face. "This hotel is still running and it's because we are doing our very best, so your investment is still safe."

"Your very best is coming a little too late. This ... this has been happening for a while. Tell Mateo that he has first preference at buying my shares, if he can afford to...but I am not sinking with this ship." One lady spoke and the rest nodded in agreement with her.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, let's not be too hasty... this can be sorted out. We need to work together and find the thief." Gregory offered. He couldn't imagine losing his job. That would be the day.

"Mateo has been borrowing company money without our knowledge for years, who is to say he is not the thief. Where is he right now?" another man spoke.

"I agree, Mateo could be behind this. I am done. And how are we paying his sister-in-law hundred thousand a month for marketing? Who does that man think he is?" The first lady spoke again. She was livid.

"Tell Mateo we are selling our shares... at market level." Another man spoke. Seems like they had made up their minds and wanted to cut losses before it was too late.

Gregory left the meeting room to go and call Mateo, leaving Mason with the board members.

"I would hate to see all of you go. You have been here from the very beginning....so I hear." Mason spoke to them.

"It doesn't matter. These reports show us that we have been robbed here. They have been cooking numbers from the very beginning... I want out. If you want my shares... I will sell them to you. I am very annoyed right now." The lady then unscrewed a bottle of water and emptied it into a glass and took a sip.

Mason's ears perked... "I may be interested in buying all of your shares..."

The board members looked at each other and then back at him, "You know we own fifty percent combined right?" The lady again asked him.

"Name your price." He leaned back on his chair.

"Mr Lombardi I don't know what you're hoping to achieve here... but they don't come cheap." One man spoke up.

"Look, I love this hotel... and the hotel deserves first preference at buying the shares... I am interested. I am sure Mr Molao wouldn't mind..." Mason answered.

They looked at each other, they were fed up anyway... so what harm could they do in selling to him? "Could you please give us a minute to talk?"

"Of course..." Mason stood up and went outside... he just hoped to God they didn't kill his pockets but between Mason Pierce and Mason Lombardi... plus the money he stole from the hotel... he could afford their shares.

After a few minutes...they called him back in, pushed a note to him with figures. He raised his brows, definitely less than what he thought they'd demand... "And it's non-negotiable." The lady spoke again, she oozed confidence and power. She clearly had money and more investments.

Mason rolled the piece of paper and pocketed it. "My lawyer will be in touch with all of you today, I am hoping the process will go by quicker." He smiled at them.

They were shocked that he didn't even flinch. But that wasn't their problem to worry about. They just made a killing.

The meeting went accordingly. He was happy. Phase two done.

Now to set Thami up.

He had Ginger enter Mateo's home and install cameras all over his office. Ginger had tempered with their electricity went in as a contractor and installed listening devices and cameras in the office.

But what excited Mason more was that he was going to Pretoria this weekend. It was Loraine's birthday on Sunday and Greyson was throwing her a small lunch with family and friends. Tracy invited Lesedi to go with and she told Mason she was going...

He couldn't wait to see her. He missed her.

Natasha was still staying with him, but she was now working on her own operations of getting the Nigerian drug lord off her back. She was a big girl; she didn't need Mason's help for it. Besides, Mason found out that the drug lord had fallen in love with her which was why he was going crazy about finding her.

He promised Tash he will help her leave once he's done with the hectic part of his operation; she should stay put and stay alive.

Mason left the hotel and received a call from his family lawyer Terrance.

"Terry."

"Are you out of your mind? Buying fifty percent worth hotel shares? Do you know how much money that is Mason?" Terry asked.

"Uhh I think so. They wrote the figures down and I made a call."

"You drive me nuts. Nobody does the things you do, nobody. Does David even know that you're balling hard?"

Mason scoffed. "He doesn't know, but if you tell him, tell him that the hotel is doing great."

"I am negotiating with those people after this call, send me the financial reports of the hotel since you work there. There is no way... maybe cut it down by twenty million at least. Fuck this." Terry then hung up.

Mason should have known Terry wouldn't just roll over and play dead. He was going to do this by the book, but that's why they pay him the big bucks.

* *

"Okay boss lady so we are changing hair dryers, we also need to scout for a new hairdresser that specifically deals with natural African hair?" Mona was with Lesedi in the salon office going over some new changes in the salon that Miss Phiri wanted to implement.

Gorgeous, the salon, was so beautiful but it needed to be kept that way which means moving with the times and accommodate all types of hair and not only focus on synthetic hair and also change some old equipment.

"Yes, or we can take two of our guys to training and have them treat natural haired customers."

"I like that idea, I think for now we have enough hands, I can have two guys be trained and then I will start on working with the marketing guy to help me put out promos." Mona smiled. She liked Lesedi they spoke the same language.

"Thanks Mona. You're doing great as the manager here."

"Assistant manager, Victor still manages us."

Lesedi corked her head to the side, "Now that can't work. He needs to focus on the restaurant and let you run this. You're good for it."

Mona grinned, "You think so? But Boss lady, I mean Tracy, needs to like make that decision."

"Not really, but I will have a chat with both of them. I know why they did that in the first place, but I think you've earned your stripes." Lesedi smiled at her. Geez she was smiling a lot these days. A lot calmer... but still deadly and calculating.

Mona just grinned and left the office with a bounce in her step. Lord knows she deserved that promotion.

Lesedi's phone rang, and it was a number she didn't recognize but her caller ID app that Mason installed told her it was Zuki Ndaba.

She stared at the phone ringing and didn't answer. What the hell did she want? That was enough to wipe the smile off her face and kill her mood.

Zuki called again and Lesedi cut the call and switched her phone off.

What the hell did she want? She should have changed her number a long time ago damn it.

"Hey, miss thang..." Tracy popped her head into the salon office. She was dressed in jeans and Minnie mouse t-shirt. Casual Fridays. She was holding the Daisy's takeaway bag.

"I came to get lunch for Kyle and I and thought I should pop by and see how you're doing." Tracy grinned. She had now dyed her hair pink. She was having so much fun with her hair cut, it was ridiculous.

Lesedi put on a smile and welcomed her baby sister, there was no need to think about Zuki and what she wanted. She will deal with that later. "You spoil him... from Centurion to here just to get lunch?"

"It's his favourite restaurant and he's been so moody lately I thought this would cheer him up."

Lesedi's forehead creased, "Kyle moody? What did you do to him?"

"Heban, why me? Why would you think I did something?"

"Because as annoying as that man is, he's never just moody. Either you did something to him...because he'd tell you if someone else had done something to him." Lesedi sat on top of her desk and looked at Tracy.

"Eish... but I don't think it's me this time. I have been well behaved. He's just been sick though. He throws up, can't keep shit down...he's moody and when he eats, he eats everything."

"Mhm sounds like he's pregnant." Lesedi joked but Tracy didn't laugh. "Geez that was a joke." Lesedi rolled her eyes.

"Hai ses'Lesedi what if... Hai wena what if I am pregnant?"

Lesedi just blinked... she was really just joking but now it seems like a possibility. "Your periods?"

"Very light last month... Mhm I need to get tests, let's go."

The two women rushed to the nearby pharmacy at a shopping complex and Tracy took about four different home pregnancy tests. Her heart was beating so fast it was amazing she didn't collapse to the ground.

She went to the bathroom with Lesedi hot on her heels. She tested on all the sticks and gave them to Lesedi who grabbed a tissue before taking the sticks and lining them up on the bathroom counter.

Some few women went in, washed their hands while stealing glances at the tests displayed there.

And of course, Lesedi mean-mugged all of them and they each scurried out of the bathroom.

"And?" Tracy asked, she was pacing near the wall mirror, refusing to check the results. She kept looking at herself and nothing had changed. She

was still the same way she was last month, except she was glowing... but happiness would do that to a person.

Jesus, she's miscarried twice already... spent years believing she couldn't fall pregnant and now... there she was...

Lesedi checked the tests, and the results were out. She gasped. "Oh!"

"What?" Tracy asked, her heart beating wild against her chest.

"So... if these tests are correct, then I am going to be an aunt." Lesedi coolly responded.

Tracy blinked, repeatedly...

**

The day of Loraine's birthday celebration arrived and Lesedi was with Tracy at her hotel room. Tracy spent the whole weekend with her.

As much as Lesedi loved spending time with her baby sister, the woman was crowding her space and limiting phone calls between Mason and herself to just text messages. Cute, fun, and flirty text messages but still...she wanted to hear his voice. She missed him.

Which she wondered if she wasn't falling a little too ahead of herself.

"Have you been listening to me ses'Lesedi?" Tracy asked, putting on her earrings. They were preparing for the celebration.

"Yes... you think you've gained weight and you're still afraid to tell Kyle about your pregnancy, of which I don't understand. You have been here the whole weekend crying about not telling Kyle...and I can't do this anymore." Lesedi was dressed in a satin dress with strapless shoulders, and it reached her knees. Tracy bought it for her. Instead of heels, she wore white designer

sneakers, also bought for her by Tracy. The girl loved to shop high branded fashion.

"You don't have to be so cold." Tracy mumbled, pouting a little.

"I am not. I have been your shoulder to cry on the whole weekend and it's always about the same thing. Wanting to tell Kyle the truth but being afraid. Tell him, he deserves to know that he's going to be a father."

Tracy mumbled her lips together. She wasn't sure she wanted to get the man that excited, what if something horrible happens again and her body rejects the baby? He was hurt the first time; he will definitely be crushed if it happens again now.

"And... you need him. I don't think you want my skinny arms hugging you to sleep while rubbing your back and telling you that you shouldn't worry yourself so much. You need his big arms."

Tracy chuckled, "You're right... I miss his arms around me... and maybe if I tell him, he'll be less moody? Also, I used to want this type of thing where the man gets the mood swings and cravings... but I think women can handle their moods better. We are aware and can apologize later but he doesn't see it. He just thinks it's work stress."

"See? Tell him." Lesedi told her as she picked her phone up after getting a text message notification. "And I want you to pack up and leave my hotel today thanks." She smiled at her phone.

It was a text from Mason - '*Sleeping over tonight, tell Tee to go back to Kyle.*'

"I was going to leave today anyway but why are you so eager to get rid of me? Sedi wa jola?" Tracy asked. (Sedi are you in a relationship?)

Lesedi blushed, "No. I am not dating anyone...I love you and all, but I need my space."

"Mhmm... space. I will give you space girl. I am going back to my man today and I am going to tell him he might be a father."

"Going to be a father... Mohau... you will carry this child full term, you need to start thinking positively, okay? None of this worrywart business. And see a doctor as soon as possible."

* *

The dinner celebration was at Daisy's. Tracy had it closed for the night to be able to accommodate their friend's birthday celebration.

They sat around a long table, and everyone was just merry, drinking, eating, and just having fun.

Mason was running late and Lesedi couldn't stop checking her phone or the door. She was anxious to see him. A week without seeing his gorgeous face ran a hectic number on her. She was dangerously infatuated with the man.

- *'Come and pay for my uber, forgot my wallet!'*

A text from Mason popped up and she smiled, she was sitting next to Tracy who was sitting next to Kyle. He seemed to be in a better mood since she had left his side for two whole nights. He must have missed her as hell.

Lesedi wondered why Mason didn't drive over, but that's a question she'd ask when she sees him. She took her purse; told Tracy she was going outside for a moment, but the woman was just a minute from disappearing into Kyle's mouth.

Mason was leaning against his car just in the parking lot, legs crossed around the ankles. He was such a... he was wearing black jeans that were ripped

on the knees, his Vanz, a black t-shirt and a black leather jacket. He looked like some hunky, sexy rockstar.

"Is the Mustang an Uber now?" Lesedi asked, shaking her head as she walked the short distance to him.

Mason looked at her, rolled his bottom lip into his mouth and pulled her with her hips. "I couldn't wait until the party is over to do this..."

His lips landed on hers and she kissed him back, tangling her hands into his hair, loving the soft feel of it. She loved doing that.

She had taken out her wig and just kept her natural but relaxed hair in a tight bun. She had long hair, as long as most of her weaves and very rich too. She just protected it a lot.

Mason found himself in the crook of her neck, smelling her in. He just couldn't get over her scent.

"Stop sniffing me you dog." She tried to push him away, but he wouldn't budge, instead he kissed her neck and then pulled back to look at her... hands still on her hips.

"God I missed this." He kissed her once again.

Lesedi's stomach flipped, hearing Mason say that caused butterflies in her tummy. Something was happening and she wasn't sure she was ready to confront it yet. Or if she should confront it at all.

"Well... let's go in... and then have some dinner, give Loraine her gift... and then dip, what do you think?" She felt so giddy, so spontaneous, so young and so horny.

"I like how you think. You look hot tonight... no sweater, no long sleeves?"

Lesedi sighed, "I only wear those long things where I am uncomfortable, okay? I came with Tracy here... and these people... well I could take all of them if they dared touch me." She smirked making her way inside.

Mason spanked her ass, "That's my girl."

Lesedi felt something... she was feeling something for Mason, and it felt like it was too soon to be developing any kinds of feelings towards him. She felt like she was going crazy.

It didn't help that the man was funny, telling stories of his little brothers around the dinner table, showing off his teeth, winking at her when he caught her looking. She was a hot mess.

"What's happening between you and Mason?" Tracy whispered in her ear. Thankful to the music in the background and the chit chatters around... only Lesedi could hear her.

"Nothing, why?"

"Because he winked at you with a smirk."

"Batho ba Modimo." (Oh my God) Lesedi exclaimed, "So he can't wink?"

"No, not like that. Y'all are having thing aren't you? This is why you are this happy and less grumpy and mean..."

Lesedi picked her glass of juice as she wasn't fully back into the land of the alcoholics, she also was doing it for Tracy, so she and Loraine aren't the odd ones out of the crew. "I am not grumpy with you... if you bring Tapiwa here I might just be, okay?"

"Mhm-mhm if I bring Tapiwa here, you won't be grumpy. You will probably just smile and dismiss her, that's how much you're smiling and

laughing tonight... and most of the time is what at that man has said." She pointed at Mason with her brows.

Lesedi sighed, "Have told Kyle yet?" she diverted.

"Mhm let's play like that." Tracy pulled back and leaned back on her chair.

"I like your dimple." A man who was sitting next to Mason, in front of Lesedi said to her when she filled her plate with some finger foods. She looked up at him, she had forgotten his name, but he was a friend of Kyle's.

"Thank you."

"It makes you look fierce. A chin dimple is rare, and I must say, it's my favourite." The man carried on.

Mason turned to look at him with cold eyes, "You're someone's fiancé Luke, act like it."

Lesedi's jaw slagged, someone was being territorial and if that wasn't hot...she didn't know what is.

"Geez man, I was just admiring the lady." Luke raised his hands in surrender.

After having dinner and a few drinks, Lesedi bid everyone farewell and what do you know, Mason offered to drive her since he was also beat.

Kyle looked up at them, "You driving her to the hotel? Isn't that out of your way? Luke can take her." He said to them. Luke was also leaving the party.

"Not that it's any of your business but no, we both going back to Joburg." Lesedi answered for Mason.

Tracy gave her sister the look knowing very well Lesedi was going back to the hotel, but she decided to keep quiet.

"Ses'Lesedi you owe me a birthday gift." Pregnant Loraine spoke up when she and Mason went to say bye to her and Greyson.

"Girl, I booked the entire restaurant for you... that is your birthday gift." Lesedi answered,

Lorraine smiled in return. "That's a good one, thank you for coming. And thanks for the gift Mason and you too ses'Lesedi." The birthday girl was adorned in a yellow dress that showed off her perfect small bun and her complexion. She looked so stunning; no wonder Greyson couldn't keep his hands to himself.

Mason and Lesedi bolted out of the restaurant and couldn't help but to kiss each other again outside Mason's car.

She let loose and Mason's hands caressed her body, squeezed her butt while his tongue was roaming her mouth, tasting the mango juice she was drinking.

"Oh, no wonder you gave me lip for a mere compliment." Luke commented, he was outside, smoking.

Mason and Lesedi pulled apart, and Lesedi didn't know what to say. Thank God it was this strange man and not Tracy or Kyle.

"Yeah and you better not tell anyone about what you saw either." Mason snapped, helped Lesedi get into the car before he got into the driver seat and drove off.

After checking Mason into the hotel, they went up to Lesedi's suite.

The minute the door closed; Mason was on her like white on rice. He was like a starved man, but she was a starved woman... their energy matched.

He sucked and licked her neck, tore her dress from her body and picked her up and threw her on the bed.

"Fuck." He stepped back from the bed, watching her in her underwear, she wasn't wearing a bra. Her boobs were great, big for a medium built woman, but she could get away with not wearing a bra.

"Baby... I need you... I need to fuck you..."

Lesedi leaned on her elbows, she still had her shoes on, "I want you to do that."

Mason's jacket was already on the floor, his jeans button undone, Lesedi's doings. He walked over to her, took off her shoes, grabbed her underwear waistband, and pulled it off her body.

"Do you have any idea what you do to me?"

She shook her head.

"Do you have any idea how sexy you are? How gorgeous?"

"I can see how you look at me..." she breathed... "makes me feel like the sexiest woman in the room."

Mason locked eyes with her, kicked off his shoes, took off his t-shirt and his jeans... he did all of that still maintaining eye-contact.

"What do you want?" He asked her.

Lesedi rose on her knees, on the white sheet covered bed, "I want you to fuck me. I want you to fill me up, I want you to own my body."

Mason felt his chest burn, his body catching multiple degrees of heat. This right here, has been what he was waiting for all week long.

Never mind how he was bringing coals down Singo's head, enjoying the thrill of seeing him stress and lose weight... but the anticipation of seeing this vixen again, seeing her smile, seeing her scowl...smelling her, touching her...holding her... was the highlight.

They were now naked, but not touching...

Mason just kept looking at her...

"What's wrong?" She asked.

He was feeling something for her, something he hasn't felt for anyone, or allowed himself to feel for anyone else. When it came to this woman, he had no control. He couldn't control himself... but he will try.

He pulled her into a hug, she melted against him. Mason gave the best and warmest hugs... then his lips were on hers... so soft, so sensual... so promising of a good time.

By the time he entered her, she was dripping from arousal. They agreed on no condom cause somehow in their horny minds, they wanted to feel each other even more.

Her nails dug into his back as he thrustured into her, bringing her to the edge with every stroke.

Lesedi was a moaning mess, but Mason had time... they swapped positions and Lesedi came on top.

She felt it go all the way in and loved how he filled her up. Her moans were getting louder as she lost herself in their lovemaking.

Mason grabbed her by the hips and helped her to hop up and down his shaft... Lesedi was almost there... and Mason didn't toy with her this time, he let

her take from him as much as she needed. His hand sneaking between and rubbing her clit, bringing her to the peak of her orgasm.

Her walls clamped around his dick, tightening, as her toes curled and her eyes rolled back... Mason clutched her hips tighter and thrust upwards, holding her so tight, she wasn't able to move but to stay on top of him and take all he had to give.

He thrust upwards in strong, harsh strokes, grunting, and growling as he lost himself inside of her.

She felt the hot liquids mix up and dare she says, her body convulsed, and she came again... they were both breathing so heavily. That was... well expected.

Lesedi slumped on the side, trying to catch her breath and to stop shaking while Mason was trying to calm his racing heart down.

A thought had crossed his mind when they were fucking, and it made the sex all the way nicer than before but scared the shit out of him at the same time...

He was falling for her...

Because while fucking her, he thought, '*I want to do this everyday of my waking life.*'

**

"You're telling me that my hotel is broke, and all my investors are gone?" Mateo was pacing his office floor, and if he carried for one more minute, the floor might just start paling off.

Mason was dressed in one of his suits, leg crossed over the knee as he watched the man stress the hell out. He had cameras installed in the office as

well and he couldn't wait to show Lesedi when he gets home. A stressed out Singo was a sight.

His mission was coming together nicely, Terrance managed to get him a good deal of the shares and all was a done deal.

"I mean I bought the shares, so you don't have to worry about anything at all. Once you're up and we figure a way out, I will sell you the shares and you will be sole owner of your hotel." Mason mentioned.

Mateo at this point trusted Mason 'Lombardi' with all he has left with. The restaurant at the hotel had to shut down for 'renovations' but the kitchen was still running for the hotel guests, only room services was allowed though. They didn't have enough funds to stock up for the diners, so they had to shut it down.

"Look, Gregory is working ridiculously hard right now in getting us affordable suppliers... I wish I could inject money into the hotel, but I can't, not at this point. However, I have several leads pointing back to Samuel... he was helping someone to steal funds..."

Mateo snapped his head into Mason's direction, "Let me hear it." He sat down, thank fucking God because he was about to give Mason a headache.

"Check the dates of the transactions...and check the accounts... I am now working on finding out where the money actually ended because they used ghost accounts, but I will find the trail." Mason was smirking in confidence, he had to so Mateo can believe he was on his side.

"Find that money, I owe a lot of people a lot of money Mason, I cannot afford to lose my children's legacy. This is their legacy. I did this for my family." The older man spoke.

Mason wore a sad expression, "I understand, I am also hunting down for Samuel, I have hired a PI, the very best and we will get to the bottom of this."

Mateo closed his eyes and sighed, Zakes had warned him about trusting Samuel with the financials now this happened. How could he be so foolish?! Damn it.

"Mr Molao, I couldn't have come in at a bad time, but I assure you, I am working tirelessly on this."

"Good. Excuse me... I need to get to a community meeting. We had water outage last week and it has been a mess. My life is a mess." He stood up and walked out. He trusted Mason with his hotel finances and secrets, he might as well trust him with his office.

But Mason didn't sit in there for long, he had to make sure he gets everything right before he goes for the jugular.

Ginger called him and Lucas Phiri was discharged from the hospital and has been talking to the police about what kind of a car hit him. The bastard even remembered the number plate, so Mason's guys had to claim the car missing in case the police start investigating who the car belonged to, and they got Lesedi another car. Mason's Range Rover that was just sitting in the basement waiting for him to attend big meetings to use it, which rarely happened, he preferred his Mustang.

Lesedi texted him asking him when he will be home because she needed to talk to him about something, he replied that in an hour he will be home.

Two hours later Lesedi went knocking on his apartment door. She was on the edge about the text message she received from Zuki, it wasn't bad that the woman tried calling her but now she was requesting a meeting? What did she want?

She wanted Mason to advise her. Part of her wanted to meet up with her, but her knife might just end up in Zuki's neck...so she didn't trust herself yet. But she was really curious to find out why the girl wanted to talk to her so bad.

"Hi there.." a woman opened Mason's apartment door. Lesedi hasn't been in there in a while. Mason spent time at her apartment instead. They didn't sleep most nights together but some nights they did, and they slept downstairs at hers.

Lesedi was confused but she figured maybe it was one of Mason's friends or contacts. "Hi, is Mason home?"

The girl was pretty, had a foreign accent to her tongue, very unique accent, Lesedi couldn't tell where she was from but definitely not from around. "Mhm-mhm, no he's not here."

"Oh, he said he will be home in an hour and it's been two hours... Thought he'd be here by now." Lesedi mentioned, she was still outside the door.

"Oh, I see... he's not here. Can I take a message for him?"

"I am sorry, who are you again? I didn't know Mason had company." Lesedi mentioned. She was actually noting red flags from the girl's eyes. The woman was trying to read her, trying to size her up...damned if she didn't do the same.

"Oh, sorry... I am Tash, sorry Natasha... Mason's wife." Tash smiled, offering her hand for Lesedi to shake.

Someone might as well have kicked her under the foot or pulled the carpet as she was strutting in heels because what in the fuck?

"Sorry..." Lesedi laughed, "You said *wife*?"

Tasha grinned in understanding. Oh, so this is the girl Mason has been messing with. Mhm.

"Yes, he didn't tell you he was married? Are you guys friends?" Tash asked, feigning innocence.

Lesedi couldn't get her thoughts in order. Someone was going to die. Someone was going to pay for this. How in the fuck does Mason do something like this to her?

Damn it she was growing dangerous feelings for him even when she knew their situation was temporary but sleeping with a married man? Now that was not something she will willingly do. And Mason was about to know that.

Lesedi was seething but had to act cool. She didn't want to lose her marbles in front the nice stranger that was her lover's wife.

"No, he didn't... but that's okay. Can I wait for him in here?" Lesedi asked.

Tash opened the door wider; she was dressed in her booty showing shorts and a tank top. "Feel at home honey." Tash closed the door behind Lesedi.

"I didn't get your name by the way..." Tash said, sitting on the couch and resuming a show she was watching on Netflix.

"Lesedi."

"Lesee... le what?"

Lesedi controlled the urge to roll her eyes, "Lesedi." She repeated.

"I'll just call you Les if you don't mind, that just sounds hard."

No, it fucking didn't, but she wasn't about to be rude to the strange woman, she wanted Mason here, right now.

"This show I am watching... amazing. It's about women who kill? Arg, stuff of my fantasies I tell ya." Tasha told Lesedi. She was enjoying the angry look in Lesedi's eyes. '*That's what you get lady for taking what's mine*', Tash thought to herself.

Lesedi's phone rang, it was Mason.

"Hey..." she answered.

"Hey, I am at your door, where you at? I have Ginger with me, we wanna show you something." Mason said to her, he sounded so relaxed.

"Why don't you and Ginger come up at your place, that's where I am." Then she cut the call.

"Is he coming?" Tash asked.

"It will be in his best interest to."

A few minutes later Mason and Ginger walked through the door. Mason's eyes found Lesedi's first and didn't even move to acknowledge Natasha.

"Les..."

The look in his eyes screamed '*whatever you think or accuse me of, I am guilty, guilty, guilty*'

Lesedi chuckled bitterly and stood up. "Ginger." She greeted the big guy.

"Hey Les..." Ginger greeted her back. He knew his boss and friend was in deep shit. He had warned him before.

They could bet with their last money that Natasha didn't explain everything to Lesedi. She probably just called herself Mason's wife and left things like that.

"Can we go talk?" Mason said slowly, unsure of his words.

His heart was racing, he was panicking. Whatever look that was in Lesedi's eyes broke the strings around his heart. She was thinking the worst of the situation.

"I came here to do that too." Lesedi responded. She walked around the couch... "Where do you want to do this?"

Mason caught the double meaning of her question, so he led them to his bedroom.

Before he could open his mouth to explain himself a fist collided with his face. "Fuck!" He growled.

"You think you can fuck me when you have a wife?" She asked. "You think you can have your cake and eat it too, home boy?" Another fist went to the man's face, and he didn't stop her.

"Lesedi listen it's not like that."

"I don't want to hear shit come out of your mouth you piece of shit. You used me! I don't care if we were just fucking but I don't fuck people's husbands you hear me?" She kicked his perfume stand. His precious colognes... boohoo!

"I don't sleep with married men, and you took that choice from me when you didn't tell me you were married." She was lashing out. She wasn't even giving him a chance to speak.

"You're such a bastard Mason. To think I let my guard down... all because I trusted you. I am the idiot huh?" She looked into his eyes.

Her foot collided with his mid-section and he hit the door with a loud bang. "Fuck!" Mason coughed, she was angry but even in her anger, she wasn't that rough. Mason knew she could give more than she did, but she didn't want to... she was holding back.

"I am sorry." Mason managed to speak. "I can explain. "

"Fucking shut up! You fucking used me you son of a bitch!" Lesedi picked up a pillow and started beating him with it, it wasn't as painful but she was a strong girl so there was some bit of impact. "You think you can do that to me? Me? Do you not know me at all?" She asked.

Even though she was holding back, the anger and hurt in her eyes and voice was very telling.

"Mason... you're married? I am the idiot, huh? The idiot that fucking sleeps with you without protection... oh my fucking God! I slept with you without protection!" She was in disbelief.

"Baby she's not -"

"Shut up! Just SHUT UP!" She screamed and hauled him off the door. "Fuck you. Fuck you Mason Pierce, fucking fuck you and stay the hell away from me. " Then she marched out.

God she wanted to kill him. She wanted to stab him. But she couldn't! She could have badly hurt him back in the room but she couldn't bring herself to. But he deserved her wrath!

How dare he!!!!

She marched right out the door and banged it on her way out. Ginger was sitting on the couch, waiting for Mason to come out of the room...

He did and he was red in the face, Lesedi's fists showing off.

"She beat you up?" Ginger hooted. "I knew she was going to go crazy, but I didn't think she'd actually put her hands on you."

Mason went to get icepacks from his fridge, ignoring Ginger.

"So, wait... that girl beats you up... I am guessing you were fucking her, and she found out that I am your wife, she didn't give you a chance to explain... she beats you up and you let her?" Tash spoke, not believing what she was seeing. The Mason she knew would have clogged Lesedi out before she even rolled a fist.

"Why did you tell her that anyway?" Mason snapped.

"Because that protects me. I didn't know that I wasn't supposed to say it. I don't know anyone here and you don't tell me anything. How was I supposed to know that she's your fling?" Tash defended.

Mason winced as he put the icepack over each off his face. "She's not a fling." He mumbled.

"Wait..." Tash chuckled, "If she's not a fling..."

"You love her." Ginger commented.

That was some bullshit, Mason didn't love. Tash snorted in Ginger's direction but when Mason didn't object, her eyes enlarged.

"You do? You love that girl?"

Mason looked at them, hearing them say that didn't help with the internal conflict he was having.

He looked at them, opened his mouth to say something, maybe to object but... why should he because what he felt for Lesedi... must be love because he couldn't explain it.

Yeah... He loved her... He did.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The following day, Lesedi was in the gym and going crazy in the boxing ring with Jamie. Jamie preferred Lesedi to partner with her or the girl named Gwen who was as tough as nails just like Lesedi. Anyone else... Lesedi always won against them, and she always beat the shit out of them.

But Jamie... they could go on and on and on...

"Fuck, time out, time out." Jamie was mad tired. Lesedi was on a roll. They had warmed up before getting in the ring and have even managed to get themselves a little watch party.

The dudes watching clapped for them as they stopped, telling them they were impressive.

"You got fire today hey... what are you mad about?" Jamie asked, taking off her protective gear as she spoke, Lesedi doing the same.

"If I didn't know better Jamie... I'd say you have a degree in psychology." Lesedi responded before drinking water.

Shit her body was aching but all in a good way. She was still pumped and felt like she could go another round, but she'd be overdoing it.

"I think I should set up an office right here too... when we are done sparring we can sit on the couch and talk... you know." Jamie joked. She got that a lot. That she should have been a psychologist instead of a gym trainer... but she'd be bored.

"Whatever."

"You're ignoring the question... you were happy these past few weeks... happiest I've ever seen you and now you're mad? It's a man isn't it?" Jamie asked.

"What else? It's always men." Lesedi snapped. "Also, I blame you for this. You said I must go and get orgasms before I die and look what that got me." She seethed.

Jamie laughed, "Hey, he did give you orgasms... you were floating on cloud nine... so my advice was good."

"It was terrible, because he's married."

Jamie gasped, "Hai unamanga wena..." she said it in her awful Zulu accent. (You're lying)

Lesedi chuckled at her accent and pronunciation, "No I am not lying. I went up to his place and the madam opened the door. And he dares tries to explain... with her in the room. Do you know how humiliating that is? Jesus Christ." Lesedi snapped. She found it sooo easy to talk to Jamie.

The woman really was a great listener.

"No, we must cut off his balls." Jamie was all but serious. "Married? No, unacceptable. He made us happy damn it... what was all that?"

Lesedi looked at Jamie, this woman was really something else. "Now why are you in it?" Lesedi smiled.

"Because jy is my pal. And he really made you happy and that made me happy. How dare he! I want name, surname, and his address please. I want to sort him out myself." Jamie punched a fist into her open palm.

"This is not even on me, I couldn't have known... he sleeps at my place, has been refusing to leave my place or my side... but he had a woman at his place? How does this work? It's making me mad."

Jamie scrunched her forehead in confusion, "wait a minute, he's been sleeping at your place while his wife was at his? Did he explain to you why he did that?"

"No, I punched him before he could lie to me. What if he's those men that lie to their wives and tell them they going away for business? And I am the business?" Lesedi couldn't believe that she was now this girl, a girl that opened up when something wasn't sitting right with her...

She hated Mason Pierce but was thankful for meeting him because he's been managing to make her change her perspective on life... then he ruined it. Arg.

"You have fallen for him, haven't you?" Jamie asked, her voice softening.

Lesedi groaned, "I don't know... but I feel - felt - something for him. It's gone now."

"Gone? Just like that?"

"Just like that." Lesedi finished. Lying through her teeth.

"Alright champ... you're lying to yourself but it's good to start denying it until it becomes a reality because married men are scums. Don't even wait for an explanation..."

* *

Later that night, after trying to call Lesedi and knocking on her door every hour, Mason gave up. He was in his apartment, told Mateo he will be

working from home, chasing a possible lead of who the bank accounts belonged to, but it was a lie.

He was in his sweats and walking barefooted, looking at his phone, hoping and wishing Lesedi could just respond him.

"So how long are you gonna mope for?" Tash asked. She was annoyed that Mason didn't even deny loving that girl and was trying by all means to get her to forgive him.

"Until she returns my calls." He answered. There was no use lying.

"Mason... you live a complicated life. Just let her go. She lives here... you live in New York... there is a fucking ocean and jet-lag between the two of you, how will you work it out?" She asked.

Mason just grumbled under his breath. That's not something he wanted to worry about now.

"Also, where does that put me? Being married to you is a protection... are you just going to kick me to curbs?" She folded her arms, sounding hurt.

Mason looked at her, "Hey, I have protected you long enough, I got my green card, the marriage served its course, we can divorce right away, and you will be fine."

She gasped, "So you will choose that girl over me?"

Mason was confused, "Tash, what are you saying? You do know that you aren't my actual wife right? You also aren't the only woman I fucked in New York... I just didn't want to be exclusive with the other women just like I didn't and don't want to be exclusive with you. So, what is this?"

One thing she disliked about Mason, he had a sharp tongue and used it when he wanted to. Whenever he got fed up and irritated, he will give it to you, and you will be crushed.

"Whatever... it's not like we are in love or anything. But I thought you didn't love...at all. Because of a choice you made."

Mason just shrugged. He didn't owe anyone any explanation except Lesedi. But Tash was right... he did vow to himself to never allow himself to fall in love... he didn't want to be hurt the same way her dad hurt when their mother died or hurt the same way Grey did when his fiancé died.

He went back to his room to put on shoes.

"I am going for a drive." He informed her.

"You mean you're going to knock on her door like some crazy, low standard having man? That's beneath you babe." Tash jumped on the couch and changed the channel of the TV.

"I am going for a drive." He repeated, took his car keys, and walked out.

He reached the basement, and his Rover was not in Lesedi's parking space or his secondary parking space. She must have been out.

Well at least she was still driving his car, that sort of gave him comfort.

He tracked the Rover at a McDonalds nearby... he wanted to drive over to her but decided against it.

He drove around until it was really late at night, then a thought hit him. He needed someone to talk to, someone who will understand him...

He pressed his finger print on the security scanner to open the gate and went knocking on the door. He was feeling like shit.

"Mace... what... what are you doing here... are you okay?" David opened the door; he was just about to go to bed when the door bell rang followed by crazy knocking on the door.

"Sorry for knocking this loud, I forgot my keys..." He said to his dad and walked inside the house.

David followed him to the lounge, took one look at his first born and hugged him.

Mason welcomed his father's hug and it felt like something he truly needed. No, not because Lesedi found out he was married, but because he realized he was in love and the whole reason he had vowed to not fall in love in the first place.

After a while they pulled back up, Mason caught the tear that had escaped his eye and threw himself on the couch.

David pulled out one of his treasured whiskey bottles, got two glasses on a tray, a bowl of ice and ice pickers and sat them down on the coffee table that he pulled towards them.

"I was about to go and sleep... but what the hell... a nightcap will do." David poured them the first round, neat.

Mason downed it in a heartbeat and so did David, the next round was on the rocks...

"Talk to me my boy... what happened? Did you get in trouble? Did you mess up... or..." David asked.

He hoped to God Mason didn't have any run ins with bad people that threatened his life because he couldn't imagine life without all his children.

"How did you do it?" Mason asked, "How did you accept mom's death and allowed yourself to move on..."

David was confused. Sure, he was back in the dating pool and his kids knew that and he hoped to God Mason wasn't here to tell him he resented him for doing that.

"Uh... are you not happy that I have moved on?" David asked.

His sons may have taken his great physique, his facial structure, but Mason... Mason took after his wife in so many ways. He was kind, a sweet heart, maybe a little too soft at heart, and had her green eyes.

Mason was there for him when he lost his wife, no child should ever go through that, but Mason did it and he did it so well that if right now he tells David he is not comfortable with him dating, he'd respect that.

"No, dad, I am not saying that... I am saying - I am asking - how are you not scared that it would happen again."

David opened his mouth, eyes coloured with confusion then realization dawned unto him. He remembered a conversation they once had a long time ago...

"Oh, my boy... is that why you haven't settled down yet? Are you afraid of what happened to me with your mom will happen to you?" David asked.

Mason gulped down his drink and nodded. "I saw you... you spiralled into a hole dad. That was scary. You almost lost yourself... Grey lost himself too."

David sighed, "I know... I know... and I feel terrible because what you saw has robbed you of the nice feeling of being in love, in a healthy relationship

with someone you want to build with. Mason you can't do this to yourself... you can't live like that."

Mason shook his head, "Dad... you know me... you know me very well, if something like that happens I'll probably die of a heart related issues. I won't make it."

David closed his eyes, he wished to take his son's pain away. Mason had been very close with his mother, took her death the hardest but had to take care of his siblings and his father...

On top of that, he had to help his father when their mother's brother wanted to steal their company claiming his sister helped to start it so he deserved a share.

He got a chance to grieve but only for a little while. Only when everyone had started to move on, that's when his mourning began and his fear of falling in love grew.

"Mace... you gotta let go of that fear. You can't live like that. So, you're telling me that you won't fall in love until you die?"

Mason shook his head, downed the contents of his glass, and pushed the empty glass to his dad, David guessed he was the bartender for the night, "I am." He told his father.

"You are? You are what?" David asked, pouring a glass for him, "in love?" he realized.

Mason kept quiet. He was in love. He finally caught the love bug and it brought back painful memories.

"I think so..." he leaned back against the couch and held the glass his father just refilled for him. "I think it's love... it is."

David smiled, "Oh yeah? Do you want to give it a shot?"

"What if she leaves me? She did say that she's been wishing for death... how do I give in to someone who says such, when I have this fear inside of me?"

"Firstly, why do they say such? Are they depressed? Is there a way you can know why and maybe help them stop thinking that way? What if she feels the same way about you, and suddenly her reason to live is because you are there...?" his father asked.

"Okay... then what if she feels the same way, then she still dies?"

"Damn it Mason, stop it. Look at your brother... Grey went through that, he wanted to die every single chance he got. He drank until he couldn't walk, drove under the influence hoping he will crash... it never happened and finally... he found love again and he gave in and he's happy. Have you seen him? He's put on weight... his eyes sparkle with life... he's not thinking about what happened to Lana, maybe he does but it didn't stop him from moving on. You can't be stopped from being happy by something that hasn't happened to you, you can't be stopped from enjoying a real relationship with real feelings by something that happened to other people.

"Here I am, in the dating pool once again, it may not be like my relationship with your mom, but it is still something nice that I have. Why can't you afford yourself the same?"

"I... I will work on it."

"Does she know you love her?" David also wanted to ask who '*she*' was but thought against it.

"No, she doesn't dad..." he was feeling a lot better than how he did when he arrived. The lump he had on his throat disappeared and his eyes didn't sting no more.

His father made so much sense, he was afraid of something that hasn't happened yet... that has happened to those he cared about.

"I want you to be happy Mace... if she makes you happy, then tell her."

"She lives here...in South Africa and I live in New York..."

"Oh!" David didn't know what to say to that. He wanted Mason back home but that was a decision this man would have to make by himself. Hell, he could head their IT department to greater heights, create new mediums within the company, create more employment and grow their wealth. But hey... this was Mason, he loved the dangerous routes.

"Can I crash here tonight?" Mason decided they were done talking. He didn't want to think about the living arrangements between he and Lesedi. New York and South Africa wasn't Joburg and Bloemfontein or Joburg and Cape Town.

"Do you want me to hold you, rock you to sleep?" David smirked jokingly, then laughed when Mason scowled at him.

Then he smiled, "Thanks dad...I appreciate this."

"Anytime. You owe me a bottle by the way. I am going to crash now, it's late." David took a glass to go and left Mason alone in the lounge.

He too took a glass to go to his bedroom with, there he called Lesedi... and by some miracle she answered,

"Do you see the time?" she snapped.

"I am crashing at my dad's tonight but tomorrow I want to see you, fucking stop being stubborn and think everyone is out to hurt you. She's not my wife... and you better let me explain tomorrow because I hate feeling like shit over nothing."

Then he hung up.

He's always too gentle with her but not this time around, she needed to give him an ear as much as he gives her an ear.

* *

Mason didn't go right away to Lesedi's place when he returned from his father's house. In fact he continued working, working on getting Tash out of the country back to the US. But first, he needed to make it look like she was in South African then out to Botswana, then the neighbouring country, just to throw off her scent.

Monday arrived and he still hadn't gone to talk to Lesedi, he was back at his office in the hotel and things were just about to escalate. Mateo was on the edge, and he trusted Mason to locate the missing funds or at least find out who Samuel was working with in defrauding the hotel but Zakes, Zakes was such a thorn on Mason's side, he had advised his brother to take back all the reigns and they ask the police officials to actually run with the investigation.

"No offence to you Lombardi but this sounds like a very sensitive matter. So I think we should take the matter to the police insted." Zakes said, they were sitting in Mason's office with Mateo.

"I hear you, none taken, I only offered to help because of my impeccable IT skills and that Mr Molao didn't need too many eyes being privy

of his hotel business." He was crossing his fingers that Mateo doesn't listen to whatever Zakes was saying.

If this goes to the police, they will find out the accounts belong to Thami but of course Thami will dispute the allegations and launch his own investigation and things would get really ugly.

"No, no... Lombardi is the man I trust Zachariah. He has done well for us in the short space of time he's been here. And to involve the police is to involve The gen - people we don't want to involve and that could make all this harder than it should." Mateo gave his brother a knowing look before Zakes caught on.

What they didn't know was that Mason knew all about The General. Even though Mateo has told Mason about Thami receiving money from the hotel, spun a story for him as to why, Mason knew exactly who Thami was.

The previous shareholders owned fifty percent of the hotel shares combined, Thami and Mateo owned the other fifty percent, but it was all in Mateo's name. Dividends went to Mateo, but he included Thami on the payroll without anyone's knowledge but the accountant, so Mateo didn't have to send him money personally.

That's how they worked and that's why Mason needed Thami and Mateo to fall out, so he'd be able to get his hands on Mateo's stake of the hotel.

"Okay, well let's give you until the rest of this week to see what you find, if you don't find anything by Friday, we are escalating the matter." Zakes finished.

Mateo just followed what his brother said. "I agree. So, Lombardi, bereka monna." (Work man.) The two men then left the office, leaving Mason to work.

He needed to act, fast... but he needed a plan to take Thami out of the picture. The General was a far too dangerous man with all kinds of resources at his disposal that could help him investigate and find out about Mason's handiwork.

When knock off time rolled over, he had done nothing sinister but actually worked on making the hotel some money at least.

He worked with Gregory to find better and cheaper supplies and tried to see how they can actually make more money for the hotel.

When he left, all he wanted to do was to device a plan with his team, on how they will actually get their hands on the whole hotel without tripping the alarm.

When he arrived at his place, Lesedi was in there... with Tash drinking water.

Mason looked between Tash and Lesedi and his eyes narrowed,

"I told her the truth. I mean I know I fucked up, you let me know that almost every day so when I bumped into her when I went to get my food downstairs, I told her the truth." Tash then walked out of the kitchen and left the two alone.

"You know when you call someone close to midnight that you want to see them and talk to them and you won't take no for an answer, you actually should show up the next day to talk to them, so they aren't so anxious." Lesedi said to him.

"I am sorry... I wanted to come but I thought I should let you stew a bit." Mason shrugged.

"Stew a bit? What the hell for?" She asked.

"Let's go talk in your place." Mason was wearing jeans and a blazer today. He really wasn't a suit man, but he at least had to look professional when he went to the hotel.

Lesedi led them out of his apartment to hers.

"Why couldn't you just say 'Lesedi she's not my actual wife' and not let my imagination run this wild with me?" Lesedi asked as she unlocked her doors.

Mason was typing something on his phone and walked in behind her. "You were angry, I was shady about the whole thing, so I let you..." He didn't want to tell her that he let her do that because he realized he loved her. That would be so weird.

"She tells me you did that because you needed a US citizenship?" She asked.

"Yup, Blake wouldn't allow me on the team without one, and she offered to help in exchange that I deal with another situation for her. A tit for tat kind of thing." He sat down on the couch. "I am sorry I didn't tell you, it's just that Ginger said you will be mad at me for bringing my 'wife' here and you wouldn't understand. So, I kind of ran with that. Also, I thought about it... if some douche was to rock up in your place and tells me he's your husband I would have freaked out on you as well."

Lesedi shook her head. That was just... crazy. "It's fine, I am sorry for beating you up for it. It was such an insane thing to do and I'm slightly

embarrassed." She admitted. She wished she could admit to him that she was falling hard for him and that's why she went haywire on him but that would further complicate things.

"It's all good.. all forgiven if I am forgiven for lying to you... trust me, you're the last person I'd ever lie to. You know me." He told her.

She looked into his eyes, glad that they were sitting down, "Do I?"

"More than you think... I've just kept this from you, I've never lied to you, never kept up appearances with you, you've seen me, you know me, you know all about me..." The way he was talking was unnerving her. The sincerity in his voice, in his eyes... it was like he was trying to tell her something.

The feelings she had for him crashed her lungs. She found it a little difficult to breathe because she never ever thought... never could have imagined... she'd fall in love.

"Mason..." She called out to him in a breathy voice. She was nervous but she had to do this. "I don't think we can continue where we left off..."

He scrunched his brows, not following, "what do you mean?"

"I mean, we can't ... we can't sleep with each other anymore. What we had, what we were doing, it has stop."

"Is this because of Tash? Les I promise you, I didn't sleep with her, I didn't do shit with her, I would never do that to you." He promised.

And she believed him, but she couldn't do it... not when he had a life in New York, and she wasn't sure he'd return her feelings.

"It's not about Natasha... it's how I reacted to the whole thing. I acted like a crazy, jealous, cheated-on girlfriend of which I am not... of which I can

never be. So, I want to still hang with you, work with you... without me acting crazy, without me feeling this way."

"Feeling what way?" Mason asked, his chest was burning. This girl was rejecting him before he even confessed his feelings. Somehow he was glad he didn't lay his heart on the table, or he'd be crushed, not that he wasn't already...

Lesedi kept quiet. She had said a mouthful and no way was she going to admit her feelings for him out loud. As long as she keeps denying them, they'd eventually fade away.

"Feeling what way Lesedi?" He asked again.

"It's nothing... just, we can't go back, we can't do that anymore. It's a dangerous territory and I am not ready for it. I am changing, I am starting to feel... and I don't want to complicate things. So, we can work together... and be... friends I guess."

Mason rolled his bottom lip in his mouth, lightly biting it to focus pain somewhere else instead of his heart. He just had to go and fall for an emotionally unavailable girl didn't he?

"I... friends, yeah I can work with that." He lied. But he was going to try.

"Thank you." She whispered. The mood was tense.

A knock on the door, snapped them out of the sad trance they were engulfed in.

"Who could that be?" She wondered as she went to open and found Ginger and Milo.

"Hey Les." They simultaneously greeted her.

"Hey guys..." She closed the door behind them.

They sat down on the couch, greeted Mason, and got down to business. Ginger couldn't help but to read the body language between the two to know that they were not on great terms.

"I need something guys, I need something on Thami, I need something that could make him get out of the picture." Mason told them. He had asked them to come over for a meeting.

"He's the commissioner of the police, we tail him he'll see us." Milo told him. "We can't get near him, he is unattainable."

Ginger nodded in agreement. "The only person that could deal with him, get him out of the picture, is Singo himself."

Mason raised his brow, "what do you mean?" His head was not right. Lesedi just fucking broke his heart, and he was trying so hard not to get up, get a bottle of whiskey and drown in it. What was he now supposed to do with his feelings?

"Show Singo Thami and Sam's transactions, make him take the man out." Ginger suggested.

"To kill him? That's drastic don't you think?" Mason asked. Lesedi was all quiet listening to them. She had told Mason the same thing. Convince Mateo to kill Thami, he's the only one that could do it.

"It is, but if you don't get rid of this man, you and Les might be the ones to be killed. He will launch a full investigation and he will know that you two worked together on this and he will kill you and there will be no evidence pointing back at him." Ginger carried on.

He and Milo have been discussing this as well, the only way they could finish with all of this in peace, is if Thami is killed by Mateo.

"I told him the same thing; I don't see any other way out." Lesedi spoke. Her chest was burning with sadness and unspoken feelings for Mason, but they had to get their heads into the game. Their lives could be at stake here.

Mason looked at her for a half a second before he looked at his hands, playing with his wrist watch. "How do we persuade him to do that? I show him my findings that Thami has been duping him... then he grows angry and confronts him and Thami tells him he will investigate because he'd never do that to the man who knows so much about him.."

"Eish." Milo mumbled.

"Or... make sure the evidence drives him so mad, you step in and advise him that the only way he can get his money back is if he takes Thami out of the picture, advise him on how do to do it.." Lesedi said to him, well to them without looking at Mason whose presence was burning her on the side.

"And how do we want him to kill Thami?" Mason asked.

"In a place where we have our eyes and ears. That way, we have a recording of him doing that, then we can use it against him to sign over the hotel to us." Lesedi told them what was on her mind. She has been thinking about it... and the only way out is this way.

Mason looked at her and just blinked. That was a brilliant idea, but he didn't particularly like killing people... then he remembered the conversation he overheard before he and Lesedi had a fight. Zuki and Thami talking about how they had tempered with the man's memory.

"But... how the fuck do I as an accountant in a fucking suit, looking this clean, suggest he kills someone? Never mind that I am fucking white, it will be like coming between brothers." Mason stood up. He needed a stiff drink.

Between being rejected by Lesedi and having to think of a way forward, his head was spinning.

"Where is my fucking whiskey?" He asked as he opened the kitchen cabinet where he kept his alcohol.

"I threw it out. Sorry." Lesedi mumbled her lips together, looking at him with sorry eyes. He glared at her, "what? I was angry. Can't blame me."

He sighed and went back to the couch. "This is getting worse every day. It's like a problem on top of a problem. Zakes is onto me, he gave me until Friday to come back with a report or else he's taking the matter to the cops."

"Fuck!" Milo swore. "I can look into Zakes, let me look into Zakes and see if I can find anything that will throw him off..."

"That's great but still... how the hell will The Lord convince Singo to kill?" Ginger asked.

Lesedi chewed on her bottom lip, thinking hard about it. "Talk about it with him." She suggested. "A man like Singo loves power and all that could give him, so when you are working on this, just mention how you'd kill this person if you were him... and remind him subtly that he stands to own everything all by himself, no shareholders, no boss to report to, no one demanding a hundred million from him, and if the conversation flows, help him come up with ways to get the job done... preferably poison. They have a drink together in his house, tell him to poison Thami... get him something that's untraceable in blood..."

The men all looked at Lesedi... not that they have never gotten their hands super dirty, but they just did not think she'd say such.

She was a firecracker... but plotting murder in that cool and calm tone... was something they just never thought they'd see.

"I am not sure if I should sing you praises for that brilliant idea or be scared of you." Ginger said.

Mason was still shocked he had no words and as for Milo, he was just looking at her, grinning. He liked her.

The guys left after they came up with all sorts of ideas as to how they will see this mission through.

Mason was left once again alone with Lesedi. "You know... I misread you. You are just as dangerous as the women on Blake's team, hell you're more dangerous than I am." Mason said to her.

She smiled, "I will take that as a compliment."

"It is... you've always had this in you, this fighting spirit."

"And you unleashed it. This is all your doing. You gave me a platform." She smiled. The air between them was less thick than before. Their feelings for each other wouldn't just evaporate into thin air but they needed to be okay with each other.

"I agree... anyway, I wanted to talk to you about something else..."

"Me too..." she told him. "But you go first."

"No, you can go first..." he didn't know why he was acting like that, but where she was concerned, he could be a fool.

Lesedi rolled her eyes, playfully so. "Zuki found my number and has been trying to contact me. She's been asking to see me. I haven't answered her calls, but she left voice messages and text messages that she'd really like to meet with me and talk." Thinking about Zuki hurt her more than it made her angry. That girl ruined her life. And she had trusted her.

"Funny, I was about to tell you about her. She's been working with Thami and Singo. There is a woman named Aurora that I have Milo's guy tracking down, apparently Singo truly forgot about you, forgot about the whole ordeal because they manipulated his mind. Through therapy, I am guessing hypnotherapy and other means... they managed to lock away the memories..."

Lesedi was dumbstruck. Zuki was really a witch. "So he really forgot? Yoh!" She had no words. What could she possibly say to that?

"I wonder what it is she wants to talk to you about, seeing that she's in bed with the enemy." Mason was thinking about it. "Do you wanna go hear what she has to say?"

Lesedi sharply turned to look at him, her eyes searching his for something, "Are you kidding? I will eat that girl alive. I will kill her, and I will enjoy it, so no, no I don't want to hear anything she has to say."

"Come on firecracker, this could give us the opportunity to know what they are up to. Or for what she's fishing. She probably wants to know what you were doing at the hotel."

Lesedi sighed, "I will think about it. In the meantime, you need to prepare yourself... we are almost there...and we can't afford any problems."

Mason groaned, they spoke for a couple more minutes then he left, told her he needed to sort out accommodation for Tash in Botswana as she will be leaving.

That, that pleased Lesedi, a lot. Yes they were just 'friends', but damn it she hated the thought of there being another woman in his apartment.

* *

The week flew by, and Mason was ready to present his findings to Mateo. His team was working hard, they had to call up some of the other guys to help with this mission.

Milo found out that Zakes was sleeping with Zama, his brother's wife and has been using pictures of them kissing in his car as blackmail. Today they sent him on a wild goose chase, to a 'meeting' so he could pay the person off.

That gave Mason an opportunity to work Mateo up all by himself without Zakes's influence.

"So, you have found who Sam was working with?" Mateo asked.

"And I found Sam too... but I told him I'll keep him safe if he tells me everything." Mason sat down and dumped the files on Mateo's desk.

Mateo quickly looked into the contents... millions of his hard-earned money moving from one account to the next and the next in a matter of days.

He was shocked but nothing could have ever prepared him for the last details of Mason's findings. The accounts all belonged to Thami Masoga who shared some of the money with Zuki Ndaba.

His head felt hot. The two people he trusted the most did this to him. Of course, Thami wasn't so selfish, he paid off Samuel too. One million. Sam was now a millionaire because of his hotel. He couldn't believe what he was seeing.

The rage filling his blood stream was like no other. "I don't suppose that's what you wanted to see, is it?" Mason asked, his voice empathetic.

"I am gonna kill them!" He seethed.

"Now, I know you're angry, but Thami Masoga is the commissioner of the police. You can't just point a gun at him and pull the trigger."

Mateo looked up at Mason, his eyes dark with anger. "I can. I can, so he can tell me why! After what we have been through together?"

Mason sighed; he didn't need Mateo to confront the man. It will spoil all his hard work. "Listen, you told me yourself you owed this man, he just wanted to teach you a lesson and take this hotel for himself. No chance, he was going to try and buy us out." Mason shrugged.

"And Zuki? I trusted her. She's my sister-in-law damn it!" Singo seethed.

"He's having an affair with her. So, it probably has nothing to do with you." Mason informed him. Since they couldn't exactly follow the general, Ginger followed Zuki to see what was up with her and maybe try to find out why she needed to see Lesedi only to find that she was having an affair with the chief of the police.

"What? Thami is sleeping with Zuki?"

Mason nodded, "Look, I told you I am going to find out what's happening. Samuel knew about all this and told me. So, maybe your sister-in-law is just getting mistress benefits."

"I am going to kill him!"

"I'd do the same really. No one will ever take something I built for my kids... I wouldn't let them." Mason leaned back on his chair. Wearing a displeased look. If all fails, maybe he should look into becoming an actor. He was good.

"Look, I know someone who can help you with this problem, you don't even need to say anything. If you confront the man, he will kill you and no one will ever know it was him, and if you point a gun at him, he might shoot you

first... you just need to play this like you know nothing and remove him from the picture."

"You're right. He will kill me if I confront him... damn it! Zakes is not here... I will have to use your guy Lombardi. Set it up."

"Wait... Mr Molao are you hearing what you're requesting?" Mason had to play his cards very well.

"You are right, if I don't act against him, either he will take my company from me and overwork me, and if I dare confront him, I'm dead. So, if your guy can come up with a way that won't incriminate me... I'd appreciate that."

Mason's heart was beating frantically. This was it... this was their chance to get rid of Thami forever. He didn't think they'd have to kill people, but then again he wasn't in love with anyone but now...? Now he'd kill for Lesedi.

He called Milo to cook the pots with finding the perfect poison. This had to be done soon, soon before Zakes makes it back and try to change his brother's mind.

Milo came by to meet Mateo. The man was pleased that Milo was a black man, he trusted him. He trusted that Milo and Mason will help him with the problem.

"Mr Molao, you just need to drop this in the man's coffee while he's visiting you. In twenty minutes' time, we will be singing *amagugu* for him." Milo smirked, he had this charming yet devious look about him.

Mateo liked it. Clearly this man has been doing this for a while. They were talking in Mason's absence as he had to go work with Gregory on matters of the hotel.

"And it won't lead back to me?"

"Not at all. It will show he had a heart attack, a man that big with such a great position can be killed by stress, what's a mere heart attack?" Milo winked. "Once you're done, call the ambulance... and wait. Don't even panic. This will not come back to you because if it does, I will be in shit and in turn my dealer will be in shit and he's a dangerous guy. I don't feel like getting my legs chopped." Milo informed him.

"Okay, okay good... I asked him to meet me in my office today at home. I will send my wife and the kids out to eat so there are less distractions."

Milo smiled, "I will be nearby in case you need help."

And just like that Mateo found himself at his house with Thami in his office, waiting for their coffee from Mateo's house helper later in the evening.

Coffee was brought to them and Mateo didn't know how to do this. He needed Thami to get out of the office so he could...

"I need to use the bathroom..." Thami surprised him. Well, he was making things easy.

Mateo searched his pockets for the brown bag that housed the small bottle of his freedom. He wasn't doing this only because Thami was threatening to steal his hotel from him, but because he has been paying this man a lot of money ever since they formed alliances. This, this just gave him a ticket out of hell.

He emptied the whole bottle in the man's coffee. He was still going to add milk and sugar... so that would just kill any bitter taste if there was any.

He picked his mug from the tray and fixed his coffee and leaned back on his chair.

Thami returned and added sugar and milk to his coffee, picked up a muffin and ate as he drank.

"Tell me here, when was the last meeting you had with Aurora?" Thami asked, looking at Mateo intently.

Aurora was his therapist. A very strange woman who is the reason his political career was this promising and the reason he had to change his name. Aurora helped him out of a dark channel... he couldn't really remember what was going on or what happened, but he knew that whatever it is that Thami had to sort out, called for him to change his name.

No one wanted to tell him exactly what happened, he was told he had done something bad, and it had come to bite him in the ass, and the only way was to help him through therapy and a name change.

His life was good as Mateo, so he didn't push for details. He remembered how difficult his childhood was, how rough it was and how he longed for a taste of the good life. How he struggled to get into politics... he was not going to let Thami ruin all of that.

"I see her every six months... but I don't think I will be seeing her this year. Even though she insists." Mateo shrugged. He didn't mind seeing Aurora, she was so easy to talk to and helped him ease his mind off a lot of things. But why was Thami asking about her? "Why?"

"No reason in particular. Just... checking in."

And then it started to kick in. Thami couldn't breathe, "Mateo... I am not feeling well." He told his friend and partner in crime. He unbuttoned his jacket, took off his tie.

His heart was beating wild, uncontrollably. He took deep breaths, but they were not helping.

"What's wrong?" Mateo stood on his feet. "General what's wrong?"

He couldn't speak anymore. He was feeling dizzy, his heart beating dangerously too fucking fast. His tongue felt like it was stuck to the roof of his mouth. Death was knocking on the door, he could feel it.

"I'll call an ambulance."

Mateo rushed out of the room and leaned back against the closed door. Seeing such a big man struggle to breathe like that, his eyes popping out, scared him but he had to do it. He normally had Zakes deal with these kinds of things, but he needed to do it anyway.

Zakes walked up the hallway, dressed in a pair of jeans and a leather jacket a couple of minutes later. He always tried to look good, to look better than his brother. "Why are you standing here... what's wrong?"

"Where were you?" Mateo asked.

Zakes scratched the back of his head, "I was chasing a lead. General asked me to check something for him." He lied. How can he possibly tell his brother he was out trying to meet with someone who was blackmailing him for sleeping with his wife, which turned out to be a wild goose chase?

"Oh. Well... you don't have to do anything for him anymore." Mateo said. He had heard the large man's body drop about two minutes ago and still didn't move to check. He was just waiting for it to be all over.

"Why? You know how crazy he gets if we don't do as he says." Zakes made means to walk into the office, but Mateo held him off.

He walked in first, taking out his phone from the pocket to call for help.

"What the hell?" Zakes walked in after. Thami was on the floor, lifeless. His eyes wide open, the coffee he had been drinking spilled on the floor. "Buti what did you do?" Zakes asked.

"I did what I had to do."

"What you had to do? I leave for a few hours, a few hours and you kill the most dangerous, well-connected man in this country? Are you fucking out of your mind? What did he do?" Zakes fired all these kinds of questions.

"Well, Lombardi found out he has been stealing from me. He's the one that's been stealing from the hotel with the help of Sam." Mateo explained everything.

"So... so you just decided to kill him? Did he admit to it? Did you get a confession out of him?" His little brother asked bewildered.

"That's your style. If I had asked, he was going to kill me... so I had to take him out first. He stole from me while demanding I pay him. It wasn't fair nor right, damn it."

Zakes couldn't believe the man. He was shocked, even more shocked when he heard his brother call for an ambulance.

"So, what's the plan?"

Mateo explained the whole plan to him. "So... you trusted Lombardi? He's the one that gave you this information, the one who hooked you up with someone who can get rid of Thami... the only person who knows where Sam is... and you didn't find all of this suspicious? What if he's the threat here?" Zakes asked.

Mateo looked at his brother and shook his head. "That man saved my company from a bloody leech. If you were there, maybe we would have handled it differently, but you were not."

"Where is Zama and the kids?"

"They are not here... they went to Zuki's place for dinner."

"So, we just wait for help?"

"Yup, the perfect alibi."

As the brothers waited for an ambulance to arrive, Lesedi and Mason were sitting on his couch, watching the whole exchange. Lesedi watched Thami die while Mason busied himself with getting them drinks, whiskey. Lesedi asked for it.

"So, he really killed him?" Mason asked, watching as the scene unfolded. Paramedics checking on Thami and all the jazz.

"Yup. Well, *we* technically killed him... but yes, Lekau Singo did it."

Lesedi looked at Mason and smiled, she took a sip of the whiskey and looked away. Mason was staring at her. The look in his eyes was enough to make her want to strip for him and jump his bones.

They were back there again, wanting each other like they have never been together.

"We need to deal with Zakes." She said. Willing her thoughts to not go down that route.

"Oh no, we are done killing people." Mason was quick to respond.

Lesedi giggled, "I don't mean kill him silly, just keep make sure he doesn't make Singo look into you. You heard what he said to Singo... he is suspicious of you..."

Mason took that into consideration... Zakes could really be a problem.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Lesedi had just returned from the gym, took a shower, and dressed up in leggings and an oversized off-the-shoulder light sweater.

She was tense, and anxious, waiting for Mason to call her or come back home to tell her if Mateo signed off the hotel to him or not.

It was end of February and their plan has been nothing but successful. They had a video footage of him killing Thami, and not even once did he attempt to save his life which further proved the intention was to kill the man. The conversation between him and Zakes was also incriminating...

Mason used that to scare the two men off. He sent the bits and pieces of the video to them, pretending it was a guy who worked as their home security who had resigned.

So, Mason in his smartness, asked Mateo to save the hotel in case the person who was sending him the bits and pieces of the video, wanted a slice of it by signing it off to him for safekeeping.

Lawyers had to be involved as Mason promised that once he finds out who was sending him the video and deal with them, he will sign back the man's stake back to him. But Terry worked a charm on the contract. That hotel was going to be Mason's.

So that was what Lesedi was waiting for. The good news.

When her phone rang from the kitchen counter, she jumped to get it, but it was Tracy instead. "Hey Mohau..."

"O ko kae?" (Where are you?) Tracy cut to the chase.

"Uhh home...why?"

"I am about to arrive come sign me in." Then she cut the call. Lesedi looked at her phone, something was wrong. Something was very up with Tracy, and she wondered what it was.

She put on her sleepers, locked the door, and went to sign her baby sister in. Once at reception and Tracy arrived, the curvier woman of the two didn't want to go up.

"Where is your car?" She asked.

Lesedi scrunched her brows in confusion, "My car?"

"Yes... your car. Where is it, I want to see it."

"Why?"

"I think you know why!" Tracy snapped.

Lesedi opened her mouth for a smart reply but chose against it. She sighed, opened the doors, and led the woman to the basement parking lot.

They walked in silence and Lesedi stopped next to the Range Rover that belonged to Mason. "That is not your car." Tracy said.

Lesedi chuckled, "I don't know what the hell is going on here, but this is the car I have been driving. Okay?"

"You have been driving a white Range Rover Evoque. This is not the Evoque. Where is it?"

Lesedi remembered about her uncle. She hasn't seen him since she crashed into him and only received updates from a nurse Milo bribed and possibly fucked into doing it.

The man, Lucas, was fine, healing well and the case he opened at the police station hasn't yielded any results.

"I don't know... I don't know where it is. Mason gave me this car instead to use after he took that one." Lesedi lied.

"You're lying to me. You crashed into rangwane, didn't you? You're the reason he's at home being a burden to Tapiwa! You and Mason are probably the reason the police aren't even investigating this!" Tracy lashed.

There were some people driving in the parking lot, some coming to get into their cars... Lesedi rolled her eyes, "Let's go to my place, since you want to cause a scene."

They marched back inside, into the lift and up to Lesedi's apartment. "What is this nonsense you're accusing me of?" Lesedi asked as soon as Tracy closed the door.

"I went to see them, I went to see koko, I wanted to see if they were okay... if they needed anything and what do you know, there is rangwane with a broken leg and a dislocated arm and a strapped forehead. He tells me he was crashed into by someone on that day we last saw him... on the day you left the restaurant immediately after him in a hurry... and on that day he says he was crashed into by a white Evoque." Tracy filled her in.

"You want to tell me you didn't do it? That it wasn't you? I could pull up the security footage and it will show your white car parked outside. And it will show you driving right after rangwane, so don't you dare tell me you don't know where the car is, you know where it is."

Lesedi blew hot breath out of her mouth, shaking her head as she momentarily closed her eyes and then opened them to stare at the raging woman in her house.

"Okay... alright... I did it." Lesedi admitted and watched as shock smacked Tracy's face. "I did, he came to threaten us, threaten you, that if we don't dance to his tune he was going to tell his new boss who's supposedly dangerous and connected... yeah well I decided to put him out of commission because I won't let another Phiri man abuse you, abuse us. Happy?"

Tracy's mouth hung open, "Huh... when did you become this person? You're so cold hearted, we are not like them, Lesedi. We would have found a way to overcome this. Not to harm him."

"Well, the man is not dead Tracy! He is not dead, he is alive."

"What if he was? Huh? Were you going to care? Were you going to have regrets? Or were you just going to go on about your life with your crazy and dangerous boyfriend who will probably help you cover up the murder?"

Lesedi kept quiet. She was getting pissed.

"I am talking to you, Lesedi. What if?"

"He didn't die, did he? It's not like I crashed that hard into him..."

"You can't control what happens when you decided to crash into a car, he could have died! You would have become a murderer; you would have become like them... cold and uncaring. And I can't be associated with that. What you did, was cold."

Lesedi lowly gasped, "what are you saying to me?" She asked her baby sister. "Are you calling me a monster? Are you telling me that I am just like our

father? Like our uncle? Are you also saying that I shouldn't protect my family? The people I love?"

Tracy couldn't believe her sister asked her that. "You can't take the law in your hands. I came here hoping it isn't true. But it is... and you're just as dangerous as them..." Tracy headed for the door. "I have nothing to say to you... because you aren't even sorry."

Then she walked out. Leaving Lesedi raw with emotions.

The door opened shortly after and Mason walked in with a duffle bag over his shoulder, "Pack up we need to move, take only necessities, your toothbrush your trackpants, and some boots. Hurry."

Lesedi looked at him with confused eyes, "Where are we going?"

"I will explain later, I fucked up. I fucked everything up and we may be in crazy danger. So, pack up, we need to move."

Lesedi went to her room and Mason kept yelling at her to finish, "It has been two seconds man geez." She mumbled as she put on her shoes. She quickly packed up what she'd need. Panicking as she did so. She zipped the bag up and went to find Mason.

Mason took the bag from her, let her lock the door and took her hand as they took the stairs down to the basement.

They got into his car, and he drove off. He was on the edge and Lesedi couldn't help but wonder just how he had fucked up.

When they were thirty minutes out of the city, Mason drove to a very secluded but nice and huge log cabin just on the outskirts of Pretoria. He parked his car inside the garage and closed the doors, took out their bags from the boot and ushered them inside.

"Do you wanna tell me why we had to pack up and run in the middle of the day?" Lesedi asked, taking note of the place they were in.

It wasn't a huge place, but definitely felt warm and homey. There was the lounge with brown leather couches, a fire place, a TV mounted on the wall, a small dining area right behind the couches... a passage that led to the bathroom and two bedrooms... and there was a door that opened to a genuinely nice kitchen that had no food.

"Anyone living here?" She asked.

"Nope, Milo said no one does, he just keeps it clean though." Mason informed her. "Food is on the way as well so we will be safe and sorted."

He put their bags in separate bedrooms. "What's going on Pierce?" Lesedi asked, after she was satisfied with the place.

"I fucked up man." Mason sighed.

"He didn't sign off the hotel?" Lesedi asked, already feeling down about it all. All their hard work for nothing.

"Oh no, no I got that. Terry's got the papers and filing them. I am now the sole owner of Asante Paradise baby, well technically you and I will be... but first we need to stay alive. Zakes found me out..."

Lesedi's eyes popped out, "What? Zakes? That man is like a dog with a bone when he's suspicious of things, what happened?"

"Well, we had just signed on the dotted line, Terry left with the papers, Singo was on the edge about working to finding out who the fuck is screwing with him... I decided to leave... said I have a meeting to get to, then Ginger calls me when I am in the parking lot... and I was happily telling him how I can't wait

to tell you that you now own the largest hotel in Soweto... then I felt someone tap my shoulder..." Mason explained.

Lesedi was on the edge... this didn't sound too good... the day was just becoming horrible as each minute passed.

"Carry on..."

"It was Zakes... he heard everything I said. He was waiting for me next to my car and was hiding behind a post... I didn't see him. But him hearing that wasn't what shook me..."

"What did he do? What did he say? Spit it out!"

"I am telling you and you keep interrupting me." Mason pouted. He hated how he had messed up. He wasn't a rookie. He knew walls had ears and he should have been careful... but what he really should have been careful about was the bugs he left all over the office and on Mateo's phone.

"Sorry..." Lesedi apologized.

"When I turned to look at him he said to me, 'well played Pierce or is that Lombardi?'"

"No!" Lesedi couldn't believe Zakes found out who Mason was. The man made sure he wasn't in of the pictures with his business famous family. He removed every single picture where he was with them.

"I don't fucking know how that man did it, but he is smart. And I underestimated him." Mason nodded. "I couldn't believe my fucking ears, and I acted dumb. Then he said to me, 'you will have this hotel, over my cold dead body.'" Mason explained further.

"Bathong! So, what did you do?" Lesedi asked, she was now on the edge. Zakes was insane, he looked scary and did dirty jobs for Mateo... if he wants to, he could kill them.

"I didn't know what to say, I didn't expect him to find me out, I didn't have a clever come back, so I knocked him out. I knocked him out and left him on the ground and drove off to get you."

They were both still standing up... trying to wrap their heads around what had just happened.

"What I did confirmed his suspicions. So now I must work on diffusing the bomb that is Zakes and I don't know how when I have to hide."

"Yoh" Lesedi didn't even know what to say. It was all too much to take in.

Their food arrived, mostly uncooked, some takeaways for that day and they had to settle in. Lesedi unpacked the groceries, familiarized herself with the house then went to the spare bedroom and took her bag to Mason's room.

"What's this?" Mason asked her. He was in his room, working on his PC. He was confused when he saw her enter his designated room with her bag.

Last time he checked, they were back to being friends who worked together and shouldn't ever cross lines. That was the hardest thing he could ever do, it was eating him up inside but he didn't want to push her into doing anything.

So this... This was surprising to him.

"You're crazy if you think I'm gonna sleep alone with Zakes out there looking for us."

He just looked at her. Wondering if she had thought it through...

Later on, that day, Mason was touching base with Ginger and Milo to see what was happening.

"You took the Range Rover right?" Milo asked, Mason had placed him on the speaker as he was in the kitchen cooking and Lesedi was drinking wine watching him. She was grateful that Mason had included it as part of the groceries, but the man had actually bought it for cooking, another thing he loved to do.

"Uhh no, I took the Mustang." Mason responded.

"Okay, it's fine. I just hope the fucker isn't tracking you or anything. He was waiting for you by the car..." Milo mentioned.

"I will check the car for any additional trackers besides mine." Mason informed him.

"Cool... uhm the funeral is this coming weekend; do you want us to send the men to jail before or after?"

Mason looked at Lesedi who looked at the phone, as if Milo could see them. "Maybe after? Let's just wait for things to settle down... we need to make them relax and not think they are under attack. The man just signed a hotel... So let's not be hasty." Lesedi responded.

"But what if Zakes tells Mateo what he knows?" Milo asked.

"Doesn't matter, the deal was concluded, just...create a rift between the brothers. Send subliminal messages to Mateo about his wife cheating - no - actually about his brother betraying him. I need to make Zakes nervous." Mason who was now stirring his home cheese sauce told Milo.

"Alright... I am on it. And Tracy has been visiting their home in Soweto, she was seen talking for a long time with Lucas. Has she said anything to you Les? Cause I know Lucas saw your car."

Lesedi sighed thinking about the conversation she had with Tracy. "Ha-ah. She hasn't said anything to me."

Mason had eyes and ears all over the place including at the Phiri house in Soweto, making sure Lesedi was safe from what she did to Lucas and from Zuki. Pity he didn't have his eyes all over the hotel parking lot. Or else they wouldn't be hiding out.

"Okay, I will keep you posted, switch off your phones in case your phones are tapped into, and I will contact you on the other one. Just for tonight." Milo instructed.

Mason smiled when the call ended. "I trained them well." He spoke.

"Mhm.. Go check if there are trackers Zakes could have planted." Lesedi was anxious about Zakes. That man looked dangerous.

Mason asked her to look out for his pots, he was making them *caprese chicken pasta*. Lesedi couldn't wait to eat. It looked and smelled divine.

She kept checking that nothing was burning, once the sauce was ready she put it on the side and returned back to her barstool that was very big and comfortable. Unlike the regular ones that were small and uncomfortable. She resumed her wine drinking, loving how warm it made her feel. She had missed the taste of wine; she wasn't going to lie.

Mason returned shortly after, "There is no foreign tracker on my car. So, I'd say we are good for now." He told her.

"That's good."

It was only now when they started to relax that Lesedi realized she was stuck in an unknown location, with Mason. She'd been fighting herself so hard the past days not to haul him flush against her body and kiss him.

What was she thinking suggesting they become friends? She should have just suggested they fuck and when he leaves for New York, he must give her a nice long round for keeps.

But she knew she wasn't going to survive that. She had fallen for him, badly, and she had to keep him at arm's length so she doesn't get too attached and end up being hurt.

"Tracy came to see you and she was pissed, what was that about?" He asked.

"You don't miss anything, do you? Geez."

Mason smiled, "but I missed Zakes." He mumbled. He has been beating himself up about that the whole day. Lesedi felt bad for him. He was usually highly organized and very aware. He couldn't have not known that Zakes was there... they have been incredibly careful. But it happened anyway.

"Stop worrying about that. I am sure Ginger, and Milo will keep him busy while we wait for Thami's funeral to blow over and then we attack them." Lesedi assured him. "And Tracy... Rangwane Lucas told her everything... she came by to see my car."

Mason was licking his finger as he touched the sauce covered spoon, that action made Lesedi feel warmer. But she shook her head and looked at her glass of wine instead.

"Shit and?"

"And I showed her your car... and she was like *where is the white one...*" Lesedi went all dramatic imitating her baby sister. Mason couldn't help but to laugh.

"Don't laugh... she told me she will pull the restaurant cameras and they will show I drove the white car after rangwane left on that day. So, I told her I did it and boy, did she not hand me my ass. She told me crap... she basically told me that I am like my father."

Mason looked at her with raised brows, "That's hectic. That's not fair..."

Lesedi sighed, "she says we don't deal with things the way they do. That we aren't those people... imagine what she will say to me if she finds out what I did on New Years' Eve... she'd hate me."

"That time you're doing all of this to protect her. Don't believe what she said. You fix problems these monsters create. You did what was necessary and the man is alive. He will be okay. Tracy must just grow up." Mason busied himself with the food, highly irritated by Tracy. How dare she.

"Mhm, she won't look at it that way, she'd probably even keep her child from me." She mumbled, already seeing Tracy being angry and telling her child that Lesedi was a bad person.

"Child? Which child?" Mason asked.

"Uhh... mhm-mhm I didn't say anything." Lesedi sipped her wine.

Mason nodded, he rounded the counter and went behind Lesedi before she could ask him where he was going, she felt his hands on her sides, tickling her.

She broke into fits of laughter trying to get Mason away from her, slapping him but to no avail. "Mason stop." She said between giggles.

"What child?" He asked, pausing with the torture.

Lesedi was all full of smiles, still giggling quietly, her arms crossing to protect herself from him. "Don't tickle me.. Mxm... Mohau is pregnant."

Mason broke into a huge grin, "Really? That's amazing. Ky didn't mention it."

"I don't think that girl has told him yet... or maybe they are waiting for at least a couple of months. You know how she miscarried the others..."

Mason returned back to his task. "Yeah... I get it. Shame man, I can't imagine living like that. Fearing that you might just miscarry for the umpteenth time."

"Yeah... that's why I didn't tell her to kiss my ass when she went off at me. I didn't want to upset her further. I don't want her to stress."

* *

The two had dinner while watching a Christmas movie. "This taste yum!" Lesedi was full of compliments. She loved it when Mason cooked, had missed his cooking even. "I missed your food." She found herself saying.

Mason looked at her from the side and smiled. God did this girl know just what she did to him? Her laughter was now the one thing he loved the most. Her smile, how she dances when she first takes a bite of her food.

How she chews, her mind... how she thinks things though, her impulsiveness... she was such a major turn on.

"I used to love cooking with my mom, overtime I found myself on cooking channels and buying cook books. Most things though, come naturally." He told her.

She was amazed, "Book smart, street smart... and kitchen *smart*? Well damn brag some more." She teased him.

He blushed.

"Aww are you blushing?" She teased him with a grin, "You are so blushing. Wow Mace..." she was stunned. He looked very adorable when he blushed. Like she could kiss him or something.

"Shut up and eat your food." He mumbled.

A little while later, after they were done eating and washing dishes, Lesedi went to shower while Mason wanted to catch up on the guys and some of his overseas work.

Ginger and Milo have also retired for the day and the plan is to make Mateo suspect his brother of sabotage so that Zakes gets off Mason's scent until they get them locked up.

Lesedi finished showering and realized she didn't take her pyjamas. "Fuck!" She swore. She was wearing a towel; they didn't have gowns in the house and she didn't pack hers. The place wasn't a hotel.

She walked out of the bedroom to find Mason, "Hey... you have something I can borrow to sleep in?" She asked.

Mason looked up at her, the blue towel she was wearing was teasing him. This woman was a stunner, and he loved her fresh new braids. She had tied them in a bun atop her head and really looked gorgeous.

He looked her from her feet up to her face and dare she says, she felt the heat from that piercing look.

"Sleep naked." Mason dared her.

Lesedi looked at him, between the wine she was drinking, the hot shower she took and thinking of Mason's touch... and how she already declared they were going to share his bed...

She unfastened the towel and threw it at him. "Plus, it's hot anyway." She then turned around and walked back to the bedroom.

Mason was stunned. If that wasn't an invitation he didn't know what was. He finished his wine, took the quickest shower of his life, and went to join the vixen that was in bed... reading a magazine she found in the room.

Mason switched off the lights but the lights from outside cast a nice glow in the bedroom.

"Thought you weren't coming to bed..." she said in a husky voice.

Mason crawled in besides her... "Baby you're playing with fire..." he said huskily as he took the magazine from her hands and threw it over his head to the floor...

"Let me burn then..."

Mason's breath hitched. How did they return here? What was in his food? Or was it the wine? What changed?

Their lips met, he leaned in first, he missed kissing her man. He missed kissing and holding her.

She gave himself into him. Into his touch, into his kiss.

She wanted him to touch her boobs, her body, for him to make love to her but he didn't. He only pulled back, and looked at her...

"What's wrong?" She asked. "Don't you want to..."

"Want to what? Kiss you, fuck you? I want to, fuck I do. You get me hard by just being next to me..." he confessed.

She felt her stomach flip, "is it because of what I said... what I did? Saying we should just be friends?"

"Yeah... it's because of that. You can't pull the plug anytime you want and not consider me or my feelings."

Lesedi shifted so she could face him, "I don't understand... it was sex, and I was..."

"You were what?" He asked, like the other day, she wanted to say something but held her tongue.

She shook her head, "I wanna get laid Mason geez. What's with the twenty-one questions?" She asked.

The sparks were still firing from all cylinders, Mason wasn't backing down from this. This girl is running from the truth... she might feel the same way he did or close.

"I wanna fuck you, I wanna watch you lose your mind over how good it feels... I want to hold you; I want to watch you shatter to my tongue lapping your juices. I want to kiss you while my dick disappears in and out of you, and have you moan inside of my mouth..."

She was clenching, her pussy was getting wetter. His voice was working a number on her. His words...

"But...?" she questioned.

"But I have feelings. I know I fucked up by not being upfront with you about Tash, but baby... you didn't have to cut me off the way you did like I was nothing to you. Like I have no feelings."

Lesedi couldn't breathe for a minute, "Mace... I... I am sorry." She felt selfish. Maybe she was selfish. Selfish because she was afraid of what she felt. "I was scared."

"Scared of what?" He wasn't gonna make it easy for her.

She swallowed hard, "Of overreacting in the future. I was scared if we kept sleeping together, then you do something else that upsets me... I'd overreact again, like overestimate my position in your life." She had to find a different way to say what she couldn't say.

"You have feelings for me..." he stated.

She groaned. "Goodnight Mason." She tried to turn so she could sleep and ignore him, but he held her arm, stopping her from turning.

"I think I am in love with you..." he told her.

Her eyes enlarged in size for a split second; her mouth hung open, but no words came out.

"I knew I had feelings for you when you left for a week to Pretoria and I was going insane with missing you. Going to your flat and knocking on the door before realizing you aren't home. I knew I had feelings for you when I saw you coming out of the restaurant at Lori's party and my heart swelled with emotions I couldn't describe."

Tears welled up in her eyes, why was she crying? She had no idea.

"When we went back to your hotel... and I went inside of you? I felt like wanting to do it every fucking night of my life... it fully kicked in that...that I am in love with you."

She bit her lips. God why was this happening... why tonight... why did Zakes do this to her, it's his fault that she found herself in some house in the middle of nowhere, in bed with Mason, all alone.

Tears fell freely from her eyes. She felt the same way about him. Her heart was beating so fast. This was a new territory for her.

"You don't have to say anything... but I need to know... should I hold myself off... when I fuck you tonight because I am going to, should I hold off... or should I give you all of me?"

She swallowed hard, God this man was so intense.

She palmed the side of his face. Her thumb running gingerly over his lips. "Give in." She found her voice.

Her corkscrewed an eyebrow, "Give me all of you baby..." she continued.

Mason didn't need for her to say 'I love you' back, he wanted her to, for sure, but just her calling him baby, telling him to give in... he trusted her. He trusted that when he walks in, when he falls in, she will be there.

He kissed her with a new feeling.

She kissed him back with the same energy. She loved him. She wanted to be with him, she was in love with him.

Mason kicked the sheets off their bodies. He settled between her legs and his tongue greeted the girl resting between her thighs.

She smelled so fresh, with a scent of her arousal. Mason lapped her all up. His tongue went inside while his hands kept her thighs separated. She fisted the sheets, enjoying what he was doing to her.

The pleasure was too fucking nice. Lesedi was floating to cloud nine. Her eyes were closed, and she could just picture him eating her pussy out.

God it felt so nice to be taken off in this manner. This man took care of her body. He worshipped her body.

He didn't stop eating her out until she started wetting the bed. He was pleased with his work.

Lesedi wanted him inside of her, but he gave her his fingers.... One finger, then two... he rose to his knees and fingered her while locking eyes with her.

She felt so open, so raw with emotions, so naked... and she felt loved.

"Open..." Mason instructed her to open her mouth. She did as told and he took out the two fingers from her cookie and brought them to her mouth, "now suck."

Okay...

She sucked his finger clean. He had nice and clean fingers... she'd suck them anytime he wanted.

Mason fingered her again, bringing her to the edge, as soon as she started clenching around his fingers he knew she was about to climax, so he'd take out his fingers and make her lick her juices, then he'd repeat... but the last time, he sucked his own fingers. He sucked her juices clean.

He crawled over to the headboard... his dick hitting her face, "open..." she opened her mouth and *boy oh boy*, this man fucked her mouth like he was angry at her.

Her arousal was trickling between her thighs. She was so wet beyond imagination. She loved sucking his dick, hell she loved everything about him, everything he did with her in bed.

Mason was too close to coming, so he stopped, pulled out of her mouth, and jumped off the bed. He pulled her with her ankles to the corner of the bed and slowly entered her.

He watched as her face transformed when he pushed inside of her. Her pussy walls clamped around him.

"Fuck." He cursed. With how tight she was gripping him; he wasn't going to last. So, he started thrusting in and out in a snail pace. Driving Lesedi crazy. "Relax for me baby...please..."

Her cries of pleasure were music in his world. And how he looked at her... how she looked at him, playing with her boobs as he took her nice and slow, making her walls relax...

Then he pulled her closer, hiking both her legs over his shoulders, going impossibly deeper.

Her moans grew louder, and her pussy got wetter than the Limpopo River.

His thrusts became ferocious and damn if she weren't about to wet him and the bed.

His thumb found her clit and his thrusts didn't decrease. She fell apart, clenching around him, screaming his name, sounding defeated, breathless, happy, and sated.

Mason pulled out got on the bed, flipped her over and took her from behind.

Lesedi kept up with him, she kept up with him as he took her the way he wanted.

It felt good. It felt too damn good. This was home. This man was her home, she wanted to be with him, she wanted to be where he was all the time. And she wanted to be fucked forever by him. No one else will ever compare.

"Baby!" She moaned; her sounds muffled by the pillow her head was pushed into.

Mason was relentless, he had no mercy fucking her. It was as if he was branding her, marking her as his. Making sure she knew who was fucking her.

"You like that baby?" He asked.

"Ye-es... fuck!" She moaned, "I can't take it anymore baby..."

"Yes you can..." he responded, almost out of breath, "be a good girl and take it baby."

And she did. She took all of him, from behind, to the side and finally he placed her on her back and took things slow...

She was dripping. Flesh hit against flesh, her wet pussy sounds filled the room, the smell of their love making made everything even nicer...

Mason let go... when Lesedi felt him pump into her in such powerful and fast strokes, she knew he was about to fall apart.

They locked eyes, he grabbed her neck and choked her as he pumped into her. That was new and she loved it.

She moaned, closing her eyes, and let go as well...

Then they came together, almost at the same time.

Mason didn't pull out as soon as he came, he stayed put trying to catch his breath, resting his head against her forehead. His dick twitching inside of her.

Lesedi rubbed his sweaty back, a smile on her face. That was the bestest sex of her whole life. Fuck. It was so sweet; she couldn't really describe it except to say sweet. It was amazing!!

Mason growled as he gently pulled out.

"Fuck!" He cursed. Then he slumped on the side.

After a while, they went to the bathroom to pee and freshen up then changed bedroom, the bedsheets were wet in the other one, and they didn't feel like cleaning or changing them tonight.

She got in bed first then Mason got in behind her in a spooning position, "Man your pussy is gonna kill me one day." He said before kissing her back.

Lesedi smiled, "Not before your dick kills me."

Mason chuckled, "Let's get some sleep baby... it's been a crazy day."

**

Friday came, the day before Thami's funeral and just a day after Mason confessed his love for the beautiful, ever scowling vixen named Lesedi Phiri.

They were still hiding out from Zakes, hoping Ginger and Milo were on his tail making sure he isn't on their tracks.

But that was the least of their worries. They took this little hideout as a getaway to be together and just enjoy being in each other's company.

"Morning baby!" Lesedi was standing on the doorway of the bedroom in one of Mason's t-shirts. He had asked, actually begged for her to wear it because he wanted to be a part of the movie cliches. Lesedi wore it to make him happy and to shut him up... but when his cologne scent hit her, she never wanted to take it off.

Mason was on the bed, doing nothing but trying to sleep. He was tired from the sexual escapades they have been engaging in. Lesedi had a stamina of a fucking tiger.

"Come here..." he called for her in a groggy, sleepy voice. He wanted her to come to bed so they could sleep in. "Let's sleep for a few minutes please..."

Lesedi giggled, "I made breakfast, so come eat...and then we will sleep." She offered.

Speaking of food, he needed food. He needed to fuel up. So, he got out of bed, wore a pair of boxer shorts, and followed the miss out to the dining table she had set up with breakfast.

They sat down across from each other and enjoyed their meal.

Lesedi kept looking at him as he dug in, enjoying how he was concentrating on the task on his plate, cutting everything up in smaller pieces so he could pick them up without having to cut every single time. She on the other hand was eating with her hands. She couldn't be bothered to use a fork and a knife.

"You eat like a baby." She commented.

He looked at her then at his plate and frowned, "it makes everything better." He pouted.

Lesedi giggled, "I see it does, I am just teasing you, come on."

"I get that a lot... I prefer eating like this, but most people I tend to dine with look at me weird or make such comments." He informed. Now she felt like a fool. She didn't mean to offend him.

"I am sorry, I didn't mean to offend you. It's just... okay I should have said you eat in a cute manner, it's really adorable."

He blushed, what was he supposed to say to that? He ate like a baby and that was it, but it made picking up various food from his plate in one go better.

"You blush easily... I am glad I am dark skinned so no one would see me blush." She commented, drinking her juice after.

"I can tell when you blush. You can't look me in the eyes, you chew on the inside of your bottom lip so that you don't smile..."

Lesedi opened her mouth to argue but he was right... he was spot on. "Shut up and eat your food."

Mason looked at her, her hands were oily from the food, and she seemed to be so much at ease and happy. "You eat like a child." He commented, a smirk on his lips.

"Touché..." She responded.

They carried on eating, and she kept stealing glances at him, she wanted to talk about something else but didn't know how to best bring it up.

"Is there something on my face or do you want to say something you don't know how to say?" He asked. He has been feeling her stares on him and waited for her to spill it but seems like she needed a push.

"Uhm... I have never... I... I don't know how to say this but... I have never had a boyfriend before."

Mason's brows shot up, "What?"

"Uhh yeah... never did."

"You know that you're older than me right? How? I am a late bloomer but even I had a teenage relationship at some point."

"I know... but being the dark-skinned girl, with a light skinned sister and a light skinned best friend didn't really help much. I was compared to them all the time, teased about my complexion all the time... if the boys came up to me, then they never wanted to be seen in public with me, so how could I possibly be in a relationship with someone who didn't want to be seen with me?" She was upset thinking back of how hellish it was growing up dark skinned.

Mason felt sorry for her. He couldn't possibly relate but he wanted to gut the fuckers out for hurting her. She was gorgeous as fuck.

"I am sorry. You didn't deserve such treatment. And I am sure now they keep lining just to get a chance with you."

"And it's so weird. Some just want to quench their fetish... so when I got into my twenties, nothing had changed much, it was a few kisses here, breaking my virginity there... and then being raped and I was thrown into the deep ends of a very dark and small hole." She stabbed the cheese griller on her plate with a fork and brought it to her mouth.

"I am sorry baby... I really am. But things are about to change for the better right?" Mason offered a smile.

Lesedi returned it, "I mean yeah... the reason I am telling you this is because I am not sure I know how to be a girlfriend. I have never been one... and you say you love me...and want me... and I want you too..."

Mason chuckled softly, "Come here..." he pushed his chair back.

Lesedi got up and went to sit on his awaiting lap, draping an arm around his neck for balance.

"I don't know how to be a boyfriend either, but we can try if we both want this..."

Lesedi's heart was beating twice the normal rate. She really was sitting on Mason's lap in nothing but his t-shirt that barely covered anything since she was also a tall woman. They were talking about starting a relationship, talking about feelings, talking about love... it all felt foreign to her... foreign but beautiful.

"What if you make me angry and I stab you?" She asked. Worried about her temper that sometimes drove her to pulling out her knife.

Mason chuckled, vibrating against her body, "I have made you angry before... twice actually and the first time you kissed me and let me play with your sweet little pussy and the second time you broke all my colognes and punched me... and you did threaten me with a knife, how can I forget that but you'd never stab me." He said it with conviction and a bit of humour.

"How can you be so sure?"

"Cause whatever I will do from now on, I will always make sure I don't do it to intentionally to hurt you. Yes, you are a crazy, knife carrying woman, but you can be rational most times... I just need you to promise me something.."

"Okay, what's that?" She asked, her voice was so smooth, so calm and so sweet.

"That if I make you angry, or upset you, you will talk to me about it and not try to beat the shit out of me without listening to what I have to say."

She kept quiet, mulling over it, "but men lie... like a lot."

"I'd never lie to you on purpose... I promise you that. I hate lies, and I don't want my first ever relationship to have holes in it. I love you, and I want to make this thing between us work until the end of time."

Lesedi looked at him, his green eyes were so clear and so gorgeous, and he thought the same about her brown eyes. They were hazel, a pool of emotions reflected in them... he was in love with this girl.

She leaned in and stole a kiss before picking up his fork and feeding him. "Eat up so we can go sleep..."

"Okay... but I need to ask you something..." he spoke as he opened his mouth for her to feed him. She was done with her food.

"Are you my girlfriend?" He asked.

Lesedi giggled, "I think I am Mr Pierce, are you my boyfriend?"

He wiggled his brows, "I am Miss Phiri."

She continued feeding him until nothing was left on the plate. They cleaned up, showered together and then went to take a nap.

Later that day, they were awake and watching a movie on the couch, cuddling in. The weather was a little chilly outside, it had been raining as they slept.

"Your birthday is coming up next month... any plans of celebrating it?" Mason asked her.

"We still have March to pass before April Mason... and I haven't thought about it. I haven't celebrated my birthday in a while." She was curled up on his side, enjoying the heat from his body and the blanket they had over themselves.

"Well... how about a trip to Mauritius? Or maybe a trip to Thailand..." he suggested.

Those were dream destinations, things people like her could ever fantasize about visiting. "Maybe, we will see..."

"You don't sound ecstatic, and I thought being with me on your birthday will make you happy."

Lesedi sighed, "It's not that... Mason you live in New York... what are we trying to do here?"

"Is that what you're worried about?"

"Yes, aren't you?"

"No, I am not tied to New York, and you aren't tied to South Africa. We can find a common ground, maybe you move with me to New York... or I move back home, that will even make my dad happy." He smiled.

"You'd do that? You'd move here...?"

"I mean I don't know yet... I haven't made any plans to return to New York yet... let's see what we have here, chances are you might have to come with me."

She pulled back from his body to stare at him, "chances are I might have to move? Haibo Mason..."

"We are just talking of possibilities baby... I have a huge and crazy successful business in New York city that I can't just abandon with a snap of my fingers. I am not all hands-on deck, but the team knows that I am never away for a long time."

Lesedi didn't know how to feel about that. She didn't want to leave South Africa. It was her home. Her mother, Sofia and Tracy were here... who was there for her in New York?

God she wanted to be with this man, she wanted to try this relationship thing with him... but she wasn't sure she wanted to move across rivers and oceans.

"Mhmm..." she didn't say anything else; she didn't know what to say.

"What?"

"This is my home Mason... I have zero plans of moving." She deadpanned.

Mason opened his mouth but closed it. The fiery look in her eyes told him he needed to tread carefully.

"Okay... it's not a decision we have to make right now, or something to talk about right now because I am still here, we still have so much work to do... eventually we will agree on something, okay?"

Lesedi heaved a sigh and nodded. She wasn't going to change her mind. Either he stays with her here or they will have to go their separate ways. His life was in New York, hers was here.

"Now come here... let's finish this movie so we can start on dinner." He lifted his arm so she could come snuggle on his side with his arm securing her to his body.

He kissed her forehead, thinking of how the fuck they were going to find common ground about living arrangements.

"Mason..." she called out to him... She understood that their living arrangements will need a serious talk, one they would not have right away.

"Talk to me... " he responded but didn't take his eyes off the TV screen. He was scared that they were going to fight a day after beginning a relationship. He didn't want that.

"Why haven't you ever dated before? I mean I had issues, I still do but you didn't..."

He chuckled, "I told you before... "

She scrunched her forehead, "You said you didn't date because of your mother's death... Ooh yeah, I remember. So that was it?"

"Yup." he answered. "I didn't want to go through what my dad and Grey went through, hell I wasn't even going to tell you I loved you... I was going to keep this to myself cause it was never part of the plan... But it happened. I went to speak to my dad..."

"Your dad?" she pulled back so she could look at him.

He nodded, "Yeah... When you were ignoring me, refusing to talk to me, I realized I wanted you, that I loved you, that I didn't want to hurt you... That I hated seeing you hurt and upset over something I had done. So I went to speak to him... So he could tell me how he moved on. How he isn't so afraid to be with someone else."

Lesedi kept quiet. When Mason told her why he didn't date, she understood him... But didn't realize just how deep this was for him. He really swore off relationships because of fear. Fear of losing his lover to death.

"And now? How do you feel? Do you want to do this? Are you sure you want to do this?" she asked.

"I mean... Don't die on me as yet... I won't be able to cope. Give me some years okay?" he smiled, but he wasn't joking. If Lesedi were to die

tomorrow, he'd probably jump off a building. He was invested, emotionally so into this girl.

"I can't... I can't promise you that."

"Do you still wish to die?" he asked.

"No, not anymore... Not ever since you came into my life and told me I can make Singo's life a living hell." now why did Mason think she'd it's because she loved him? Some things didn't change...

"Well promise me you won't die... Promise me we'd have some good years together..."

She opened her mouth and only hot air came out. "I don't think it's up to me..."

"Promise me..." he sounded so cute, so adorable and very, very vulnerable.

She touched his face, pecked his lips about four times and then pulled back, "I promise you... God willing, I won't die on you."

Then a smile appeared on his face. He could live with that.

But that, that worried Lesedi. She had no control over life... People lived and people died all the time.

"This kid is a genius." he commented on the movie.

Lesedi looked at the screen but not really seeing anything. "Mhm-mhm!" she responded.

She said a short prayer asking God to take her when she's at least ninety years old...

For Mason's sake.

Lesedi woke up the following day with the need to pee. Having to detangle herself from Mason's hold was a mission but she prevailed. The man could hold her all night... but she loved it.

She looked in the mirror, and her eyes were bright with life. Her skin was glowing, she took good care of her skin, drank her water, and used the right products but she knew it was more than that.

She was happy. She truly and honestly was happy.

And it was all thanks to Mason. She wasn't going to beat around the bush with this, that man sleeping in bed brought her so much peace and happiness. Although she had to work on her mind, it was still all his efforts.

She returned back to the bedroom and Mason opened his eyes to find her leaning against the doorframe, staring at him.

"Morning my little creep." His morning voice did a wonder to her body and her lady parts.

She smiled and walked over to him. "This is going to sound cliché... and I am only going to say it once..."

Mason scrunched his brows, waiting for her to say what's on her mind. "You look fucking cute when you're sleeping." She said with smile.

Mason blushed and pulled her to him. "I love it when you blush." She giggled as she fell onto his body.

"Mhm.." Mason in a swift mode had her pinned underneath him, his lips on hers. Their tongues battled and he moved from kissing her lips to her neck, down to her boobs.

Lesedi arched her back, pushing her boobs into him so he could kiss, and suck her nipples properly.

"And I love it when you moan." He told her in between.

She had to admit, she enjoyed being at his mercy. She enjoyed what he did to her body.

"Oh baby..." she moaned out loud, trying to get him to insert his dick in her dripping sex. But the man wasn't budging.

He kissed her body down to her pussy, but he didn't dive in as yet...he kissed her thighs, each side, her moans getting louder.

He loved that, he loved doing that to her.

He watched mesmerized as her pussy clenched and unclenched. Oh, she wanted him... and that pleased him. The mighty Lesedi Phiri at his mercy.

His tongue lapped up her slit and she arched her back, her fingers clutching the bed sheets. "Mace..." her voice was filled with so much need.

"Yes baby..." he did it again, and again. He was teasing her. Giving her just crumbs of heaven and she was about to lash out. "Tell me what you want baby..." he spoke over her pussy.

His tongue went in, and she cried in pleasure, he worked her up, pushing her to the edge but denying her the one thing she wanted, an orgasm. The pleasure was becoming too much to take. Her nerves were taut with need.

"You, I need you," she whisper-moaned. "Please... fuck me before I lose my mind."

He pulled away from the bed, they were in their birthday suits, they slept in the nude. Mason had missed her naked body against his.

"Why did you stop?" She whined, pouting. Mason grinned and captured her lips in a sensual kiss and then pulled her to her feet.

Her walked them over to the dressing table in the room. She couldn't help but to admire how hot they looked on the mirror. Their eyes, their faces were coloured with raw lust.

"Bend over and hold on.... Keep your eyes on the mirror." Mason instructed.

Lesedi's stomach flipped, she did as told.

But she couldn't help but close her eyes when she felt Mason enter her wet channel from behind. The man filled her to the brim. Her walls stretched to accommodate him as if they hadn't been going at it from last night.

"Fuck baby!" She moaned and opened her eyes to find Mason's green pair staring at her through the mirror.

Her pussy leaked some more. This man was going to kill her.

Steady, he picked a rhythm. Watching as she made all kinds of faces. Her mouth gaping open as he filled her, pulled out to the tip, and rammed into her... in a very slow, steady pace.

"Please baby... please... fucking fuck me!" She begged. Her voice was on the verge of breaking.

Mason smirked, pulled her back, grabbed her throat, her back against his front, her boobs staring at him in the mirror, and he pounded into her.

Hot, hard and fast strokes were delivered and Lesedi's walls clamped shut around his dick, her eyes rolled to the back of her head as she came.

But Mason didn't stop, he chased his own orgasm while Lesedi was lost in a bliss. "Fuck baby!" He made animalistic sounds as he roughly came inside of her.

He held still inside of her, his dick twitching inside of her, and they were breathless. They were both sweaty and spent. He was looking in the mirror, they both were...

"Fuck Mason." Lesedi cursed when she felt him swell up again inside of her. He took her again, hard, and just as she wanted him to.

A while later after they had eaten, showered, and cleaned up... Lesedi sat on the bed and Mason followed.

She was wearing one of his t-shirts that came a little under her butt. It was a little bigger though, considering the man was all muscled up.

"Les..." Mason called out to her.

"Mhm?" She responded, she couldn't think of a time when she was this happy. This man made her so happy.

"I said I won't put pressure on you, and I am not... but I just want to know how you feel about me?" Mason asked. It was as if he was seeking clarity or maybe assurance that this girl was here with him and wanted to be with him.

Sure, she'd proven that when they spoke about living arrangements, but he wanted to hear her say the words. Whether it's like or love...

She sighed, "I don't know... I can't put it in words... I... I don't know, but I know how you make me feel."

"How do I make you feel?"

"You make me feel, Mason. You make me feel happy, you make me feel like a human being with feelings that matter. You make me feel like I need to protect you, to make you happy... you make me feel."

Mason looked at her, she had tears in her eyes. "You've always said that..."

"It's because before you, I was just empty. Everyone said I was bitter, I was angry, I was full of hate... but I was just... empty. I didn't care, I didn't want to care, I didn't want to feel... I didn't want to feel hurt, or sad, or angry... I didn't want to feel happy, or safe... I was just a shell. An empty shell. But you came along... and you made me feel."

Mason never looked at it that way. He actually just never asked why she liked to say that.

"And you're okay with feeling?"

"I am more than okay with feeling. I want to feel. I want to be human, and I want to be a better girlfriend that's going to love you for the long haul." She smiled. She rested her face against her knee.

Mason tilted his head a little to look at her, he smiled. "You want to love me?"

"I might already do..." she whispered.

He swore he could feel his heart stop functioning, "Come again?"

"I feel like a snack, do you want a snack?" She jumped off the bed. Clearly she was losing her mind. She didn't love the man... maybe... she didn't want to confirm that. Or she might really be too late because Mason laughed at her when she left the bedroom.

"One day imma make you say it..." he called out to her.

Maybe that one day she'd be meaning it and very sure of it. But now, it was an unfamiliar territory and she'd like to stay away please.

She opened the fridge and decided to make them a fruit salad with yogurt, she loved it.

She gathered all the peels and the empty carton of yogurt on a plate so she could throw in the bin they had left outside when they were cleaning earlier on.

She went to the huge bin outside and emptied the contents, went inside the kitchen to put the plate in the kitchen and then went outside again.

She was enjoying the breeze. The fresh air. It was a little chilly outside and the house was so warm that she didn't need to wear anything but Mason's t-shirt.

She wished Mason could come out and be with her, so they can enjoy the cool breeze. She looked around at the green trees around, the flowers around, this was a hiding spot for Milo... it was definitely taken care of regularly.

It was also peaceful, not too far out from the city but still away from the noisy traffic and the busy streets of Joburg.

The next thing Lesedi felt an impact on her abdomen. It was so sudden and unexpected, she took a look and saw her t-shirt had a hole and blood was coming out.

She was in shock but quickly understood what had just happened. She walked back inside as fast as she possibly could to be missed by a bullet as she entered the house. She leaned back against the door and managed to lock it behind her.

She clutched her side, starting to feel the impact of the bullet that was most definitely lodged inside of her.

Blood dripped on the floor as she slowly walked to the bedroom. Her mind was racing. Zakes found them. That could be the only explanation. But how?

"Mace..." Lesedi was a little bit dizzy, the shock of being shot taking a toll on her. But the adrenaline kept her going.

Mason was lying in bed, eyes closed as if he wanted to take a nap. "Come to bed." He mumbled.

"Mace... I got... I got shot." She managed to say in a breathy voice.

Mason's eyes flew open, he looked at her face, agony, his eyes travelled down to where her hand was clutching, and the black t-shirt was stained. It clung to her skin, her hands were coloured and painted with the dark liquid.

He was immobilized. He was shocked. He couldn't even think.

"It fucking burns!" Lesedi muttered, tears falling freely from her eyes. That caused Mason to jump into action.

He walked over to her, picked her up and placed her on the bed. He pulled his sweatpants over his nakedness and grabbed a towel. "Press this baby, press this against the wound so you don't bleed out."

His worst fear was threatening to come to pass.

"You need to call Ginger." Lesedi told him, he was staring at her, fear everywhere on him. In his eyes, on his face, on his quivering bottom lips, on his body posture. She knew where his mind was going...

"Mace..." she called out to him again, her voice sounded forced. She was speaking through gritted teeth.

He blinked, "Ginger... call Ginger." He said in a frantic tone.

He had to find his phone. He went to lock the doors, at least the windows were bulletproof. But he still stayed clear of them.

He realized he had umpteen missed calls from Milo. He dialled him back. "Mason, someone is trespassing there... you need to vacate the house or stay inside until we arrive there. The house is bullet proofed so don't open the door for anyone. Zakes might be on the loose." Milo answered his phone.

This was his house, and he was the only one who knew where he set his bobby traps should anyone trespass into his land.

"I need an ambulance Milo, I need us to get air lifted out of here, Lesedi has been shot."

"Shit!" Milo cursed, it sounded like he was driving. "Okay take care of her, I am getting help. Fuck!" Milo cursed one more time before hanging up.

Mason returned to the bedroom and the towel he had given Lesedi was soaked. He took out another one... he applied pressure to the wound.

"I'm sorry baby, I am so sorry." He apologized. He couldn't bare to look in her eyes. He was ashamed that he failed to protect her.

This was not a romantic getaway; how could he be so stupid? So careless? And yet he claimed to love her?

"Hey... hey... talk to me." Lesedi urged him. "If... you... don't... I... am... going..."

"I know... I know... help is on the way... I am sorry Les, I am so sorry baby." Mason's eyes stung with unshed tears. He was scared. She was bleeding but at least now, with him applying pressure to the wound, she wasn't losing a lot of blood in a short time.

"Tell me... about your life in New York." Lesedi was trying to be strong for him. She hated seeing him blame himself but most importantly she didn't want him to think she's dying. She didn't want to die and didn't want Mason to think that his worst fear was coming true.

Mason wiped the lone tear that escaped his eye with his other hand as he pressed the towel to Lesedi's wound with the other. He cleared his throat, but the lump stuck on there refused to be moved. "It's fine..." he didn't know what to say. "How are you feeling? Does it hurt too much?" He has never been shot before. He had no idea how it felt like.

Lesedi smiled, but her eyes had dropped... "Never been shot at?" She asked. He shook his head.

"You...really are...the tech...guy...aren't you..." she was still talking through gritted teeth and laboured breaths. Her chest rising up and down as she released shaky breaths. Mason could see she was in pain. How he wished it could be him instead of her.

"I am... and I put you in danger."

"Stop... baby... it's not your fault..." Lesedi encouraged him.

"I left for New York because I missed my mom, and my dad reminded me of her... and when I came back, same thing happened to Grey with Lana. And Lana's death reminded me of my mom too. When Grey spiralled out of control, wishing to die, drinking, and driving... I couldn't stand to see him like that... so I left, again." Mason told her.

He still couldn't look into her eyes, he just held her other free hand. The other one was holding the towels to her wound with him.

"You're a softie..." she smiled.

Mason didn't miss the smile, "I am. At heart. I couldn't help Grey... hardly helped my dad... so I wanted out... I wanted to be happy, be free and not stress so much. I was selfish."

"No, you were not. Maybe with Grey but you didn't leave him alone, your sister and father were there..." she spoke in a very slow pace. He waited for her to say every word. In that way, he'd know she was very alert.

"I guess. You're gonna be okay...right?" he went back to her situation, something she didn't want.

"Tell me about Gina..."

Mason smiled, "That's my baby. I don't give her much attention because she says I'm smouldering her which is true. I've taken a step back and watching her as she becomes whoever she wants to... I'd kill for her." He grinned.

Lesedi smiled too. "I can't imagine having overbearing three older brothers."

Mason chuckled, "she'd say she wished she had a twin sister or just a sister at least. She'd agree with you. As overbearing as we can be, we just want to protect her." He shrugged.

"Can't protect her from New York."

"I can... trust me, I have my eyes on that girl always. She's a good kid but I always make sure there is someone watching her."

Lesedi gasped but that was a bad thing to do because she started coughing and blood started coming out of her mouth.

"I am sorry baby." Mason moved to get something to wipe the blood trailing down her side of the face. "Shit!" He was stressed, scared and everything negative.

"I am tired..." she couldn't hold on anymore. She was feeling dizzy, the pain on her abdomen felt like someone had deposited hot coals and kept poking at them.

In no time Mason heard the sound of a helicopter outside. He rushed to check, and Milo was just parking his car as well.

Lesedi succumbed to sleep. She couldn't bear the pain much longer so as soon as Mason was out of sight, she closed her eyes and welcomed the darkness.

Mason went to open the door and the paramedics rushed in. He followed them and found Lesedi limp on the bed.

"Fuck baby!" He tried to get to her, but the paramedics asked him to get out of their way. "Don't do this to me." Mason just saw death when he looked at her limp body.

He stayed rooted by the door, watching as the paramedics worked on Lesedi. "God, please... please keep her alive. I love her."

He silently prayed.

**

Mason was going out of his mind. They have been at the hospital for a few hours now, and he hasn't seen any of the doctors or nurses that have been treating Lesedi. All he knew was that she had to under go surgery so they can remove the bullet.

Just thinking about it made his blood run cold.

His baby was fighting for her life in surgery while he was pacing the walls and filling his system with coffee. Bad tasting instant coffee. But now wasn't the time to act like a brat over coffee.

His phone rang from his sweat pants, he had managed to put on shoes and a t-shirt before flying out with Lesedi and the paramedics.

He needed to change. He felt more comfortable in his cargo pants. That way he'd have as many pockets to store ammunition he'd need.

"Christopher." He answered his phone. It was Ginger on the line.

"Christopher? Damn. Are we there?" Ginger asked. Mason hardly ever called him by his birth name. "It was definitely Zakes. We had the boys scouting his place, but he had a decoy. Didn't use his car, that's how we lost him." Ginger explained.

Mason's jaw locked. He was ticked off. He paid these motherfuckers a lot of money to be this careless.

"You are giving me problems, I need solutions."

"Sorry I know we fucked up. But we are on to him. The only way we can get this man off your back... is to release the Thami footage. It places both brothers in deep water, and he will be off your scent." Ginger told him. He needed permission first to use the footage otherwise Mason will eat them alive, they had already fucked up.

The dude might just be a tech guy, but Ginger knows, he could fucking get deadly when he wanted to. He didn't want to anger or stress him.

"I need you to broadcast that footage for the world to see. I need it everywhere on the internet G. But before you do that, send Singo the footage of his brother fucking his wife, minutes after that, broadcast the murder. I want them to burn in hell." Mason ordered.

Ginger kept quiet, "Okay so you want Mateo to call Zakes up so he could explain himself and then have them swim in hot water for the murder together?" Ginger asked.

"Either they kill each other, or they get arrested at the same time. If anything happens to my firecracker, I am going to kill them myself." Mason then hung up.

He was on the edge. He didn't even know what Singo would do to his brother after seeing him screw Zama, and quite frankly, he didn't care. He just needed to make sure Zakes wasn't after them anymore.

He couldn't risk Lesedi being killed in the hospital.

The doctor who had informed Mason about Lesedi going into surgery came out and Mason was all over him, throwing questions at him.

"Mr Pierce... we have the best surgeons working on miss Phiri, we are doing the best we can. Please, calm down. A nurse will be with you." The doctor ran past him.

He was scared, the doctor seemed to be needing more hands on Lesedi.

She was fine when she got shot. She was talking. She was fine. She couldn't get any worse right?

Some people died just when they arrived at the hospital. The surgery could be a success, but she might not make it.

He sat down but a few minutes later, he was up.

His phone rang, it was Tracy. Did she know? It couldn't be. How would she know? He was handling it all by himself. Only his team knew of the situation.

"Hey Tee." He answered. Cleared his voice of any stress.

"Hey Mason... how are you?" She asked. She sounded tired.

"Good... you?" what a lie. He was far from being good. He was fucking stressed and scared.

"I could be better, listen uhm I haven't heard or spoken to my sister in a couple of days, her phone has been off, I drove to her place today, and she wasn't there... and neither were you, uhm do you know where she is? Is she with you?"

Mason sighed; he didn't make a habit of lying but he wasn't sure if he should be honest with her.

"Mason are you there?"

What if he lies to her that they were fine and Lesedi doesn't make it? They will think he killed her. He was conflicted. He wished Lesedi to make it, he won't be able to take it if she didn't... but lying to her family...

"Mason, I can hear you breathing, what's going on? Where is my sister?"

"Hospital."

"What?"

"Yeah, I will text you the address." He cut the call and sent her the location of the hospital Lesedi was admitted in.

He paced up the walls of the hospital and no doctor or nurse came to see him. Only Ginger came through.

"You look like shit, why don't you go freshen up at home and I will hold the fort?" Ginger suggested, passing Mason a steaming cup of coffee he grabbed in the café down the road.

"I don't need to freshen up G. I need to see her." He replied, accepting the cup of coffee. It was better than the shit he had earlier on.

Ginger shrugged and sat down. There was no convincing him to do anything. If he were in Mason's shoes, he'd also refuse to go anywhere.

"Tell me what happened. How the fuck did he find us? He didn't track my car... he couldn't have bugged my phone; I check it all the damn time." Mason needed answers. He was always careful damn it.

"I went over to the house and checked for any bugs..." Ginger informed him. "He fucking bugged your laptop bag."

"What?" Mason was in disbelief.

"Yeah, so the time you found him waiting for you in the parking lot, he was probably done with you. This man does Singo's dirty jobs, of course he's a pro. It just took him a little longer to get to you but... yeah."

"So, what is this? He wants to kill me? You are telling me that he shot Lesedi to get to me?"

"That would be my best bet. But he might have also figured Lesedi was working there for the same reason as you."

"I already have the hotel... Mateo signed his stake over to me, what could he possibly get by killing us?"

"Revenge. Or maybe they have a plan, I don't know... but right now, we have sent the video out on the internet, social media, the fucking police. The two are wanted suspects in the murder of Thami, that should take the heat off your back."

Mason nodded and drank his coffee. The heat on his back was the least of his worries. He needed his firecracker to pull through.

No sooner than he and Ginger were talking about more details surrounding their mission, Tracy and Kyle walked in, quickly spotting the two men.

"What happened to my sister Mason?" Tracy was all fired up.

Kyle looked at his brother, Mason was a fucking wreck. His eyes were red like he was crying and there was just no fucking joy or hope on the man's face.

"G my man." Kyle shook Ginger's hand but kept his eyes on Mason who looked at the cup between his hand. Avoiding eye contact with either him or Tracy.

"Ky" Ginger acknowledged Kyle.

"Mason what have you done to my sister? This is the second time she's hospitalized and you're just always right there. What happened this time?"

Mason bit his bottom lip and stood up. "Tee not now okay? I don't need you throwing accusations at me like that. Fuck."

"But you aren't telling me anything Mason. I am worried about her."

"She got shot." He informed her. Her eyes enlarged to the size of the full moon. "I... don't..." he didn't know what else to say.

"How? When? Where were you?" She asked.

"Earlier today... we were at Milo's house out of town. Look I will explain everything just not now."

"Have you seen her? What are the doctors saying?" Tracy sat down. She thought back to the last conversation she and Lesedi had. She wasn't very nice to her.

"No, the last doctor I saw was calling for help in surgery. I have been sitting here since they wheeled her in. The bullet was lodged in her body; she was shot on her stomach."

"Oh my God!! This is your fault you know that right? If you didn't fill her head with this revenge nonsense we wouldn't be here. She'd have been living with me in Pretoria just fine." Tracy's tone was accusatory.

"Babe come on, that's not fair." Kyle sat next her.

"You will say that because he's your brother, but you know I am right. If Lesedi doesn't make it out, I will never forgive you, in fact I will get you arrested for this." Tracy was fuming and very terrified. She has never been shot before, hell in her mind shot people just never made it out alive, but she was holding on to a very thin rope of hope.

"You're the fine one to talk. Remember the last conversation you had with her? You clearly don't fucking care about her as you are now pretending to be." Mason snapped.

"Prete.... how dare you! That is my sister."

"And yet you called her a monster, how nice and caring of you." Mason sat down next to Ginger.

Tracy was livid but Kyle was holding her down. "Stop it you two. This is not the fucking time to be fighting over shit. We need to stand together and hope she makes it out." Kyle interjected.

"Talk to your fucking girlfriend." Mason stood up and walked out. He needed some air. He needed to breathe.

He needed a smoke; he needed a fucking bottle of whiskey, but he wasn't a smoker, and he didn't have alcohol with. Hell, he didn't have his car. Ginger said Milo was having it driven over to him after he run his rounds.

"Mace..." Kyle found him outside next to the parking lot. It was dark outside, not a lot of motion outside. Just one or two people going in and out. Security guards visibly on duty.

"Are you okay?" Kyle stood in front of him. The two men were tall, large, packing heavy muscles and they were so easy on the eye.

Mason looked at Kyle and he shook his head. "I am scared shirtless bro. I can't lose her. I can't... I just..."

"Hey... she's a fighter that girl. And I trust these surgeons here know what they are doing. Trust them."

"I am trying Ky... I am. But... fuck, who do you know that's been shot and survived?"

Kyle looked at him with furrowed brows, this Mason in front of him was new to him. This man has been involved in crazy mercenary operations with Blake overseas countless times and those soldiers got shot and survived. Maybe some didn't but Blake's A-team always dodged bullets and made it through.

"Almost half of Blake's team got shot and survived Mace. You can't think like that."

Mason kept quiet. Rationally, Kyle was right... but his heart was galloping in his body, it was threatening to jump out at the possibility of him losing that girl. He couldn't lose her, not when they had just begun their

relationship. Not just when he is about to learn and experience how to be an actual boyfriend with an actual girlfriend that he actually loved.

"What happened there?" Kyle asked. He was aware of the mission Lesedi and him were on.

"I thought I covered my tracks very well... that this was going to be a quick in and out situation. But somehow, Zakes found me out... and he tracked me, so he wanted to kill me... so instead he shot Les."

"How did he find you out though?"

"I don't know... but Les has been telling me that we are treading around a dangerous territory. I thought I had shit under control. I thought I was the smartest guy in the room, but clearly I bit more than I can chew and now my girl is fighting for her life." Mason was beating himself down every notch. He just couldn't see how this wasn't his fault.

"Have you seen the media and the news yet? They are covering a Thami Masoga murder, that Mateo Molao, owner of Asante Paradise and ward councillor is the number one suspect.." Kyle informed him of the buzz he created.

"So maybe if they are arrested, you and Lesedi will be safe."

Mason sighed. He should have thrown the video out there the same day Zakes approached him. He wanted to play the long game but clearly Zakes wasn't playing any games.

All he had now was regrets.

They stood outside for a while, talking about the situation, the mission Lesedi and Mason have been on, how they were now in possession of the hotel... Kyle was really trying to ease off Mason's fears and worries.

He hated seeing his big brother so down and out. It was unlike him. The man was always confident and easy going.

"Let's go inside, it's been a while maybe there is news now on the operation."

The two tall men walked back inside, and some nurses and doctors and some patients and visitors just couldn't help but to stare at them. The Pierce boys demanded attention by their mere presence. The way they walked with purpose and confidence, their sculpted bodies to their pouty plumb lips and their thick bushy brows... you wouldn't help but to look.

Ginger was left alone, Kyle asked where his girlfriend went.

"Uhh a doctor came out looking for Lesedi's immediate family. So, she went inside."

Mason felt his hands get sweaty, "Did they say anything else?" He asked. Ginger shook his head.

Soon enough Tracy was walking out. Mason stood up, "and?"

Tracy rolled her eyes, "They managed to get the bullet out, but she has lost a lot of blood, so she still needs to be here."

"Can we see her?" Mason asked again. He was anxious as hell.

"No. I told them that I don't want you anywhere near her. It is still your fault that she got shot. And right now, we aren't even sure if she's gonna make it." She angrily told Mason. "Take me home Kyle, I will come back here in the morning I am tired."

"But baby you can't keep Mace away from his -"

"I can! She's my damn sister. If you don't want to go home, stay. I will get an uber." Then she walked to the direction of the hospital exit without waiting for anyone else to say anything.

Mason looked at Tracy in disbelief.

"Is there any other way we can get you to see her?" Ginger asked. He knew damn well Mason wouldn't just take this shit lying down. He wanted to see his woman.

"My name is Mason fucking Pierce, G, I am going to see my girl one way or another."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

“**F**uck!” Mason groaned as soon as he slumped on his couch at his apartment. It was Thursday, five days since Lesedi has been shot. Five days since Thami Masoga was buried and four days since the news of Mateo Molao being arrested for the murder of Thami Masoga being blasted all over the news channels and newspapers.

He was tired, it was Thursday in the early morning... and he had just returned from the hospital. Lesedi was out of the woods, the bullet didn't hit any major arteries or any vital organs, so she was very fortunate. There was silver lining after all. But he just needed the whole mess to be over.

He felt bad, really bad that he had fucked up. Maybe love was never meant to be apart of the equation for people who lived the kind of life he lived. His life was a one big ball of danger and people closest to him were bound to be hurt because of him.

He has worked hard in making sure his family were moved away from his crime life, but he turned around and shoved Lesedi right in the middle of it and now she was paying the price.

He poured whiskey in a glass, half full, he didn't care about the whiskey etiquette. He needed to get drunk, he hadn't slept in forever and now he needed to recharge. There was a lot he had planned to do, he needed to have a sharp mind for it, a sharp mind and energy.

He was reading the news and Mateo was detained in jail, pending investigation and probably bail. But there was a video and sound that put the two brothers in a tight spot.

The only issue was that Zakes was nowhere to be found, only Mateo was arrested and a search for Zakes was on. His face was all over social media and various news outlets and that was a problem. It could give him a chance to stay in hiding.

Mason had Milo on duty to track the man and he is yet to come back with positive results. It was not surprising that Zakes knew how to hide, the man worked for Thami, he definitely was smart.

They now needed to tread carefully, he also had bodyguards outside Lesedi's ward just in case Zakes comes back to finish what he started. But he also wanted to know how in the fuck did Zakes know he was lying to them, that his name was Mason Pierce and not Lombardi. Where did he slip up? He had been careful, both he and Lesedi have been careful.

He didn't know what the hell was going on with the hotel, but he trusted Gregory will run the ship, that man seemed to be power hungry, he's probably a self-appointed CEO which would be great as he knew the ins and outs of the business and Mason had a lot to deal with than running the hotel. All that mattered was that it officially belonged to him.

Mason downed his glass, jumped in the shower and relaxed under the warm shower spray. It felt fucking good to relax. He cleaned up, wrapped a towel around his waist, went to pour another half full glass, downed it and jumped in bed.

The minute his head hit the pillows; his eyes dropped. A few minutes later he was out like a light. Snoring into the sunrise.

When the morning came, he felt revived. He showered again and dressed up in his signature wear, black cargo pants and a black t-shirt and Vans. He ordered breakfast and once he finished eating, he hit the road.

He jumped into the Rover that Lesedi had been using instead of his mustang. It felt nice driving the car, it smelled like her. He missed her, he missed her cute laugh, missed watching her fucking chin dimple, enjoyed watching her scowl... and definitely missed watching her face as she came during sex.

Arriving at the hospital, he parked right next to Tracy's car and groaned. Now she was another thorn in his backside.

He walked inside, straight to Lesedi's ward and found Tracy outside, pacing the floor.

"Hey, what happened?" Mason asked, worry filling his body.

Tracy turned and looked at him. She was not going to work; Kyle gave her time off. "Hey... uhm doctors called me to come here, they are still with her." She sounded anxious as hell.

"Why? They said she was going to be okay when I left here last night."

Tracy remembered how rude she'd been to this man, he looked equally worried, and she knew deep in her heart that Lesedi liked him. That Lesedi would kick her ass for keeping Mason away from her. But she was just worried, especially since the last time she and her sister spoke, she was mean to her.

"Listen... I am sorry for going off at you, blaming you... and telling the hospital not to let you see her." She apologized. Mason sighed in relief. He

hated having to pull up his height over Tracy, he was prepared to do just that. He wasn't going to let her talk to him however she wanted.

"It's cool."

"It's not cool. My hormo... I am just not in the right frame of mind, and I was looking for someone to blame. You can see her... I told them they can let you see her. I also saw the guards you have provided for her, and I appreciate that." She explained. She wanted to mention how her hormones were driving her insane but didn't want to tell anyone she was pregnant. Not even Kyle knew.

"I understand... I mean in your situation; you're bound to go crazy on me."

She gasped, "my situation?"

"Yeah, I mean your hormones might just be adding to your stress." He continued.

"You know? She told you?"

Mason chuckled, "that girl in there? Is my girl, of course she told me. You didn't want me to know?" He asked.

"I didn't want anyone to know... well not at least until I hit three months. I don't want anyone to know, so you can't tell anyone, not even Kyle."

Mason opened his mouth, trying to find the right words to say... "Tee, you have to tell him. What if it slips out? I also won't be able to look at him the same knowing I know what he doesn't know..."

"He wants a baby Mason, he wants a baby with me and if I don't carry this baby full term, he will be crushed... I can handle it. I've lost two babies

already; I can handle it but him...?" She caught the lone tear that escaped her eye.

Mason felt a pang in his chest. These girls have gone through terrible things in life, and he wished he could carry their burdens, but it wasn't possible.

"I understand, but you will need him. Because right now, you might be stressing over carrying full term and keeping it from Kyle that you cause harm. So, I advise you tell him so he can be there, fully supportive and making sure you stress less, okay?"

Before Tracy could respond him or even mull over his words, the doctor came out of Lesedi's ward...

"Doctor, is she okay? What happened?" Tracy walked over to the dark and short man who was Lesedi's doctor.

"Miss Phiri, sorry for getting you worked up but your sister is awake. You may see her, but I'd like to have a word with you after, okay?" The doctor smiled then looked at Mason and smiled too before leaving them alone.

Tracy looked at Mason, "You wanna go in first?" She asked.

Mason was suddenly nervous, "Nope, you go in first... I will wait here."

Tracy nodded and walked inside. It was just a typical private hospital ward. A little cute, looked as comfortable as a hospital can be. Pink sheets and Lesedi was also dressed in a pink gown too.

She was awake and looked fucking tired.

"Hey sis... oh my God, I am so glad you're alive, you scared the crap out of me!" Tracy rushed to Lesedi's side to hug her, but Lesedi made grunting sounds, feeling pain and some discomfort. "Sorry..." Tracy pulled back and offered a smile.

She dragged the chair closer to the bed and held Lesedi's hand, "Hey..."

Lesedi looked at her, she knew her, her face was very familiar...

"Mohau?" She called out.

"Hey... God I am so glad you're okay. We have been worried sick."

Lesedi blinked, "You look different..."

Tracy's head snapped up, "what do you mean?" She hoped to God the pregnancy was not changing her physical appearance as yet. She couldn't have that.

"You look old..."

"I look old?" Tracy was touched, she quickly took out her phone and turned the *selfie* camera on... "No, I don't look old. I look normal."

"No, I mean... sorry, it's nothing. What happened to me?" Lesedi asked.

"You got shot. I don't know where you and Mason had gone but you got shot there... I gave him hell for it though, but you know Mason, can't stay mad at him forever."

Lesedi narrowed her eyes, her voice was raspy and low, "Who is that?"

Tracy did a double-take, "who is who?" She looked around, wondering if her sister wasn't seeing ghosts around.

"This person you say I was with when I got shot..."

"Mason?"

"Yeah...who is he?"

Tracy's jaw hung low, "what do you mean '*who is he?*'"

Lesedi kept quiet, she was confused... "You look older, aren't you supposed to be ten?" She couldn't help but to wonder just what the hell happened and why is her little sister such a grown ass woman.

"Ten? What is happening right now?" Tracy stood up, she put her bag on the end of the bed, her eyes almost bulging out of their sockets. Things were getting weird.

Tracy looked to the direction of the door then back at Lesedi. No way, the doctors needed to come in there real soon because what was happening was freaking her out.

Lesedi looked confused... "How old are you?"

"Jesus Christ... doctor!" Tracy didn't answer her sister, she straight up shouted for the doctors and nurses to come to her aid. Clearly her sister was going off the rails.

Mason stood up and followed Tracy back inside the ward, with Lesedi's doctor in tow.

"I don't know what's happening, she's talking crazy." Tracy rambled on and on about the things Lesedi was saying to her. "Ten years old? Has she gone crazy?"

Mason looked at Lesedi, they starred at each other. Mason was staring at her in wonder. He couldn't believe she was alive and seem to be recuperating well... but Lesedi was looking at him with nothing but confusion. Her eyes did not seem like she was recognizing anyone in the room.

"She has lost her mind... definitely." Tracy carried on while the doctor walked over to Lesedi with a file in his hand.

"Hey..." Mason walked over to Lesedi on the other side of the bed... God he wanted to hold her, to apologize to her, to kiss her...

"Hi..." She responded, she looked at him, he was a good-looking man, but he wasn't wearing scrubs or anything. In fact, he looked more relaxed and casual. He probably wasn't a doctor... so who was he?

"How are you feeling?" He asked.

She looked at him, he had a beautiful pair of green eyes, "I am fine, who are you?" She asked. The only person she knew was Tracy in the room and the doctor who has been treating her.

"Huh?" Mason was confused, his eyes narrowing into thin slits.

Tracy rounded the bed to stand next to Mason while the doctor was still going through the file but still very much listening to the interaction among the three.

"You don't know him? He is your boyfriend, Mason!" Tracy deadpanned. What the hell was happening. "Doctor what is wrong with her?" Tracy asked, turning her gaze to the doctor.

"Can the two of you excuse us please, let me check something and I will inform you what is going on with our patient." The doctor smiled at them then watched them as they left the room.

"Let's see what we have here..." the doctor said turning to Lesedi who for the life of God still couldn't believe the white man was her boyfriend. The way he looked at her with star-struck eyes and wonder, how affectionate he looked at her... just how did that happen?

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"She thinks I am ten years old... ten? Mason, ten years old? Just exactly what happens to a person when they get shot?" Tracy was going crazy.

"You shouldn't be stressing yourself so much, you're pregnant." Mason sat down and watched Tracy paced down the hospital floor in front of him.

"Wena why are you not stressed out by this, hey? She's your girlfriend and she doesn't know you."

"Remember me... she just doesn't remember me." Mason was calm but the way his foot was tapping showed he was anxious.

"And that makes it okay? She probably thinks she's a twenty-year-old girl. Is that even possible?"

Mason just looked at her and kept quiet. He always had answers to most things but now he was at loss for words. He had nothing to say.

"How's Kyle?" Mason diverted. Hell, he didn't know what the doctors were going to say once they were done with Lesedi so he figured a change in topic would be vital.

"He's your brother, you call him and find out." Tracy snapped.

"You live with him, so why waste airtime with calling when you can just tell me?"

Tracy looked at Mason and groaned. "I don't need this... he's fine, Kyle is fine, but my sister is not."

Mason pinched the bridge of his nose. He didn't need this additional stress from Tracy. He was trying so hard to be calm and rational about everything.

His phone rang and it was Ginger.

"G." He answered.

"The Lord, how is she?" Ginger asked.

"Out of the woods."

"Oh, that's great, I bet she's angry at you."

"When she remembers..."

"What?" Ginger was confused.

"I don't want to get into that right now. What's up? Do you have anything for me? Did you find him?" Tracy turned to look at him, so he stood up and walked out. "Hold on G..."

When he got outside, he leaned against the wall that faced the entrance of where he exited. "I am sorry Mace, but we were slacking. I was slacking. I didn't have my eyes everywhere I needed them to be and that's why this happened."

"You're speaking in riddles. What happened?"

"Punch... the guy we sent to Eastern Cape? Well, Zakes found him, and he talked. Mentioned how Les stole the hundred meter from Morris and all that jazz. Zakes, roped Lucas in and they ran their own investigation and figured you and Les out. I am thinking Lucas remembered you from the funeral..."

Mason kicked a pebble off the ground, "I thought you said you dealt with him?"

"Yeah, I did, but I forgot to keep an eye on him so I can keep making him shut his mouth. You don't like us killing so... I resorted to other means." Ginger replied. What Mason didn't know was that the big man was holding his breath. Mason could go berserk when he wanted to.

"I had you doing too many things at once, I can't fault you for it. But I need you to keep your eyes on the ball now. The ball is Zakes. Do whatever you have to do to the idiot in Eastern cape."

"Are you hearing yourself?" Ginger asked.

"Do what you must do G, we spared his life and he thanked us by trying to get me and my girl killed, do what you must and after, I need you and Milo to find Zakes. I need him alive." Mason then cut the call.

Zakes was going to regret he ever learned how to hold a gun when he finds him.

The tall man walked back inside and found Tracy talking to the doctor just outside the door. '

"Mr Pierce I was just explaining to Miss Phiri about her sister's condition." The doctor was happy to indulge Mason in the conversation.

"Miss Phiri has what we call dissociative amnesia. This is typically caused by stress or trauma. It's not permanent, well we haven't come across permanent dissociative amnesia patients. So, there are memories she recalls but only from her childhood until the age of twenty. The good thing, she knows who she is and knows her family... but the other twenty years of her life she lived are non-existent."

"Oh my God." Tracy couldn't believe what she was hearing. "Does she need medication for it?"

"There is unfortunately no medication for it. She will just have to be around people she feels safe with who will help her reconnect with her old memories. Therapy can also be a vital option you can go for in this case, otherwise let it run its course."

Tracy swallowed while Mason just kept quiet.

"Thank you doctor..." Tracy thanked the doctor who had other patients to go and see. As far as the bullet wound was concerned, Lesedi was doing well,

and will recover well if taken care of. As far as the amnesia... that was another story.

"I need to go..." Mason said to Tracy.

"Mason you can't just leave without seeing her..."

"What's the use Tee? She doesn't remember me or us." Then he walked away.

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"This is your place, but I don't think you should stay here alone." Tracy said as she opened the door wider at Lesedi's apartment.

Mason still had security looming close by in case Zakes decided to strike again. For the life of God, his best PI couldn't find the man and it was pissing him off. Couple that with the fact that he can't do shit with his girl who doesn't remember him, he was a ticking time bomb.

Mason was chilling on Lesedi's couch, a glass of whiskey in hand. Tracy had told him they were coming through to pick some of her stuff so Lesedi could stay with her and Kyle in Pretoria. He was not going to let that happen though.

"This place is mine? Where do I work?" Lesedi asked in wonder. She was dressed in leggings and a tank top. Her body was tight and sculpted for the gods. She looked ridiculously hot that Mason couldn't stop ogling her.

Tracy and Mason shared a look... now how do they explain things to her?

"You own a salon with Tee." Mason answered for Tracy.

Lesedi snapped her head in the man's direction. For a hot second she forgot he was in the room. Just why was he there? He made her anxious with

his smouldering look. Those eyes were a wonder. But she couldn't believe she was dating a white man, somebody had to be lying. She liked them black and streetwise.

The older woman walked around her apartment and couldn't believe she owned it. She had a lot of questions that Tracy avoided answering like where their parents were and when did they move out of home... and how come they were dating brothers.

It was all strange to her.

She felt a little discomfort where she had been shot but the pain meds were highly effective she just needed to take it very easy.

"Where is my bedroom?" She asked.

Tracy was in the kitchen having a glass of water, she had been avoiding Lesedi's questions like the plague and now she left the reigns in Mason's hands. He got her shot, let him deal with her memory loss. She was tired, tired and worried.

"Through there.... The last door facing you." Mason responded coolly. His eyes were on the glass in his hand. He restocked the alcohol earlier on. He figured he'd need it. He also couldn't look at her... he hated the '*I don't know you*' look in her eyes.

Just a few days ago, she almost told him she loved him, he believed she did, but now she couldn't remember any of that.

Lesedi carefully walked into her bedroom, it was spacious and beautiful. She opened her wardrobe, and she had more tracksuits, overalls and boots than she understood. Didn't she wear miniskirts and dresses anymore?

She had a couple of sexy dresses but everything else was just mature and not revealing.

She shook her head and walked back out. "Mohau, why hasn't Zuki come to see me?"

Mason snapped his head up...

"You said she moved out of the country when I asked you about her. I don't know..." Tracy answered. God, it was like dealing with a child. The million questions...

"Where is my phone?" She asked. There is no way Zuki would leave the country and she wouldn't know about it or keep in touch with her. That was her best friend.

She received her handbag from Mason which had her phone and identity documents and just some other bunch of things she had with her before getting shot. "And mama le papa? Are they still together? Do they still live in Soweto?" She asked as she tried to unlock her phone, and Mason told her how to.

Tracy was now reconsidering moving Lesedi to her place. The twenty-one questions were a lot.

"Zuki has been trying to reach me, but I hadn't replied any of her messages." Lesedi said again as she scrolled through her phone. "Why wouldn't I return her calls or messages? Did we fight?"

"I don't know... you only told me she's gone like a long time ago, probably when you were like thirty something, you're forty now...so..."

"Uhh yeah... you and her aren't on great terms with each other." Mason blurted out.

"Why? That is my best friend, my ride or die... what can we possibly fight over?"

"Yeah Mason, what did they fight over... since you know more than I do?"

Mason chucked the rest of the whiskey down and felt as the brown liquid licked and left a burning yet soothing sensation on his throat down to his chest.

"It's a long story... you just got back home. Aren't you hungry?" He diverted. "We could order some food...?"

Lesedi narrowed her eyes. This man seemed to know more than her baby sister did. Were they really boyfriend and girlfriend?

"Yeah... I could eat, hospital food was just bland really. I'll call Zuki in a bit, but I have so many questions... mama le papa ba kae Mohau?" (Where is mom and dad, Mohau?) She asked, "And you said we owned a salon... where is it?"

"In Pretoria, I will take you there some day... you need to take it easy, and I will tell you about mama le papa in a bit. Just... relax, let's have lunch and you need to pack, and I will explain everything later."

Tracy needed time. She didn't know if she wanted to tell her sister about what her father did to them, or how their mother was now living in a home. This was all too much for her to take in.

"I need a bath. Help me please?" Lesedi asked her sister.

Tracy ran her a nice and hot bubble bath and helped her get in then closed the door behind her.

She walked over to the lounge and sat next to Mason, "What happened with Zuki? Did they really fight?" She asked in a low tone.

Mason nodded, "That thing that happened to her when she was thirty? What Singo did to her? Zuki was part of it all." Mason informed her. Tracy gasped, her jaw slagged. She couldn't believe her ears.

"You lie!" She blinked repeatedly, her eyes stinging with unshed tears, "Zuki was like my older sister too. She and Lesedi were so close it was ridiculous. I'd trust her with my life the same way I trusts Lesedi with mine. Mason are you sure?"

He nodded. Tracy knew Mason couldn't lie. He had no reason to.

"Oh my God... and now she doesn't know that. Jesus, I need her memory to come back soon!"

Mason shrugged. "You really want to leave with her in your condition? You are in position to take care of her Tee." Mason mentioned

"She's my sister. She needs me."

"I am here."

"I know... but I would just feel better if she were with me."

"I love that girl, she's my girlfriend... my first ever. I will take care of her. You heard what the doctor said, being in familiar places can jog up her memory... and this right here... is way too familiar. Besides that, the person that really needs to put their feet up and not stress is you..."

Tracy couldn't argue with that. As much as she keeps saying if she lost the baby, she'd be okay, she was lying. She'd be equally crushed. She wanted that baby.

"You need to rest, and you need to talk to Kyle." Mason patted her hand before getting up from the couch when a message from food delivery app popped that the food was here.

He went to collect and came back to find Lesedi still in her bedroom.

"Do we have to tell her about what happened with Singo?" Tracy asked, already rummaging through the food package Mason got for them. Her hunger caused Mason to smile. He was going to be an uncle, well an uncle to two babies since Lori and Grey were also expecting. He was happy to feed Tracy.

"Ooh thanks for getting onion rings... they are my fave." Tracy said as she shoved one in her mouth while plating her food. Mason did the same.

"You're welcome... and I don't want to tell her about that. I'd rather she just remembers it. How do you tell someone they have been raped?" Mason asked, focusing on carefully filling his plate with food. If there was one thing the Pierce boys would do, is eat!

"Who has been raped?" Lesedi asked, approaching the kitchen.

The pair clamped up. Tracy's eyes almost bulged out of their sockets while Mason picked his plate and went to sit by the couch. Being next to Lesedi without being able to touch her drove him insane so he kept his distance.

"We were watching the news." Mason answered from the couch. He was such a smooth liar.

"Oh. Okay, anyway... I called Zuki."

Tracy blinked while Mason who was about to take a bite of his chicken burger stopped midway.

"Okay... and? She left the country?" Tracy asked. She hoped to God that woman skipped the country for real this time because if she sees her, she'd break her neck.

"No actually... she's here... in Joburg apparently and happy to hear from me. She asked to meet but I told her my situation, so she will be coming over." Lesedi told them nonchalantly as she also rummaged through the food package.

"Sorry, you did what?" Mason asked, "you invited her to come where?"

"Here... to my place... is that a crime?" Lesedi snapped.

"Okay, okay let's not get our blood pressures up." Tracy couldn't believe just what Lesedi had done. But then again, she was a twenty-year-old woman who didn't know she was actually forty. "What time will she be here?"

"She said in an hour's time or so. She and I have a lot to talk about. I cannot believe that there are no WhatsApp chats between me and her... and I have been ignoring her calls and texts. I mean it's Zuki, what could be so bad that she and I fought over?"

Tracy looked at Mason, he was angrily eating his food now. Bloody pissed he seemed. Tracy was groaning inside. This amnesia business was working on her nerves. This is not what she signed up for.

They quietly ate, with Lesedi and Tracy eating around the kitchen counter and Mason by himself in the lounge. He had kept his eyes on the girls throughout their lunch.

Once done, Lesedi received a call from reception that Miss Zuki Ndaba was at reception.

She went to get her.

When Zuki walked through the door, Mason wanted nothing but to choke her. She looked so beautiful and put together. She took extra care of herself that day. Maybe to impress Lesedi who knows.

"Hello." Zuki greeted Mason and Tracy. Mason didn't miss her narrowed eyes at him. Maybe she knew him, which could bring trouble for them or none at all.

"Zuki." Tracy greeted from the kitchen. She hadn't moved from her seat. Mason had told her to keep her cool while Lesedi went to sign Zuki in. He told her they needed Lesedi to work on her memory. That maybe seeing Zuki will help. So Tracy had to bite her tongue. That was such a difficult thing to do.

"Hao... what happened to *sesi* Zuki?" Zuki joked. Tracy used to call her 'sesi' just as she called Lesedi that too. As a sign of respect and also because Zuki was almost like family.

"I think I outgrew that." Tracy snapped. Goddamn it, Mason shouldn't have told her the truth about Zuki, but if he hadn't, then she'd be laughing with the hyena.

Zuki turned to look at Mason but quickly looked back at Lesedi. Mason's expression was stone cold, she didn't miss it.

"I didn't know you had company." Zuki said to Lesedi.

"Oh no uhm they will be leaving soon. Tracy says she now lives in Pretoria she just needed to make sure I was home safe. She worried that I might hurt myself or whatever, but I am grown now... I think a twenty-year woman can take care of herself...right?"

Zuki wasn't at all on terms that Lesedi has amnesia but with how the woman embraced her at reception, she believed it. Maybe this way, she'd be able to help her sister with her husband's hotel that Lesedi supposedly stole.

"You mean a forty-year-old woman... don't worry Mohau, I will take care of her when you aren't here... I will show her around and get her to be familiar with the places." Zuki offered. She was dressed in jeans and a nude top. Her curves were bigger than Tracy's and she flaunted them, alright.

"See problem solved. I saw we have a balcony outside; you can go there, and I will join you just now..." Lesedi said to her best friend.

Zuki smiled and walked through the sliding door to the sitting area on the balcony.

"Zuki is here... I will be fine. I am sure we can work out our differences. I think she'd be more willing to help me out with my memory. And I think you two should leave." She said while looking at Mason expectantly.

"Haibo... you're kicking us out?" Tracy couldn't believe her sister. If anything, she wanted to drag her to Pretoria with just so Zuki could play far from her.

"No, Mohau... I am asking for space. You can come back here tomorrow or whatever, but I assure you, I will be fine. Zuki is here."

"Mason please take care of her..."

"He needs to go too." Lesedi deadpanned. "Look I know they say we are in a relationship; we are dating... but I don't know you. And I don't understand how you and I came about... so I need space to think things through."

"And you think the best person to be with, all by yourself is that woman out there?" Mason asked with narrowed eyes. "You haven't spoken to her in

years, and now you're not only kicking your sister out, the one person you remember, you're kicking me out? The person who's in love with you and would do anything for you?"

Lesedi looked down and played with her fingers. Why did the guy sound sincere now? She hated that. He sounded like a man who'd tell you how he feels about you until you go dizzy with smiles and a jubilant heart.

"I am sorry... but I don't remember you or our relationship... but I remember that woman outside. Maybe her presence will jog up my memory."

"Call me when you need me, okay? You have my number saved as Tracy on your phone... if you don't reach me, you have Kyle's number as well. I will see you tomorrow. Call me before you sleep too."

"I will, Kyle is your boyfriend right?"

Tracy smiled and nodded, just thinking of that man made her smile. She truly loved him. "Yes, and you will meet him soon, he's afraid of you."

The sisters then hugged after promising to call each other if there was a need, even when there isn't a need. Then Tracy left before Mason.

"I will check on you later." Mason said as he reached the door. Lesedi was ready to lock it after him. She needed time with Zuki.

"There is no need, I am sure I will be fine."

"I will check up on you later, I wasn't asking." Then he walked out.

Lesedi watched his tall self walk away. His broad shoulders, his heavy muscles, that man definitely knew the way to the gym. His body was gorgeous... she couldn't help but to stare... maybe he truly was her boyfriend.

But how!

"Hey, I'd offer you something to drink but there seem to only be whiskey in here... I think it belongs to that guy." Lesedi said, joining Zuki across the table.

Zuki chuckled, putting her phone aside to give Lesedi her undivided attention, "You say '*that guy*' like he is not your boyfriend."

"Is he? How though, Zuki? Do you know anything about it?"

Zuki shook her head, "Listen you and I haven't been talking a lot lately, but I just know he's your boyfriend but he's also a criminal."

"I don't understand..."

"Okay, you can't say anything to anyone babe... he manipulated you into doing something for him. I think because you were lonely and you and I were fighting, you let him use you."

Lesedi was even further confused, "what did I do? Is that why I got shot? Because of him?"

Zuki nodded, "You defrauded someone I know of his hotel. And your boyfriend is the mastermind to it all. So, once the owner of the hotel's brother figured it out, he went on a killing spree. You should have died, but here you are... I don't think it's what you'd want to happen... right?" Zuki was playing heavily on the woman's memory loss.

"Oh my God, no wonder they didn't want to tell me why I got shot or what happened. Zuki... how do I fix this? I don't want to die young. Do I even have kids?"

Zuki shook her head, "No, no kids. You've never actually spoke about having kids you know? It was never our thing." She giggled.

"Maybe I do want to have kids now, but I won't if I die... who did I steal from and how I can I fix this?"

"You stole from my brother-in-law. You stole my sister's husband's hotel. You can fix things by returning it to us... it's for my sister's kids. It's their legacy." Zuki looked hurt and angry.

"I get it, I am sorry, is that why we are fighting?"

"Sort of... look you're a good person. I am not, I do crazy things to get what I want... but you, you're a saint. Your boyfriend needs to give the hotel back to us."

"I will talk to him. Do I have the power to do that?" Lesedi wondered. "Can I make him do that?"

"I think you can... if you can't, then you need to get the original contract they signed and bring it to us. Make sure there are no copies, can you do that?"

Lesedi grabbed Zuki's hands and smiled, "You're my ride or die babe, of course I will try and do that. If you help me. I don't know him, and I don't want to get shot again. I am already in pain. So... if you help me, I will fix it." Lesedi said with conviction and that made Zuki smile.

This fucking amnesia was probably the work of their ancestors... Zuki thought.

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"You should see him Zuki, he's miserable in there. He was denied bail and all evidence points to him... I am telling you it's a done deal. He's going to be sentenced. My kids will not have a father." The light skinned woman adorned in a purple dress and matching purple heels was in their lavish home in the north of Gauteng, a glass of water in her hand.

She wished it was something stronger, but she has drank not even a drop of alcohol in her life. So, water worked well to at least quench her thirst and moisten her dry throat.

Mrs Molao, the wife to the ward councillor and hotel owner, well previous hotel owner of the remarkable hotel in the heart of Soweto was highly stressed ever since her husband was detained by the police on the counts of murdering the chief of the police.

She knew he did it, she saw the footage herself, even if she was stupid, which she wasn't, she'd still know he did it. Mateo has always been a shady person.

Their lawyer, Lethabo was working hard on the case, to maybe suggest his client was framed or was not in the frame of mind, he was trying to explore all angles, but nothing was working in their favour.

The man admitted on tape of what he had done and there was little to nothing that Lethabo could do to save him.

Zuki who had temporarily moved into her sister's home since the arrest was sitting on the chair in their dining room, looking at the news on her phone detailing the arrest and what people were saying about her brother-in-law. It did not look good.

"I can't imagine what he must be going through in jail... how long are we looking at?" Zuki asked.

Her sister had just came back from the courthouse and has had a chance to speak to their lawyer on how many years Mateo was facing.

"Life. Life in prison. My boys will grow up having a relationship with their father through jail visits. Oh my God, do you know what that will do to them?" Zama was soft spoken; she was on the verge of tears.

"And Zachariah... he's hiding, he's okay wherever he is... while his brother is suffering." Zama knew Zakes and Mateo were brothers. Mateo sold her a bogus story of why they had different surnames.

"Uhh firstly, Zakes didn't kill Thami... secondly he is not just hiding, he's trying to get the hotel back for you and your boys. You need to look at the bigger picture here, your hotel which now belongs to Mason Pierce who tricked your husband into signing it over to him..."

Zama groaned. Her problems were too many. A criminal for a husband who is now behind bars leaving her to fend for herself. Not only did she learn that the hotel was now in possession of someone else through devious ways but she also learned that her husband was broke... save for the trust money they had for their kids and her savings account.

"How will we get the hotel back? It is clear as daylight that this was those people's mission all along, to steal our hotel. Do you know how hard Mateo fought for that hotel? He fought very hard, it is his blood and sweat. We cannot just lose it. My kids can't lose their father and their bread and butter in the same breath." Zama sat down. She felt dizzy from pacing up and down.

Zuki looked at her sister, she felt bad for her. She on the other hand knew why Lesedi and Mason did what they did. It was probably revenge for what Mateo once did to Lesedi. She must say though, she was proud of the lengths Lesedi took to get her revenge, but not on her sister's tears.

She's going to get the hotel back. She just needs to find a way to keep manipulating Lesedi's mind. It was a sweet miracle when she received a call from a frantic Lesedi wondering why they weren't talking, or why she hasn't come to visit her in the hospital to Lesedi letting her know she was shot but she was recovering except for the memory loss.

She was going to fight for her sweet, sweet sister and then the two of them will run the hotel together. They will be stronger and sexier and richer...

"So, I sent Zakes a message about Lesedi's memory loss. I also bugged her place yesterday when I went to visit... So I can listen what Mason says to her. So far, nothing."

"I still don't understand why your ex best friend... is in on all of this. I know Lesedi, she's such a sweet person. How can she do this?" Zama asked.

Zuki just looked at her phone, now she couldn't exactly add on to Zama's problems by revealing that her husband raped Lesedi, and she helped him do it and then continued to help him cover up and get cleaned up as long as he paid her to keep her mouth shut.

"I don't know, she doesn't know either... Zakes shot her, so she is suffering from memory loss and think we are best friends. So, I have encouraged her to get the original contract from her boyfriend... make sure there aren't any copies made..."

Zama looked at her, "and that will work? What if this... this guy sets a trap for us? What if he tells her it's all copies but it would be a lie?" She asked her younger sister.

"Mhm I didn't think about that. Shit." Zuki sat back on her chair and bit on her lower lip.

"Ask Zachariah on what we should do. He probably has a plan that doesn't involve killing her. I mean, what is the use of killing these two? Their hotel will go to their families."

"Oh my God you're right, okay let me call him." Zuki then dialled a number and spoke with Zakes for a while.

Zama was looking intently at her. God she hoped Zakes was safe with her cousin. She didn't condone what they did -cheating on Mateo- but she couldn't afford to lose the two men in her life at the same time. Who'd take her out to her favourite restaurant while she wasn't feeling well or just because? Who will compliment her new hairstyle and nails? Who will caress her thigh in the car while driving to some crappy motel for a love-filled sexual escape?

Mateo, sure, she needed him for the kids... but Zakes? She needed him for herself. For her sanity.

"What did he say?" Zama asked as soon as Zuki removed her phone from her ear.

"Well, this is getting complicated, he says, I should tell Lesedi to make her boyfriend sign the hotel to her, so she becomes the sole owner... then after that, we get Lesedi to sign it over to us."

Zama smiled. Zakes was smart. He was smart, conniving and wicked sometimes, but that's what she loved about him.

"He says to tell you, he's okay." Zuki watched as her sister blushed. She knew about their shenanigans. When Mateo received a video of Zakes and her kissing, the first person she called was Zuki.

"I am glad." Zama smiled, looking at her fingers. "I just can't believe that our lives have come to this. I can't even go outside without the neighbours

spotting me and wanting to talk about it or giving me side-eyes. I was even kicked out of one of the neighbourhood WhatsApp groups. Like? Why?"

Zuki felt sorry for her sister, "I am sorry, maybe you just need to let them know you didn't know you married a criminal. I am going to bath and heading over Lesedi's place. I promised to take her out for lunch to catch up." Zuki smiled.

"Did you miss her?"

"Like miss our friendship? Yeah... she was my best friend, the only person after you who has always tolerated my bullshit." Zuki then walked out of the room.

* *

"You want me to what?" Lesedi couldn't believe what Zuki said to her. They were having lunch at a fine dining restaurant in Fourways not too far from where Lesedi lived. She was still recuperating and had to take it easy, but she also wanted to get out of her house for some fresh air.

"It's the perfect way to ensure that we will get the hotel back. If we just trust he will give you every single copy of the contract, we might as well just go gamble our last cents at the casino."

Lesedi chewed on the straw of her drink. "How do I even do that? I haven't spoken to him since I returned from the hospital. He calls and knocks on my door like a crazy person... so he is not going to sign over the hotel to me just like that."

"He can... if you start returning those calls and opening the damn door." Zuki was a little pissed at how Lesedi was. Damn it, they needed the hotel back before anyone catches a wind of this or before Zakes is found by the cops.

"Don't yell at me." Lesedi pouted.

"I am sorry, it's just that... you're the only person who can rectify this... and I don't want to say this, but it is your fault."

Lesedi opened her mouth for a remark but found none. It was her fault. Zuki told her that it was. She believed it was.

"I still don't understand how come I agreed to do such a thing in the first place. It's all I think about. If only I can fucking remember all these things. It's driving me insane... and I don't even want to talk about how I managed to date a white man let alone work with him to deceive and steal from people." She leaned back... taking in the scene of the less busy restaurant.

It was such a posh environment. A few patrons were dining alone, with their laptops for company. She wondered if they were self employed or worked for other companies.

Zuki was worried about Lesedi needing to know the reasons why she stole the hotel. She wondered if Mason knew the real truth... but if he did, he'd have told Lesedi a long time ago. He didn't look like the kind of man that would blindly let Lesedi play friends with her.

"Don't worry so much about that. Worry about how you're going to fix this."

"That's easy for you to say. You aren't the one who has lost twenty years of memory with a snap of the fingers..."

Lesedi was pouting visibly upset. Well Zuki didn't have time to be worrying about that, she needed to make sure this girl was on board and understood the terms and conditions.

"Flirt your way into that. Hell, sleep with him if it will get us what we want." Zuki told her.

"Why is sex always your first weapon in a battle?" Lesedi narrowed her eyes, hell this lunch date with Zuki was annoying her.

"It is not, but it helps doesn't it?"

"You would know..."

"What is that supposed to mean?" Zuki grew angry at the implication of Lesedi's words. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Nothing, it means nothing. Sure, Zuki, I will sleep with the man to get what you want. I will sleep with whoever you say I should sleep with to get you want. Hasn't it always been that way?" Lesedi angrily snapped then carefully slid out of the booth, grabbing her purse as she did.

"Thanks for lunch, I wish I enjoyed it." Lesedi then stood up, pulled out three hundred from her purse. "Oh, you said the lunch is on you..." she put the money back in her purse, "and I know I walk slow, so don't follow me." She then walked away.

"Lesedi, come on I didn't mean it like that!" Zuki tried to call after her, but the dark-skinned beauty heard none of it. She wanted to leave pronto.

Once outside the restaurant, Lesedi spotted her bodyguard that Mason had hired for her protection, and he took her back to her apartment.

She arrived at her place and almost screamed her lungs out when she spotted a figure on her couch.

"Jesus Christ! How the hell did you get in?" Lesedi asked Mason who was comfortably drinking whiskey with his PC fired on. He seemed to be working on something.

"I have my ways." He responded nonchalantly.

"Hey, you can't have your ways with my place. What if I was in here naked?" She asked, fuming.

"Nothing I haven't seen, how's your wound? How are you feeling?" He asked, he still felt very bad about her getting shot but the fact that she was alive and still giving him hell even though she didn't remember him, was good enough for him to start feeling better and concentrate on finding Zakes.

"I feel okay... I changed my dressing today and it doesn't look so awful." She admitted to him. He nodded and didn't say anything else further.

Lesedi rolled her eyes, "So -"

"Can I see your phone please." Mason interrupted her. He was ever polite.

Lesedi narrowed her eyes but gave him the phone nonetheless... Mason took it, their hands touch as he did, he looked in her eyes for a hot second then averted his gaze.

He checked something on Lesedi's phone as she sat down next to him. Scanned the phone, checked for bugs, the works.

"What are you doing with it?" She asked.

"Checking for software... you might need an upgrade and with you forgetting half of your life, I just need to make sure you have all you need." He told her. He typed something on his PC, then returned her phone to her.

"Can you please tell me how the hell you got into my apartment? That's making me uneasy."

"I am your boyfriend, I have my own key, well I made it... Don't I knock every time I come but now it's an emergency right? If you don't answer when I knock, I will use the emergency key." He responded coolly.

"No give it back..." she wanted to tell him to give it back, but she thought about what Zuki said... seduce the man to get the hotel. That's something that she could do right?

"That's going to be a hard no firecracker." he deadpanned. "How was lunch with Zuki?" he asked. His jaw clenching.

"Not so great we had a fight... But I think we will work it out. We always did." she informed him.

"What was it about?"

"None of your business, really." she rolled her eyes.

"Be careful of her... Okay? I think she will help you gain your memory... But I don't trust her." Mason warned her.

She rolled her eyes, "I can tell the two of you don't get along... But that can change, right?"

"Don't bet on it."

Lesedi wanted to talk about something else. Well she wanted to do something else...

"Mason..." she shifted closer to him. God he smelled incredible, she enjoyed his scent and there was no need to lie, the man was a definite eye candy.

"Talk to me."

"I... uhm... I need you to help me... remember us..." her tone was breathier and more sensual. Her eyes dropped, and she batted her long lashes at him.

He was not an idiot; he could see she was flirting with him. Part of him wanted to get excited that he'd have his firecracker back... but part of him didn't want to rush anything.

"Uhh... how do you propose I do that?" He asked... very unsure of himself.

"I mean... we have sex right?" She asked.

"Sure... we used to... a lot..." he smirked.

"When you say a lot...?"

"I mean a lot." He continued to smirk at her scowling face. Goddamn that chin dimple that he loved so much.

She opened her mouth, "well... uhm... so maybe we can do... a little bit of that?" She asked, unsure of herself too.

"No." Mason deadpanned.

"No?" Lesedi felt rejected, "what do you mean no?"

"I mean no, I won't have sex with you." He clarified. "Look, just the other day you kicked me out of here because you couldn't remember us. Today you go on lunch with your best friend and you come back and want to have sex with me? No."

Lesedi gasped in rejection, "I can't believe this. I, you're just... I, wow... I don't even know what to say." She stood up from the couch.

Mason looked at her... then closed his PC, pocketed his phone, grabbed his stuff, stood up and walked over to her. His height was so perfect to her frame. She looked up at him, those green eyes...

With his free hand, he grabbed her chin, then gently planted his lips on hers.

She closed her eyes and sighed.

Then as soon as that happened, he pulled back. "I am only going to fuck you and kiss you, when you remember me." Then he walked to the door and opened it, "and stop going outside will you, we don't know if you won't be attacked again." Then he walked out.

She touched her lips and looked at the now closed door where he had just exited.

"Yoh!" She exclaimed.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Mason knocked on Lesedi's door, a couple of days later since their last incident. Lesedi had asked him to come down, she texted that she needed him.

She opened the door wearing black pyjama shorts and a sports bra.

"What's wrong?" Mason asked first thing he came face to face with her.

Worry instantly filling his system.

"My wound... it's changing colour. It's a little painful than normal." She told him. Truth was, she was scared as fuck. She has been cleaning her wound herself... and it was turning green.

Mason took her hand and led her to the barstool in the kitchen so he could have a better look. "This wouldn't be happening if you weren't so stubborn and let me do it." He grunted.

Lesedi sighed, "I don't know you."

"Mhm and yet you wanted to know my dick just the other day." Mason retorted.

She opened her mouth, but she chose against it. She felt him poke around her wound and she flinched and moaned in pain, "that hurts. It hurt all night." She had tears in her eyes.

Mason looked up in her eyes, "Okay, alright, let's take you the doctor then."

Soon as they arrived at the hospital, Lesedi was admitted and Mason was standing outside, feeling like crap. Ever since the whole ordeal he's been feeling withdrawn. He has been beating himself up every single day.

And now this, his girl was in pain, once again, because of his carelessness. And he still couldn't find the damn bastard that shot her. He had gone up to check the hotel the other day and Gregory has been doing a great job that Mason couldn't stop singing him praises, however Gregory needed an assistant, but Mason remembered that Lesedi once mentioned hiring Mbali to assist there... so he just needed to wait until all this was over before he could make any decisions.

The hotel belonged to Lesedi. She'd have to make all those decisions.

"Mr Pierce, you can go in." The nurse that had been in Lesedi's room told him with a polite smile.

He sighed and walked into the room. "Hey...what did they say?"

"Hey... she said I am healing, just a little infection, she cleaned me up and the doctor will see me soon." She smiled.

"That's great baby." He said to her, when he called her *baby*, she looked up but as soon as she their eyes locked, she looked away.

"Yeah... uhm... Zuki has been calling, every hour, and she told me that I helped you steal a hotel." She told Mason.

"I don't think that's the kind of conversation we should have in public..." he answered, warily looking at the door.

"Okay... I thought you'd say she's kidding... but damn it..."

"Also, it's yours... it's your hotel now."

"Really? I don't believe you." She was holding her phone in her hand, playing with it. She couldn't look him in the eye. His eyes were talking to her, they were saying something, something she felt like she wouldn't be able to handle.

"Look I don't know what to say to you, I can give you the contract... hell we need to do the handover anyway... I mean I did it for you." He said, he hoped that if he did whatever she wanted, whatever she requested, something will trigger her memory.

"Why? Why did we have to steal it... especially from Zuki's brother-in-law?"

"One day, your memory will come back, and you will know why. All I know is that you wanted revenge and I happened to just be the right guy to partner with... and we didn't know he was Zuki's brother-in-law until recently."

Lesedi looked at him, "so are you going to give me the contract today?"

"I want to... But how do I know that you won't give it to Zuki? You two have been plotting for a while now and it's making me worry. We did this for you..."

Lesedi sighed, she played with her phone without looking up at Mason, "I won't. I am not stupid. But if it's mine... It should be in my name right? I should have the contract."

Mason rolled his bottom lip in his mouth, he sighed, "you're in the hospital again, you're in pain..."

"Mace... Mason, are we doing the handover today?"

"If you insist." He flicked his nose. Something he did when irritated.

Lesedi nodded, "I do. I do want to do it today. And I want you to take me to the hotel to see it."

Mason groaned, "I am giving you the hotel today, but you aren't going anywhere near it..."

And just like that, after the doctor's visit, Lesedi found herself signing on the dotted line that now Asante Paradise belonged to her.

Mason had contacted his lawyer to draw up the papers and found out they were already drawn and just waiting for them to say the word. So he had them with.

"Hey... uhm... are you okay?" Lesedi asked Mason once she packed the contract in the black envelope.

Mason nodded; his jaw locked. "I need this to be fucking over. I fucked up and I need this to be over without anyone getting hurt." Mason stood up. They were at Lesedi's place and Mason has just been on the edge.

"Hey..."

"No, no... it is my fault you got shot in the first place. Your fucking wound is turning green, you're in constant pain and I can't bear to look at you, I can't bring myself to touch you, I am unable to do this... I am fucking.... I just... I am going to go... and hope to God that this, this is it."

Then he walked out. Lesedi was dumbfounded. She didn't know what to say. Mason was just going off the rails and she didn't know what to fucking say. She didn't even understand what he was rambling about, he made no sense.

Her life was just hectic.

She snapped out of her trance when her phone rang on the table. It was Zuki. This woman was driving her up the wall. Just the sound of her voice was enough to make her want to take her braids out.

"Hi." She answered.

"Hey... you got the contract finally." Zuki sounded happy.

"Uhh, how did you know that Zuki?" Lesedi asked, "are you... wait a damn minute, did you plant listening devices on me?" Lesedi asked.

"Shit, fuck, I am sorry, you weren't supposed to know that but yes I bugged your phone and your place but all because I wanted to see if you're making progress. It took you fucking long though." Zuki responded.

"I can't believe this. I thought you trusted me."

"I did, I mean to a point. And it sounded like your boyfriend is leaving you there, are you two okay?" Zuki sounded too fucking happy for Lesedi's liking.

"I don't remember him, so whether we break up or not, doesn't fucking matter now does it? Can we meet so I can give this back? I want to start my life again; I want to try and work my memory back... so I need this gone from my hands."

"I am putting on my shoes and on my way to you." Zuki then cut the call.

Lesedi looked at her phone and chuckled in disbelief. Zuki damn bugged her? Just wow.

Tracy called while Lesedi was waiting for Zuki. "Mohau... I am okay, it was just a little infection." That's how Lesedi answered her phone. Tracy has been going all 'mom' on her through the day and she was enough of it.

"Hey... I know, I know... I am not calling about that. You made it clear on my third call that you'd block me if I called one more time."

Lesedi giggled but regretted that because her fucking wound still hurt. To this day she couldn't believe that she got shot.

"What's up?" Lesedi asked her little sister.

"I was thinking of driving down to see mama and Sofia? I called them and she sounds so great, I want to see her..." Tracy sounded so happy.

"Mhm, no, after what you told me, I don't want to worry mama about me being shot. I don't think that's a good idea." Lesedi shot down the idea.

"Oh yeah. I didn't think of that. Okay, I am going to be out of your hair... but I need to see you, how is Zuki been with you? Has she been hustling you? Did she trigger any memories?" Tracy asked, hoping for good news at least. A flicker of light maybe in Lesedi's forgotten twenty years of life.

"Nothing really, look uhm, I need to go, I will call you later before I sleep..."

Tracy giggled, "Okay, Kyle and I can come and have dinner by your place?"

"No, no... not tonight, that's not a good idea." Lesedi shot that down too.

"Oh... uhm okay... uhh just call me later then."

"I will, I will call you before I sleep, like I do every night as if I am your girlfriend."

Tracy giggled happily, she really enjoyed riling her sister up. She figured if she kept annoying her, she will get her memories back.

A moment after the phone call, Zuki arrived at the palace. She was beaming. "Okay, I could hug you right now. Is that it?" She smiled looking at the black envelope on Lesedi's kitchen counter.

Lesedi looked at the envelope and smiled, "It is. I mean this is all of it. The hotel is now mine and if you take this... then the hotel belongs to you. It will be as if it never left." She pushed the envelope towards Zuki. "I don't know what happened that led me to doing what I did, but it almost cost my life, so you can have your hotel back."

Zuki grabbed the envelope, opened it, and peeked inside. "You've always been a good friend." Zuki went in for a hug, but Lesedi stopped her.

"My wound is acting up. It hurts."

"I am sorry. Look, this is great, and I appreciate you doing the right thing. I can't stay, I need to take this back to my sister."

"I understand, uhm call me later?" Lesedi suggested.

"I will, take care." Zuki couldn't contain her excitement. She was far too excited that she slammed Lesedi's door too hard, causing Lesedi to jump out of her seat a little.

She sighed looking at the closed door.

* *

Mason was chilling in his apartment and having drinks with Milo. Their laptops were fired on as they were always working on something.

"Your whiskey collection is insane!" Milo commented, "this is some good shit and I am not even a whiskey person."

"I got the bottle from my dad. He brought this earlier after he shitted on me the time he came to the hospital." Mason informed Milo.

"Oh yeah, he's the only one that can tell you shit isn't it?" Milo got a kick out of being a nuisance.

Mason chuckled, "and firecracker."

"Don't I know that, even when she can't remember you, she still gives you hell!"

The two men laughed their asses off until Mason got a beep from his PC.

"We got a move..." Milo was the one closest to the PCs that were on the coffee table, so he took a read at the screen. "We fucking got a move." Milo's face lit up.

"Yeah? Where is it headed to?" Mason asked, checking the screen on his PC.

"Singo's house. I am telling you boss-man, you're a fucking G!" Milo grinned, "I didn't know we can fucking put a tracker on an envelope."

Mason winked, "I am a man of great talents baby!" Mason cheered, he stood up and went to refill their drinks.

"Can we hear anything said by these people once the envelope reaches them?" Milo asked as he accepted the glass. He was singing Mason praises.

Mason chuckled, "Hey... I am genius but not that kind of genius. I will look into developing something like that though, you know for the future."

"I can't believe Lesedi gave the hotel back so quickly! What the fuck is wrong with her? Imagine if you didn't know what Zuki was up to." Milo commented.

"Hey man... Let's not even go there... At least we are containing the situation." Mason piped in.

Milo nodded, "Okay it's cool. So if we can't hear what they are saying... Let's just hope they will go see the man with the contract. I mean it's still early in the day, they could get too excited and do that."

"Oh, they will... When Zuki bugged Lesedi I bugged her right back. Zakes told them as soon as they get the contract, they should bring it to him. Which is why I had this idea of encrypting the envelope. They are definitely going to visit him. I just hope they take the envelope with. And if they want this hotel sooner... Then they will hurry up and get to him. We just have to wait."

And just as Mason planned, the envelope that Zuki picked up from Lesedi was on the move from Singo's mansion.

"Let's go boss man." Milo packed up their PC's and picked up his car keys. "Let's hope they are not going to a lawyer or some shit like that."

They followed the envelope and it led them right to Soshanguve. They were not alone, they had contacted the other rough riders they usually worked with because one way or another, Mason had to find Zakes and deal with him.

The minute they arrived in the vicinity; it was already dark outside. They scouted the area first and made sure it wasn't busy, no eyewitnesses around.

It was Zama who drove all the way by herself in her black Mercedes Benz which she parked next door and walked with the envelope in her purse to the small four roomed house.

"We need to check how many people are in the house before you go in. Let me get one of the guys to pose as lost and looking for direction." Milo suggested to Mason. The said guy went inside, pretended to have seen the lady walk in and needed directions.

He came back to report, "Two men and one lady inside boss. They are all in the lounge." The guy then walked away.

Mason took a deep breath in, wore black gloves, and put two guns behind his back.

"Cover me." He said to Milo before he walked to the house. With two knocks on the door, the unknown man in the house opened the door to find Mason by the door.

"Uhh can I help you?" The old guy, reeking of cheap alcohol asked, sizing Mason up and down. Mason was tall and broad; he stood no chance.

Mason smirked, "yeah... I am looking for Zakes." In a flash he had a gun pointed to the guy's head, with one of his arms twisted behind his back.

He walked into the house to find Zama and Zakes kissing. He cleared his throat. "Mhm, you have no shame at all Zakes, do you? That is your brother's wife." Mason asked.

Zakes and Zama's heads whipped to the new voice in the room and had the shock of their lives. Zama was both shocked and scared at the gun being pointed at her cousin's head.

Zakes looked pissed. Well, he should be pissed as he was unarmed. He tried to move but Mason clicked the safety off his gun, "One wrong move and I will blow this motherfucker's brains off. And I am not bluffing." He warned him.

To say Zama's cousin was scared when he heard the click of the gun was an understatement, the man peed on himself immediately.

Milo and gang entered the house and tied Zama and her cousin up, dragged them to the kitchen and kept an eye on them.

"You think you can shoot my girl and live to tell the story?" Mason asked as he landed a punch to Zakes. He didn't tie the man up; he wanted a fair fight.

"You have got some bloody nerve Pierce. That is my brother's hotel." Zakes threw a punch back. "We worked too damn hard for that, you piece of shit. You think you can bring your white boy ass in our business, and we let it slide?"

Mason dodged the next punch, rolled his fist, and sent Zakes into the wall. Fighting him was like fighting an eighteen-year-old inexperienced boy. Zakes punched like a little boy.

"Your fucking brother is a fucking rapist, he raped my girl and had the fucking nerve to go wipe his memory!" By now Mason was seeing red. Zakes wasn't sorry, hell he was like Mateo. They were cut from the same cloth, hell they suckled the same fucking breast.

"And you motherfucker think you can kill her? You think you can put a bullet to her fucking stomach, and I let it slide?" The Pierce man was seething.

Mason kicked Zakes hard on his stomach and he crashed into the wall, Mason didn't want to talk anymore, well not with his mouth, his fists will do the damn job for him.

He punched Zakes repeatedly on his face, his jaw locking with every delivery. The man was now bloodied and spitting out blood on the floor. He couldn't even defend himself anymore.

Mason beat him to a pulp until Zakes was all but a twitching mess on the floor. "I get that Singo raped my girl and he's still going to get a piece of me... but you, you shot her..." now he started kicking the dying dog.

"Okay, okay, okay, okay.. You got him." Milo walked in the room to find blood everywhere on the walls and on the already dirty couches in the living room. The glass coffee table was broken into pieces and Zakes was barely breathing. "I think he's dying..." Milo commented as he pulled Mason away.

Mason looked at Zakes, he drew his gun from his back and one bullet to the head, he ended Zakes's life.

"Shit!" Milo cursed as he shut his eyes and looked away.

"Clean that up." Mason instructed before he walked into the kitchen to find Zama silently crying.

"I am going to let you go, but if you try to come at me, even sideways, I will kill you, I will wipe your entire family off the face of earth." Mason threatened her. "Do you understand me?"

Zama quickly nodded. She had no choice. This was a new territory for her. She wanted out of it. Clearly they all underestimated this man's wrath.

"How... how did you find us?" She asked. She just needed to know, no one knew to come searching in this dead side of the world.

Mason chuckled, "Don't worry your pretty little head about that. Go home to your kids... and if you involve the cops in this, Zama, I will start off with those twin boys you love so much."

"And you... you will more than pee on your fucking self if you dare open that mouth. I am not in the mood of -" Mason didn't even finish his words as a bullet went through the man's head. It was Ginger with his gun. Zama screamed in terror but one of the guys slapped his hand over her mouth to keep her quiet. They didn't need to attract the neighbors. Their guns all had silencers.

Mason whipped his head in Ginger's direction. "One loose end to deal with is better than two. I don't trust him, he had nothing to lose... but she does." Ginger explained. He had followed them to the area and had just arrived when he heard Mason speak in the kitchen.

Mason wanted to say something, but he fucking had no energy for that. He had just killed a person and he didn't want to lose his cool, so he walked out. The guys will deal with the mess, that he trusted them to do very well.

"Milo, you and God make sure everything is cleaned up. I am taking your car." Mason informed him on his way out, he picked up the envelope that was now covered in blood and the papers that Zama was showing to Zakes and walked to Milo's car then drove off.

Just when he arrived at his place, he took off the bloodied gloves and everything that transpired in the last two hours sank in.

He just killed a man.

Not only did he beat the man to a pulp, but he sent him back to his maker with a bullseye. A bullet between his fucking eyes.

The adrenaline wore off... and his heart crashed...

He just took a life...

He wished to cry, to let it out at least, but nothing... he was shocked that the love he had for Lesedi made him that way.

When she killed their father, he had no problems cleaning it up because he understood why she did it.

But now... he did it, the one thing he never wanted to do, kill, he did it. He killed... for her.

"Fuck!"

**

Following day, news of Zachariah Singo's body being found were splashed all over the news and Lesedi caught them just in time.

Zuki had been blowing her phone the whole morning, security even called her to let her know Zuki Ndaba was at the reception causing chaos of which she didn't attend to.

She spent the whole day in her house and just when the sun had set, one of her bodyguards called her to let her know Mason has requested her presence.

She was told she needed to dress up for a celebration. Rummaging through her wardrobe, she decided to wear a black dress shirt, a little short but not too much, with long sleeved folded to the elbows and a pair of heeled ankle boots. She felt like being a little badass and sexy with her look.

She applied her makeup on and allowed the bodyguards to usher her to the awaiting vehicle. She was surprised Mason wasn't at his place but somewhere else.

She was led to an exclusive night club in Johannesburg but to the rooftop. The city lights were illuminating the area, the music from the bar below was audible but not enough to penetrate through the night.

She saw Mason and a group of men sitting around the couches and eating, having drinks while sharing hearty laughs in between. She was the only woman.

When she approached, the bodyguards remained far but close enough to protect her against anything. They were hired solely to protect her, even against Mason if there ever is a need, and he was the one paying them.

Mason stood up as she approached, he watched her in awe as she walked towards them. He was sitting with Milo and Ginger around a table, sharing some good, club expensive bottle of whiskey.

Milo and Ginger watched Lesedi approach too. The girl felt like their family. They were protective of her, even when she was older than them, and she whipped ass, they still felt the need to protect her.

"Ladies and gentlemen..." Mason hooted as Lesedi strutted towards him, "the award for best oh no - outstanding actress in forgetting twenty years of memories goes to...."

"Lesedi Phiri!!!" Milo hooted as he stood next to Mason, followed by Ginger. The rest of the guys who were loitering around turned to look at their bosses go crazy over the girl.

Lesedi grinned and threw her arms around Mason's neck.

"Hey baby!!" Mason hugged her back, kissing her neck in the process. "God I missed you."

Lesedi pulled back to look at him, she still had her arms around his neck, the other men were long forgotten... "shut up and fucking kiss me."

Everyone cheered as Lesedi and Mason got lost in the kiss. They kissed each other like they hadn't seen each other in a year. They kissed each other with passion.

"Okay! Okay!" Milo pulled the two apart, but Mason had a tight grip around Lesedi's waist. They pulled back to look at the guys, grins on their faces. "Now you know the other girls will come after an hour don't make me jealous now." Milo mumbled.

"Other girls?" Lesedi asked.

"Yeah, we got a lot celebrate and I ain't going home alone boo." Milo winked then sat back down, Ginger following suit.

Lesedi and Mason also sat on the couch facing Milo and Ginger. "It's over?" Lesedi asked with a smile.

"It's over baby. We did it." Mason filled a glass with champagne. "Champagne?"

"Mhm-mhm... I'm still taking my antibiotics..."

"It's non-alcoholic." He winked. Lesedi accepted the glass and they all toasted to a mission complete, mission successful.

"To a successful mission, a crazy fucking successful mission!" Ginger proposed the toast.

"A mission that almost killed me..." Lesedi blurted out...

"Sorry about that Les, but you made it. You're a tough one." Ginger complemented her.

Milo was drinking beer, even though he liked whiskey, when he was at a damn club, he was going to drink beer, from a bottle. None of these glass stuff. It was too bougee for him.

"I gotta know though... how in the hell did you two manage to pull this motherfucking amnesia off?" Milo asked, leaning back on the couch. He was dressed in black jeans and a white golf-shirt. He looked very casual but very cute.

"Also, when did you decide to do that because we just found out today, *today*... that it was all a fucking act." Ginger added. He was a little on the hippy side. He was a big man that dressed well, with his favourite Timberland boots. He owned about thirty pairs of those...

Lesedi smiled and looked at Mason, God she missed him. She missed his kisses and his hugs, and his warm embrace in bed at night. Zuki made it impossible for them to steal moments cause she bugged her place and her phone. They couldn't risk anything.

"I mean should I do the honours?" Mason asked, he hasn't removed his arm around her ever since. He missed touching her however she wished, and however he wished.

"Take it away..." she smiled.

She was glad to be back into the real world and not stuck twenty years into history.

They drifted back to the time Lesedi was still in hospital, right after surgery.

It was Wednesday night when Mason had threatened anyone who tried to stop him from seeing Lesedi that they let him in to see her.

He sat quietly in her room, just listening to the beeping sounds of the machine, and watching her chest rise and fall.

Her braids were sprawled all over the pillows and she just looked so peaceful, like she didn't just survive a fucking gun shot, to the abdomen no less.

Feisty little thing, he had to give it to her.

As he sat there, he received a call from his father, he was outside. Mason found out big-mouth-Kyle told their father his girl was shot and in the hospital. In Kyle's defence, Tracy opened her mouth first.

So, David Pierce made his presence known.

"Pops..." Mason found his dad chilling in the waiting room, it was deserted save for Milo sitting in the backseat, waiting for Mason.

"Mason fucking Pierce... you got a girl shot?" David was pissed. The old man was still highly active, and Mason didn't want to step any closer to him. He might just get punched by his father for the first time in his life.

"Uhh..."

"I told you that your fucking job is ridiculously dangerous, and now you got Tracy's sister in it? And she almost got killed? You do realize Mason that she could have died, right?" To say David was livid was an understatement. Mason had nothing to say, to save himself.

"Dad..."

"Don't dad me!"

"We are gaining attention..." Mason said in a low tone. They were hardly gaining any attention. He just wanted his father to stop kicking his balls with words.

David dragged Mason back into Lesedi's room and found her just as she was about to wake up. Mason's heart accelerated as he took her eyes in. She looked so gorgeous and yet tired.

"Hey baby..." Mason walked over to her. "Baby! You're awake!" He kissed her forehead lingering for a good thirty seconds before he pulled back.

"*Baby?* This, this is the woman you were telling me about? The woman you love?" David asked. He chuckled in disbelief, "you put the woman you love on the firing line Mason?"

Lesedi was waking up for the second time that day, so she looked at David and then back at Mason. "Hello..." she whispered. "Can I please have some water?" Her voice was groggy, she'd had been out of the real world in forever.

"Sure baby." Mason made quick work of pouring the water in a glass and helping her drink. After a while, David asked the two to fucking tell him what was going on... so Mason had no choice but to spill all the beans.

"Okay... so this was a revenge for you... you were happy to get in the middle of it... what if you had died? Do you understand what this could have done to your family? To my family? Godamn it, you two are fucking reckless and now you have a killer on the loose baying for your blood!"

Mason and Lesedi didn't have time to even reconnect again, or to at least find out how Lesedi felt, David was hearing none of it. He hated this part of Mason's job.

"I don't think you two understand what this means... I could have been called to come and identify a body, your mother could have been called and told that she had lost her child. Did the two of you just ever stop to think 'hey, we have families, this is dangerous' or it's all fun and games?"

Lesedi chewed on her bottom lip. Damn she's never had a person scold her this hard. She wanted to cry. All she wanted was for Mason to wrap his arms around her and kiss her, but David Pierce was raining on their parade.

"I'm sorry Mr Pierce... we are sorry." Lesedi apologized, catching a lone tear that escaped her eye.

"I am not the bad guy here. I can't lose my kids. I am not ready for that. I don't want to be ready for that, and I don't want to go through that. Mason loves you; I know he does, had something happened to you, I would have lost him... so you need to finish this." David told them.

"What do you mean?" Mason asked.

"I mean Mason, finish what you started. Make sure that the person who is out for your blood is dealt with. I won't lose my son because of his crazy stupid missions. And this better be the last time you pull some crazy shit like this Mason, or I swear to God, I will kill you myself." David deadpanned.

"I can't find Zakes, the person who did this, I have the best PI in the game looking for him but whatever hole he disappeared into, he's not getting out of it." Mason explained.

Lesedi shifted a little, concern coloured on her face.

"Are you scared?" David asked Lesedi. She looked at Mason then at David, she nodded. Rolling her bottom lip in her mouth.

Good lord, she woke up to a scolding. She couldn't believe this.

"Well, you should be, this Zakes man could be planning how to get to the two of you by going after your family. Greyson and Loraine are fucking expecting a child soon. I don't want them caught in the cross fire. Fix this Mason." David said again. "Find that Zakes guy, lure him out of his damn hole and finish this."

David walked over to Lesedi and patted her hand gently, "when this is all over... the two of you better re-evaluate your lives. We can't live like this." Then the man looked at his first-born son and walked out without another word.

"Geez, your father is hectic." Lesedi commented soon as the door closed.

"I know. But how are you baby? How is the pain?" Mason asked.

"Bearable. They dosed me with some pain meds earlier on... I just woke up now when I heard the door close. Kinda little scared to sleep." Lesedi told him.

"It was me... I was sitting in here, watching you when my hectic father arrived." Mason mentioned. "I'm sorry about that. He just... I guess he just cares. And I have security outside, so you're safe."

Lesedi passed a weak smile, "he's right though, we need to lure Zakes out of his hiding hole. We need to deal with him, if you can't take him out, I will." And she meant it. If there was anything this woman wasn't afraid of, was to fucking gut a person.

Mason looked at Lesedi, he moved away from her side, pulled a chair, and sat at the foot of the bed, facing her.

"How do we lure him out? I have exhausted all options..."

Lesedi sighed, they sat quietly for the longest time when an idea struck her. "I know how..."

Mason's interest was perked, he looked up at her, encouraging her to go on...

"I fake a memory loss... we use that to bring Zuki back into my life, I lie about not remembering why we fought, why we aren't friends, make her believe we can be friends again, chill together again... she might lead us to Zakes." Lesedi informed Mason of her bright idea.

Mason's eyes narrowed, "mhm... okay but what are we offering her? You can't just say you don't remember and expect her to invite you to her home and you go searching all the rooms for Zakes."

Lesedi bit her bottom lip, "Mhm we just need to think of something, but this will work. It will buy us time... and if I act right, and act like we never fought, act like I had no idea what she did to me... we might get something."

Mason stood up and paced up and down the room, thinking about what Lesedi was suggesting...

"I got it... yes, memory loss... okay, you and I will have a fallout... I won't go crazy on Zuki, I will keep my mouth shut like I know nothing about her, make her tell you why the two of you fell out, make her believe that you don't remember me and don't believe you and I are a couple... make her talk about the hotel... and then tell her you will give it back because it almost cost your life."

"Which is true, it almost cost my life... then that way... okay... uhm so are we going to give it back? Because no way in hell did I survive a gunshot to be giving back the damn hotel." Lesedi needed Mason to know she was not letting go of the hotel.

Mason chuckled, "Nah. We aren't giving it back... but we are going to fake it. I will have Milo's crooked lawyer cook up some shit, have a clause in there that only Zakes should sign before the hotel fully belongs to Singo's wife."

"Okay... but you're forgetting something, Zakes is a Singo... and the hotel belongs to Mateo Molao. So, correlation? Why does Zakes have to sign anything?" Lesedi asked.

"Good point... at this point I am just hoping they will be stupid not to notice this. Because this is our last resort. If you could convince Zuki that you want your life back away from the drama, they'd be happy to have Zakes sign

this off as Mateo's second in command. I doubt they know all the ins and outs of Mateo's business."

"That's dangerous. They might not buy it. If they are in contact with Zakes, he'd tell them we are playing them." Lesedi told him.

"Okay... Alright let's think this through..." Mason paces down the floor. "Okay also, you were shot on the abdomen... Amnesia? It has to be something that sticks."

"When you told me Mateo was hypnotized... I searched about such things... And there are different types of amnesia... Give me your phone..."

Mason quickly passed her his phone and she went online, "See these... There is dissociative amnesia... This is caused by trauma. Not really a blunt force trauma. I've went through hell that messed with my head, I got shot recently and that is trauma to my body... Ultimately my mind... It could stick if I play my cards right..." she showed him the Google Search results.

Mason's brow shot up, "I like that. Okay... Alright this can stick. It totally can stick. You went through surgery... That's traumatic enough as well. I'll bite... Now what do we offer Zuki?" He asked, since they have established the kind of amnesia they were going to sell.

Lesedi bit her bottom lip. God she hated Zuki. All she did was drug her, let a man have unconsented sex with her, and Lesedi's life was ruined.

Now Lesedi was going to play budde-buddy with her? She hoped to God, she'd be able to do it. Because all she wanted to do to that woman is kill her. Gut her like a fucking fish.

"Okay... You and Zuki... Friends again, I act like I don't know why the two of you fell out, let her be around you with hopes that she will trigger your

memory. Then I bug her... If I can listen to her, follow her... One way or another... We will find Zakes." mason mentioned.

"And now that Singo is arrested... He is arrested right?"

Mason nodded, "yeah he is. Zakes managed to slip away from the cops before they could arrest him as well." he informed her.

"Alright... Now that Singo is in jail... Zakes might want to lay low a bit. So if I work on Zuki... And she tells him I have lost my memory, they will try to convince me to give back the hotel... And then we will take it from there. You can bug her still and we watch the show..."

"Brilliant! That will work. If I can bug her, ultimately I can bug the sister too, who's having an affair with Zakes... One them will lead us to Zakes. If they try to get the hotel out of your hands... I will work on something that will definitely get us to Zakes."

Lesedi mulled over their plan, "Okay... Okay.... Baby if we are going to do this... then from tonight on... I don't know you... I don't know anything about you, I know nothing about the last twenty years of my life. Now Mace... I am going to go all out... hugging Zuki, hanging with her...and being a total bitch to you..."

Mason looked at her... "Let's do it. I will be the caring boyfriend still, terribly upset that you can't remember me... and the other stuff, I will just learn and do on the way." He said.

"Okay... and Tracy? Do we tell her? She's pregnant and I don't want to stress her."

"We can't tell anyone, this is between me and you, and if we are going to sell this memory loss thing? Then we have to use her to set it in motion..."

"This is our last chance at shutting this down..." Lesedi reminded him.

"This is our best chance... I am really hoping those two women aren't smart. Because if they are... I don't even want to say... What I will do is... I will beef security around us in the meantime." Mason promised.

And just like that, that's how their plan came out. It kept on changing as they went. They had promised to steal some nights to be together but then Zuki bugged her phone and her place, Mason found out the day she had gone to have lunch with Zuki and typed on his laptop for her to read that her phone and place were bugged. She almost, just almost stepped out of character on that day...

So they had to improvise and stop trying to kiss each other or be happy together.

"Wow, so you two planned this while I was sitting outside, playing security guard?" Milo asked.

"Yes, David told us to finish this, or he'd kill Mason..." Lesedi said beaming. She was so glad that this was all over. But she hadn't had time to talk to Mason about what happened to Zakes.

"And none of you ever slipped up?" Milo asked, very intrigued.

Lesedi giggled, "please I called Mason 'Mace', imagine that. I had to quickly get hold of myself... And Zuki didn't realize when we were having lunch I said she always wanted to sleep with men to get what she wanted. When we were twenty she wasn't that kind of a girl. She just didn't think much into it." Lesedi informed them.

"I almost told Tracy the truth..." Mason confessed. "I bit my tongue hard that day, fuck." he chuckled.

"Me too, the only way we could do this was to limit access from other people. I kept Tracy away cause I knew at some point I'd crack and we'd lose... It was fucking hard man." Lesedi added.

"And there I was calling you all sorts of names in my head cause I couldn't understand why you signed the hotel so fast." Milo admitted.

Lesedi and Mason laughed, "Dude it was hard! Zuki was just too self-absorbed to be suspicious. I mean there are things she did that I let slide. I didn't question her a lot when she ordered me around... She just never thought about it. She was so self-absorbed that it actually worked in my favour. We were really just trying out luck and improvising as we went and she made things easier for us..." Lesedi opened up. She felt right at home with Mason's team. She knew these men would put themselves in the firing line to protect her.

"The clever part on her side was the bugs. That actually was smart if she wasn't dealing with The Lord." Ginger chirped in.

"Let's not even mention how we couldn't kiss or do anything because of those damn bugs... And I was dying to tell Mason how much I hated that girl yoh! I was dying! But I told myself... If I could face my rapist head on... Zuki was nothing. It gave me joy to see her try to play me..." she wore a proud smirk. She really knew how to play the long game of revenge. And she did it so well!!

"Not knowing she was being played, damn y'all are fucking good!" Milo was in disbelief! He was stunned and excited at the same time. He loved his job! He loved working with Mason even more.

"You two are like Bonnie & Clyde of Joburg, huh?!" Ginger said to them, "the two of you combined, make a lethal combo. I like, I like that a lot."

Milo agreed with him.

"Nah G... Not Bonnie and Clyde... Just The Lord and his firecracker." Mason cheesed, looked at Lesedi then kissed her on the lips. Lingering just a little to savour the moment.

Ginger and Milo hooted. They were totally invested in the pair's relationship. Totally invested. They couldn't stop grinning.

"I missed you, damn Zuki for bugging you, cause I couldn't even steal a kiss." Mason whispered to Lesedi as the other guys started talking to themselves.

"Well, I offered, and you said you will only do that when I remember you... I remember you now..." Lesedi spoke in a low flirty tone.

Mason's Adam's apple bopped up and down as he milked his girl in, "wanna go back home?" He asked, his voice husky and needy.

"Please..."

He didn't need to be told twice. He took her hand and looked at his men, "Fellas, it's been real, but we will talk. I'm taking my lady home." He winked when the guys hooted. Of course they knew the love birds were horny and dying to get their clothes off and have their way with each other.

Lesedi looked at them and flipped them the bird while laughing as she let Mason lead the way.

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"Mhm your wound is looking better than last week." Mason had finished cleaning Lesedi's now almost healed wound. She was no longer in pain, she just needed the wound to heal completely so Mason could stop faffing, not only

Mason but Tracy too, who by the way, was upset that Lesedi faked her memory loss.

It was a good thing the woman was pregnant so, Lesedi bribed her with food and a promise to supply her with designer maternity wear for when she was starting to show.

"Yeah... it needs to heal; I want to get my freak on." Lesedi smiled, their sex has been nothing but careful. Mason was very gentle and all... and she missed his powerful strokes that made her voice stay locked in a box while her mouth would be wide open.

Mason looked at her and shook his head.

"What's wrong Mason?" She asked, "don't give me that look, you've been...I don't know how to say it... but you're withdrawing." Lesedi was worried about this man. Even though he was careful when having sex with her, half the time he lived in his head.

They had just finished eating lunch at Lesedi's apartment and he was wearing nothing but his cargo pants.

"I have a lot on my mind... shit happened with Zakes, and I am having a hard time dealing with it." He admitted.

"What happened? What happened that night with Zakes? I know you don't like killing... so is that it?" She asked.

Mason looked at her as he packed away her meds in the bag, "It's nothing, but there is something we need to address so all of this can be put to bed."

"The hotel?"

"No, Singo...Zuki..." Mason looked into her eyes, "someone is out there, baying for your blood."

"Oh, I plan on visiting Zuki. I am going to beat her ass black and blue; you don't have to worry about that." Lesedi assured him that she planned to decisively deal with her drink-spiking ex-best-friend.

Mason chuckled, "Don't make me clean another murder, I already have difficulties sleeping as it is. I'm talking about going to see Singo in prison. G tracked down Aurora, and I paid a couple of bucks to the wardens at Leeuwkop prison where Singo is detained... and he has his memory back."

Lesedi looked at Mason. He wasn't joking, of course he wasn't joking, he wouldn't joke about that.

She thought about how the man would look when he learns she stole his hotel... suddenly she wasn't so terrified, and tongue tied anymore.

"What do you think I should wear when I go to see him?" She asked.

Mason shook his head, smiling as he put away her medical bag. "Whatever you feel sexy in. I just have to go see my lawyer and we finalize the hotel business so we can pay Gregory a visit. At the end of this, I want you to fire him. He's good for the business, but I hate him."

They took turns showering and Mason drove Lesedi down to visit Mateo Molao.

The man had aged quick fast since he was arrested, beards covered his face, hiding his lips and wrinkles had formed underneath his eyes.

Mason walked in first. Seeing Singo's angry eyes pleased something in him. Even though he was feeling like crap for having killed Zakes, he still knew deep in his being that he did this for the woman he loved.

"You son of bitch! What do you want here?" If Singo could, he would choke Mason to death. "You cheated me of my hard work, of my blood and sweat! Is this how you get rich? By scamming people?" The man asked.

Mason sat down and smirked, "I know you won't believe this but... yes, yes that's how I get rich." Mason chuckled, "But I don't do it for my benefit. I am just a thief for hire." He shrugged.

"What the hell are you talking about? Who do you work for?" Singo asked.

"Oh, I work for various people... whoever hires me, and if I feel like they are well within reason, I accept the job and steal whatever they want me to steal, and they pay me a good amount of money." Mason explained. Oh, the joy he was feeling when he was telling Singo all of that. He had been anticipating this day for a long time. He hated what this man did to his girl.

Singo's eyes narrowed, "who hired you?"

Lesedi who was listening just outside the door walked in, "me." She answered for Mason.

Mason looked back at her and smiled as she strutted in. She was wearing black skinny jeans, a black vest and her favourite combat boots.

Singo took her in, her silky brown skin, she radiated like melting chocolate. Her chin dimple that deepened as she scowled. Her sexy frame... it was her... the girl he had sex with many years ago. The girl who tried to ruin his life, accusing him of rape.

The girl who Aurora had paid him a visit to only leave him reeling in memories of, and that unfateful night. He was left with memories of how he

loved his women dark. Aurora undid eight years of hypnotherapy and left him feeling raw and confused.

He had spent the whole week going almost crazy with thoughts of what happened that time.

But he consoled himself with the fact that it happened ten years ago, and it was not possible for the girl to still be trying to gun for him...

But how wrong he was. She was always there... she had been there all along, plotting against him, working for him...

"Remember me?" Lesedi asked, God she loathed him. She wanted to gauge his eyes out with a fork.

Singo kept quiet. "I didn't know what I was going to say to you, but just seeing the shock on your face brings me joy." She sat down next to Mason. "You took from me... and I took from you. And not only did I take from you, but I also sent you to jail for murder... payback is a bitch huh?" Lesedi giggled happily.

"You bloody bitch!" Mateo tried to reach for Lesedi over the table, but he had been cuffed to his chair. Mason had asked the guards to do that for him. It was no telling what prison skills the man could have picked up in the time he was detained.

"Hey now, control yourself buddy, that's my baby." Mason warned him.

Lesedi felt her stomach flip over Mason's protectiveness of her. She looked at him for a second and smiled.

"You know what? Seeing his face was enough for me... I am done here." Lesedi stood up.

"Oh one more thing..." she rolled her shoulders back, rolled a fist and punched him square on his nose.

"Fuck you little bitch!" he hissed, already feeling blood trickle out. The guard just reminded still. Mason paid him good money.

"I hope they rape you every single night in here... you think we can have that arranged baby?" Lesedi asked Mason.

"No, no, no, please... please no." Singo begged. His tune changed. He realized who was in charge now.

"I bet that's what she said before you raped her but that didn't stop you, did it?" Mason stood up and they walked out.

"Mason please!" Singo yelled after them, but the couple didn't even stop to entertain his pleas. "I am sorry!!" He continued screaming behind them.

"I want to deal with Zuki and then finish all of this. I don't ever want to see these people ever again in my life." Lesedi said to him when they reached his car.

"Hey... come here..." Mason opened his arms, and she went in. She hugged the hell out of him, her body shaking against him.

"Thank you baby... thank you for coming with me, for being there with me... I drew strength from you..." she admitted.

Mason kissed her forehead, "I wouldn't let you do this alone. Come on, let's go to the hotel to see if Mbali and Erica have settled in well." They had hired Erica and Mbali to be the hotel assistants and Gregory was not happy at all. But Mason threatened the hell out of him, so he is squared up now.

Samuel is back on the job and happy to be working for a new boss, even when Mason had threatened to slice off his balls if he messed up, he was still happy.

They walked through the hotel and the security guards, the receptionists and the doorman had already received the memo of the new boss in town, but still, Mason and Lesedi still introduced themselves to the staff, to let them know there was a new sheriff in town.

The two went to Mateo's old office, "Okay a lot needs to change in here... do we have money for office renovations? Because all of this here, needs to go." Lesedi said to Mason, Mbali and Gregory who followed her into her office.

"Samuel should know babe..." Mason chuckled, "Just let your assistants know what you need, and I am sure they can work something out."

"I need the paint changed, I need new furniture, sell all of these and bring me a new office. I need the stench of Lekau Singo or Mateo Molao whatever his name is gone forever from this hotel." She looked around and smiled at the people watching her.

Mason watched her amused, Mbali was impressed while Gregory still held some resentment.

"So, you working here, was all a plan to take over this hotel?" Gregory asked.

"Yes, anymore questions?" Lesedi quirked an eyebrow. "Listen Gregory, I already don't like you, but you know this hotel better than I do, so I need you, and I am gonna keep you. But if you come at me sideways, I will cut off your dick."

Mbali snorted, she was happy Lesedi saw value in her to appoint her as the assistant to this huge hotel. "And don't think she won't. There is a reason she wears boots even when it's hot." Mbali smiled at Gregory after sweetly saying that.

Mason chuckled, "You know her too well. Listen Greg, I know you can make this happen. Have Samuel look at the budget and fix this office. Everyone's office is getting a makeover. Love, run with it okay?" Mason said the last part to Mbali.

She nodded and walked out. Gregory followed suit after he brought Lesedi and Mason up to speed about what has been happening. Erica, the new recruit was at the now open restaurant of the hotel, running it to the best of her abilities.

Mason hired Erica, she came highly recommended, has a vast experience and she was going to replace Gregory when the time is right.

The two were left alone when the office phone rang, it was reception, Zuki Ndaba wanted to see Lesedi. She had been looking for her, checking on when she will go to the hotel and today was the day.

"Let her up. Thanks." Lesedi then hung up the phone.

"She's coming up..." Mason pulled her up and kissed her. His hands roamed all over her body and he felt her knife... "good girl, cause I'm gonna leave you to deal with it." He smiled.

"You little bitch!" Zuki charged in the office, gunning for Lesedi, "You set me up!" She screamed.

"Hey! Lower your fucking voice when you're talking to her." Mason shielded Lesedi with his body, "talk like a normal person."

Zuki was seething, "Get out of my way, white boy, this fight is between me and her!" Zuki was on fire. She could taste blood.

"Hey! You watch your fucking mouth! You're not gonna talk to him like that!" Lesedi defended Mason.

Mason liked that, he liked it a lot.

"What is this? Some Bonnie and Clyde shit? You think you can steal my sister's hotel and scare her into not talking about you killing Zakes?" Zuki was firing at her. "Over my dead body! You will bring this hotel back to us!"

Lesedi narrowed her eyes at the woman, "Baby please give me and this bitch a moment."

Mason looked at Lesedi, "Alright, don't drop a body though." Then Mason walked out.

Soon as the door closed, a slap went across Lesedi's face. She saw stars for a few seconds, she definitely wasn't expecting that.

"You tricked me! You tricked me into giving you Zakes like you haven't stolen from us in the first place." Another slap. This time Lesedi just let the woman do as she pleased. Zuki pushed her and she stumbled back.

"You are a bitch! A murderer! You probably even had my brother-in-law framed for murder so you could take his hotel!" Zuki kept going and going. Her anger not dissolving. It was as if she expected Lesedi to sign over the hotel as quick as she delivered the hot slaps and shoving her around.

"You pretended to be suffering memory loss so you can kill him! So, we don't have anyone to help us!" Another slap.

Lesedi began to laugh, "are you done?" Her voice had gone deep, her eyes had darkened with nothing but pure hatred for the woman standing before her.

In a blink of an eye, Zuki pulled a gun from the back of her trackpants, "You are going to give back the hotel or I swear to God, I will kill you!" Zuki threatened her.

Lesedi looked at the woman, she was shaking, she was angry and definitely bluffing.

"Well, you better shoot me right now because if I get that gun out of your hands, I am going to whoop your ass." Lesedi warned her.

But Zuki didn't listen.

"I am not bluffing; I will fucking scatter your brains all over this office!" Zuki spat angrily.

Lesedi swiftly kicked the gun out of Zuki's hands, caught with her hands, released the magazine and punch Zuki square in the face and send her crouching, before Zuki could even understand what the hell was going on, Lesedi kicked her stomach and sent her to the floor.

"You fucking drugged me." Lesedi spoke as she straddled the woman, Zuki's arms went under her knees, allowing Lesedi a chance to deliver crazy hot punches to the woman's face.

"You let a stranger fuck me because you wanted them to give us money!" Lesedi continued, each word carried by the punches. That time Zuki was screaming, trying to kick but Lesedi was awfully strong. Zuki didn't understand just where the smaller woman got her strength from. She also hit like a man. Zuki could swear her teeth were going to fall out.

"You let him rape me, you helped him forget it... and you took his money and skipped down you fucking bitch!" Lesedi was seething, "You were my best friend, my fucking sister, my fucking ride or die! And you let him do that to me. You let him rape me!" Hot tears fell freely from Lesedi's eyes.

God, when she hugged Zuki, pretending to be friends with her just to get to Zakes, this was all she could think of doing. Rearranging the woman's face. She hated the sound of her voice, her touch, the smell of her perfume, her stupid beautiful smile, her flawless skin... she hated her.

And she was doing a good job at showing her how much she hated her. Zuki was now bleeding from every hole on her face. And Lesedi wasn't stopping.

"You said you had my back, that we had each other's backs, but you fucking lied. You betrayed me, you fucking betrayed me in the worst way possible, and now you want to cry over some little hotel? You fucking bitch!"

She stood up and started kicking Zuki everywhere she possibly could. Then she took out her knife...Zuki could no longer see properly...but she was relieved when Lesedi stopped kicking and punching her. She was in so much pain.

A loud scream echoed thorough the office as Lesedi plunged into Zuki's side of the stomach, she didn't want to kill her, so she knew where to stab, enough to cause pain but not deep to cause death, "I have been beaten and shot at... all because you drugged me and helped a man rape me. This is the little I can do to you."

She finished. Mason rushed into the office when he heard Zuki scream and he was met by a bloody heap on the floor. Zuki was twitching and bleeding in the worst way possible.

Mason fished for his phone and called Ginger, "G my man, I am going to need a doctor... make that a fucking doctor, some couple of nurses and a damn hospital. Now!"

"You good baby?" he asked, looking at Lesedi who watched Zuki twitch on the floor with nothing but hatred in her eyes.

"Yeah, yeah I'm good."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Ginger dealt with the Zuki issue and the Punch issue. Lucas used his savings and went back home after he realized just how crazy and dangerous his niece has become. But his mother and Tapiwa were still living there in Soweto, Tracy found them a nurse that checked up on their grandmother regularly and sent groceries every two weeks.

Lesedi's wound healed and her office space changed. New paint on the walls, different, chick and classy furniture, new laptops for the team, new set of rules, new marketing agency, Samuel did not work alone, and he didn't have as much power over the finances as he did before... Erica was getting quiet good at her job and she knew that she will be taking over from Gregory, Mason and Lesedi made that known to her.

Besides the hotel, Gorgeous, the salon has also been extended, old furniture replaced, and the hairdressers were now more equipped to deal with all types of African hair. Mona was running the show now, but Victor was still overseeing things from time to time. He loved to do it and was happy that Mona was getting the recognition she deserved as the manager.

The hundred million they stole, over the time Mason managed to slowly but effectively send it to their business accounts and the hotel accounts.

He did it for her. He loved seeing the smile on her face, seeing the life in her eyes.

March came and went; they were now in April... Winter was approaching and so was Lesedi's birthday.

They were at Kyle and Tracy's house, for dinner and also to congratulate the couple with their additional member of the family. Finally, Tracy cracked and told Kyle.

Kyle was a happy man, he was over the moon, looking forward to becoming a father. Loraine and Greyson couldn't come as Loraine was due anytime now and they had limited movement. Just waiting for the day.

"Hey, I am sorry for the stuff I said about rangwane... it was uncalled for. You did what was necessary... I just, I was just afraid that you would become a criminal like them." Tracy apologized to her sister, Lesedi, as they dished up in serving bowls.

"It's okay man. But these people man... in order to defeat them, you have to stoop down to their level. People like you, wouldn't be able to do that, because you're softie and a good person."

Tracy sighed happily, "I try to be. Anyway, thank you, it was brave of you and that will serve rangwane well for trying to ruin our lives. You're also a good person, always have been."

Lesedi was glad her sister was cutting her some slack, but that didn't mean she'd tell her everything she's done, like having the chief of the police killed, or that she killed their father... the cherry on top. Even with the Zakes issue, she still lied and said they alerted the cops of where he was hiding, and unfortunately someone else had killed him.

Tracy bought the story because she couldn't picture Mason and Lesedi actually killing people or ordering people to kill for them. Just Lesedi and Mason's luck really that Tracy chose to believe that.

As for Kyle... He had his doubts, he has worked with Mason before, while he knew Mason wasn't too thrilled about killing, he knew it wasn't above him, especially if he had to do it to protect someone he loved. But would he hold that over him? Hell no. As long as Mason took care of himself, he was okay.

Lesedi and Tracy walked back to the dining room where Kyle and Mason were talking over whiskey. Those men loved their whiskey.

"I can't believe we have a hotel..." Tracy spoke up as they began to eat. They were sitting around the dining table, enjoying a feast Lesedi and Mason made for them. The two realized they loved cooking together. Mason had left Tracy and Lesedi to serve after he and Lesedi were done cooking so he could catch up with Kyle.

"Right? I can't either... but I love it. Did you see how much it made last month?" Lesedi asked her sister.

"Dude! We are rich, rich!" Tracy laughed. "I am thinking all of us should go on a vacation somewhere on the beach... sipping on some... arg I can't drink but whatever... just enjoying the beach... we deserve it." Tracy continued. Lesedi made her sister her business partner. So they both owned the hotel, and hired Tapiwa as a waitress at the hotel restaurant. Lesedi wasn't keen on that, but Tracy felt bad for their cousin, so she let it happen. Lesedi didn't fight it. She'd rip Tapiwa to shreds if she dared tried anything.

"I agree... a vacation sounds great, but I need to be returning to New York... I have shit load of work waiting for me there." Mason piped in.

Lesedi turned to look at him, she didn't know that... but he has always made it clear, at some point he had to go back to New York. She just wasn't ready to deal with that.

"You're leaving?" Kyle enquired. He honestly enjoyed having his big brother around. Even with their busy schedules, they still met up, had drinks, called each other often knowing they were all in the same province, it was nice.

"I mean yeah, Blake needs me... my company needs me... but it's not a done deal yet." Mason caught Lesedi's questioning eyes, so he didn't want to poke the bee's nest. They were having a beautiful dinner. He couldn't ruin that.

"Well, since the two of you aren't playing dangerous games for now... we should use this time to spend some time together. You should pop by Graymont and see how we are running things." Kyle said to him, "You too Lesedi, might give the two of you a new direction in life...instead of dodging bullets and whatnot."

Lesedi rolled her eyes but agreed she will do that. "Fine, we will come."

They had dinner and then left back to Mason's place. They had been spending time at Lesedi's place, so she figured a change of scenery was needed.

"So, when are you leaving for New York?" She asked as soon as Mason locked the door behind her.

"I don't want to talk to about that now..." he walked towards her, keeping eye contact.

His arms went around her waist, pulling her so her pelvis touched with his. She instantly wrapped her arms around his neck. "When will we talk about it?"

"When I am done loving you up baby... God, I missed this..." he said as he kissed her. He pecked her lips a couple of times, teasing her, softening her up and it worked.

"You know... I can't believe we pulled this off, I mean I trust my abilities and grew to trust yours... but I just didn't think that we'd do it. The minute I realized there was the chief of the police involved, I wanted to quit." He confessed.

"Me too... I really wanted to quit the first day I started working at the damn hotel. I wanted to just carry on being bitter and wishing death on Singo."

Mason kissed her; the kiss was more than just a peck this time. "I am proud of you. Yes, you're crazy, fucking impulsive, dangerous as hell... but you're smart, you're strong and I am proud of you."

Lesedi felt her heart accelerate and her body catching multiple degrees of heat, "you're going to make me cry man stop it."

Mason pulled her to the couch, "I mean it. And I am so glad our paths crossed because baby, you're such a fresh breath of air."

Lesedi blushed, all Mason could see was her cheek bones protruding as she blushed, "come on... stop it!" she giggled shyly.

"I love you."

If she wasn't already sitting down, she'd have fallen. His words carried so much weight, the sincerity in his eyes, how low and steady he spoke to her. He meant every word, that much she could tell.

"I never thanked you... Mason. You didn't have to do what you did, and I appreciate you for that. What you did for my family... I know your dad hates

what you do, but you gave us a lifeline. You gave us a chance to live. You gave Tracy a chance to live." Lesedi said to him.

He smiled, while they had gone to Kyle 's and Tracy's, Tracy thanked him as well. She gave him an expensive bottle of whiskey as a token of appreciation because she didn't know what else to get a multi-millionaire. He loved that... and now his girl was also appreciating him, he felt all warm and fuzzy inside.

"Thank you, I honestly don't know how to fucking thank you... I went from being bitter, being sad, lonely, almost going crazy, full of hatred in my heart...living in a dingy flat in Joburg, stuck in a salon I didn't want to be in... to owning a hotel, a salon... and smiling, laughing...while living in one of the luxurious apartments I have ever seen... and not only did that change... but I met an incredible man that protects and cares for me... how do I thank you?"

Mason smiled at her, wiped the tears that fell from her eyes, "I know how..." he said.

"How?" She wondered what the man had in his mind.

"Hold on..." he stood up with a nervous smile and went to his kitchen and opened one of the drawers and produced a white envelope.

"Come to New York with me." He said.

Lesedi opened the envelope, and it was her travelling documents. "Mace..." she didn't know what to say to him.

"Tomorrow, I got Blake's jet... You have people working for you now, there is no need for you to be hands on right now..."

Lesedi stood up from the couch, "Mason... you want me to go to New York with you tomorrow? *Tomorrow?*"

"Yes. I have no more serious ties to South Africa except for you right now. I need to get back to my job, my company...my life."

"What about my life? I am just starting to find my feet and you want me to drop everything? Mason this... tomorrow?"

Mason stood up, his eyes were burning with something, "Les come on, you can keep an eye on your businesses from New York, I will make it easy for you to do that, I promise you. And we will come back, as frequent as you want us to..."

Lesedi couldn't believe this.

"It's too soon." She told him.

"Too soon? I have been here for four months. Here for you and your sister, no complaints. I chose to be here for you, I chose to help you, I chose to stay... hell I have been living for you these past four months, I am just asking for something small. I am not saying move to New York, I am saying accompany me there for a while."

"I don't know Mason... New York is your home, not mine. You have friends there... cousins there... I have no one... I have nothing there."

"You have me! Baby, you have me... isn't that enough?" He asked. It was really time to go back to New York to take care of his other business interests and he needed her with him. They just started their relationship and he'd like to give it a real chance.

She pursed her lips together, her eyes burning with unshed tears because the look in Mason's eyes told her, he needed her, he needed her to choose him. Like he has been choosing her all this time.

He was right, he was right about him choosing her, he chose to stay here and help her out. He didn't have to, but he did. And that led them to forming a romantical relationship which she enjoyed with everything she had.

Would she be happy if she went to New York with him? Would they be okay? What happens if they fight? Would she be able to come back home? Who would she go to if the shit hits the fan?

New York was not just next door or the next province, there was a whole ocean and jetlag to consider.

She had her family and friends in South Africa... she was just starting to build a solid relationship with her family... now Mason was asking her to abandon all of that.

She wanted to see the day-to-day running of the hotel. She wanted to see how much more she can grow her businesses so she wouldn't overload Tracy.

She wanted to take a breather and think of how she now wanted to spend the rest of her life without thinking about Zuki and what Singo did to her.

"Mason... I am not ready." She told him. "I don't even know what to say or do..."

"I am asking you, to choose me. Not against your family, but against your businesses... I am asking you to go with me so you can see the other side of my life, to spend some little time with me so we can decide on how to move forward. It's not a forever thing."

"Mason, what if we fight, what if when we get to New York and you realize that we won't work out, that you don't love me anymore... what if when

we get there, you will realize that maybe it's Tasha you want, or maybe an American girl..." she told him her fears. She and this man have known each other for a couple of months, what if he realizes that his life is in New York with a better woman than she could ever be?

"Not love you anymore?" Mason asked, disbelief on his face, "woman, I love you, I am crazily and dangerously in love with you... and I am saying *dangerously* because I fucking killed for you." Mason declared. "I put a bullet between someone's eyes, for you. I ended a life for you, because I fucking love you and I will kill anyone who tries to kill you, or who hurts you. I will protect you, I want to protect you even though I know you're capable. Woman I fucking love you, and New York won't change that."

She was gobsmacked. Mason killed Zakes for her, he doesn't like killing, he doesn't like when his teammates' resort to killing, but he did it. He did it for her... and he looked like he'd do it, over and over again if it meant keeping her safe and alive.

She heaved, she was hearing him, she was but at the same time she was scared. "Mason, tomorrow?"

"I live life on the edge. We will buy clothes when we arrive if you're worried about packing. These apartments, I own them, Naison will have someone come to clean... Tracy and Kyle also can come to make sure it's spotless all the time." He assured her. He thought of every small detail that could stop them from leaving as soon as tomorrow.

"You have thought of everything haven't you?"

He nodded, "I want you with me..."

"I need to think about this. I need some time to think about this. Can you give me some hours to think about it?" She asked.

Mason felt rejected but he made small room for hope. He hoped she'd choose him. He hoped that she'd take his hand and go to New York with him.

"My father hates my job, but I am not ready to sit behind a desk and think of ways to grow his company while wearing a damn suit. So, I am going back to New York to see things through and think of what's next because this mission, as exciting as it was, it almost took you away from me." He told her. "So, I've already told him I am flying back to New York...but will see him soon, that's why I say, we will come back...sooner than you can think."

She knew that sooner could be months. Still, she needed to think things through.

"I am gonna go baby... I am going to my place to think, okay? In the morning, I will give you an answer."

He nodded. He pulled her towards him and planted a kiss on her forehead, "goodnight then."

"Goodnight." She whispered. She unlocked his door and closed it behind her and heard the lock turn.

She went to her place and couldn't sleep a wink that night. She called Tracy and spoke to her for over thirty minutes and after that, she was just restless. She kept tossing and turning until the sun rose again.

She woke up, bathed, tied her braids into a bun, she had fresh braids on, she was giving her weaves a break. She dressed in tracksuits and sneakers and grabbed her purse, her phone off the charger, her car keys, Mason's Rover, and left the building.

When Mason woke up, he got a notification that his Range Rover was on the move.

His heart crushed against his lungs. He couldn't breathe for a second before he recollected himself. He logged out of the app...

"Fuck!" He cursed. Lesedi had made a run for it.

She couldn't fucking tell him to his face that she couldn't come to New York with, she ran away like a fucking coward.

But he had already decided, he was going back to New York.

He had said his byes to his family already...including Kyle and Gina...so there was nothing left for him to do in South Africa.

Lesedi made her decision, and he was going to respect it.

He just needed to pack his clothes and say bye to Naison, the building manager and be on his way.

His team, Ginger, Milo and the rest knew he was leaving as well, so he was ready to bounce.

Since Lesedi made a run for it, he'd leave sooner.

* *

"Sedi laka." Daisy's eyes were filled with tears as she walked to her girls sitting in the garden, enjoying the morning sun and some tea with biscuits.

"Mohau waka." She was beaming.

The girls stood up and watched their mother walk towards them, she walked faster than they remember, spoke clearer... and her body posture was returning to normal, and she had picked on weight.

Tracy hugged their mother first, then Lesedi followed suit. "So much for being the first born." Lesedi mumbled playfully.

"You snooze you lose." Tracy dismissed her, a smile on her face directed to their mother. "You look..."

"Healthy? Strong? I feel healthy and strong." Daisy answered with an equal happy smile.

"I was going to say beautiful. But yes, you look strong, healthy and so beautiful." Tracy gushed.

Daisy blushed. "Aww thank you my baby." She smiled. She hadn't seen her children since after their father's burial and she was so happy to finally see them.

The clinic allowed her calls only after a month and the girls only called once a month to check in on her. They didn't want to disturb her programme and they also didn't want her to worry about them. They wanted her to live her life, settle in and concentrate on getting better.

She was shocked when her the clinic assistant told her, her daughters were on their way to visit her. They wanted to have breakfast with their mother.

"You do, you do look strong and healthy and so beautiful mama. Your skin is glowing... what do you use?" Lesedi asked.

"Some nice soaps and creams baby. They say they are top of the shelf. They smell good and I eat better." Daisy told them. "They are taking care of me here, I love it. Thank you for bringing me here."

Lesedi cried. She couldn't help but to cry. Seeing her mother look so good, so healthy brought a warm feeling to her heart. She fantasized about this day since she could remember. The day her mother would be free from Morris Phiri, the day she would heal from his terrible beating that almost killed her. And there it was... what a beautiful day.

"Ohh baby, don't cry, mama's okay now." Daisy stood up to comfort Lesedi. Tracy did too. Lesedi took care of their mother long before Sofia could come, so this was a bitter-sweet moment for her.

After a few minutes, Lesedi calmed down and they were back to asking about each other. Finding what activities Daisy did on the regular...

"We play cards, we do cardio outside... I attend my physio with this lovely girl that reminds me so much of you two. How you have such good hearts. And I still go see a chiropractor regularly who has helped my back in an amazing way... and I still go to therapy which I love... just talking to people about what I have went through other than Sofia is so relieving. I love it here... on Saturdays we have braai, we dance outside... we all feel at home."

Tracy caught a tear that sneaked out. She knew what their mother did, as they paid the bill and Sofia kept in touch with them but hearing from their mother made it all worth it.

"That's great, I am happy you love it here. Does it mean you're never leaving?" Lesedi asked.

"Yes, I am not going anywhere until I die. I am happy here, but I can still visit for longer days... so when I miss you two too much, you will come fetch me." Daisy told them with a smile.

"We can live with that, right sis?" Tracy turned to look at her older sister.

"Yeah, yeah... yeah we can live with that." Lesedi answered toying with her fingers. "I think that seals the deal then..."

"What deal?" Daisy asked. "Why did you two actually decide to come in the morning, is something wrong? You didn't come to fetch me right? Is it

money?" Daisy panicked. Here she was ranting about not wanting to leave but this place might just be too expensive for her girls.

"Oh no, no, no mama, it's not that. Trust me, we can afford to keep you here forever." Lesedi grabbed her mother's hands across the table. "I have a boyfriend... and he lives in New York and has asked me to go with him for a while and we will be back."

Daisy gasped, "a boyfriend? New York? Who is it? Where did you meet him? Do you trust him?" She asked in her sweet motherly voice. It was really a wonder how Morris managed to get this soft-spoken woman while he was loud and demanding and very arrogant.

"You remember Mason, Kyle's brother?" She asked, as she did that, Tracy noticed Sofia approaching, dressed in her nurse uniform. She had a huge smile on her face and a bounce in her step.

"Hold on, I want Sofia to hear this." Tracy stopped Lesedi from speaking. Sofia had called this relationship from the minute she saw Mason and Lesedi in one room.

"My babies!" Sofia shrieked happily, enveloping each girl in a bone crushing hug. "I missed you so much!" Sofia sat next to Daisy as the girls were sitting next to each other in front of Daisy.

"What brings you by so early in the morning?" Sofia asked.

"Lesedi says she's going to New York with a man." Daisy answered. "She was just telling me who the man is."

Lesedi blushed, "It's Mason."

Sofia's eyes narrowed as she put her thinking cap on, "Mason... I know that name."

Lesedi rolled her eyes playfully, "It's Kyle's brother. Tracy's boyfriend, Kyle?"

Sofia shrieked again like a little school girl. "I told you sesi, I told you that man wanted you. Oh my gosh, and I told you sis'Daisy that you will have bakgonyana ba makgowa." Sofia was so happy to learn about Lesedi and Mason. (You will have white sons in law.)

"Yes, Sofia, you did tell me... and man he makes me so happy. He takes care of me... and he loves me. He makes me happy." Lesedi told them.

This is what she told Tracy too last night on the phone. That Mason wanted her to come to New York with. Tracy was surprised but quickly told Lesedi to go for it if she wanted to. In her actual words she said, "if Kyle asked me to move across the world with him, I would do it because I am happily in love and want to spend my forever with him. So, you can do that too if you want and I won't be mad."

"Then what's wrong? Are you here to say bye?" Sofia asked.

"I came here to find out what mama thinks. I feel like I am leaving you." Lesedi said.

"Well, can you call me from New York?" Her mother asked, and Lesedi nodded. "You haven't seen me in four months, you can go and visit us when you can. As long as you promise to call every now and then. I am happy here, and I want you two to be happy too wherever you want." Daisy told her first born child.

"My baby, you took care of me like no one did. You deserve to choose yourself and your happiness this time. From the last time I saw you, to today... I can tell he is good for you. He is good to you. You are smiling, crying,

laughing... you are a ray of sunshine and if you have to go to New York to continue being this happy... do it." Daisy finished. By the time the older woman finished talking, Lesedi, Tracy and Sofia were a weeping mess.

"Thank you mama, thank you so much." Lesedi went to hug her mother. They all stood up and had a group hug. Wiped each other's faces and laughed.

"I am pregnant." Tracy announced. More shrieks and more squeals around the table, more hugging, more tears of joy, it was a jubilant morning.

"I have to go, we are flying to New York around one in the afternoon, so I need to go pack." Lesedi announced.

"I am so happy for you two girls. You deserve this. And Lesedi, you better come back from New York before Mohau gives birth. You're an aunt now." Sofia said to them.

They talked some more, finished eating and drinking tea then the girls said their byes to Sofia and their mother. But of course, they came bearing gifts.

Sofia's hunters dry, some new and expensive sneakers, their mother's new and expensive shoes with purses and scarfs as she had requested.

Everything they bought for their mother and Sofia was of top quality and others were just expensive and they just bought them because they definitely could afford to.

"I love you mama okay? And you too Sofia." Lesedi said to them before they left.

She dropped Tracy off in Pretoria and went to her place. She still had time to pack and surprise Mason with a packed bag. She had blessings from her family, that's all she ever needed. She was choosing Mason.

She finished packing light, she was going to make him buy her a new wardrobe, she just took what she felt she would need.

She went up to Mason's place and found the door open with Naison and the housekeeper in it. "Ahh miss Phiri, always lovely to see you" Naison was always happy. He was such a kind and warm man.

"Uhh hey, where is Mason?" She asked.

"Oh Mr Pierce, he said he was leaving for New York, he didn't tell you?" Naison asked, confused. He thought Lesedi and Mason were thick as thieves.

Lesedi was confused, he couldn't have left, could he? Without her?

She left her bag at the door and walked inside, she found the envelope he had given to her last night and a note next to it.

'Firecracker,

I see, you have made your decision, I guess I didn't mean anything to you, hence you couldn't face me to tell me you can't come with me. Look, what we had was real, well it was real to me, and I thought it was to you too. Guess I was wrong. Anyway, since I don't have to wait for you, I am departing early... I enjoyed my time with you. Hopefully, our paths will cross one day,

Love,

Mace.'

Lesedi felt all hot. Her head felt hot. "Uhh Naison, when did he leave?" Lesedi asked.

"About an hour and half ago." Naison innocently responded. He was confused though, as to what was happening. The housekeeper was fluffing up the pillows looking at Lesedi, trying to figure out what was happening.

"Oh my God he left... he left... why would he think I didn't want to go with him?" Lesedi was talking to herself, her head spinning that she had to hold it with her hand, trying to calm down.

"Miss Phiri, are you alright?" Naison asked.

"No, no I am not. He has a jet and is probably gone by now." Lesedi couldn't believe this. She looked at the note again, what made this man think she didn't want to go with him? If she didn't, she would have told him in his face....

"Maybe... but maybe he still needs to check some things out? Call him." Naison suggested.

Lesedi looked at Naison, call him, she reached for her phone in the pocket of her trackpants but didn't call Mason, she called Ginger.

"Hey Les."

"Hi Ginger, where is Mason? Please tell me you know where he is, and he hasn't left yet." Lesedi quickly spoke into the phone.

"No, he hasn't left yet, the jet wasn't ready, but I think any time from now, it will be." Ginger responded.

"Can you stall it? Please do me a favour and stall it, but don't let him know it's me." Lesedi asked.

"Alright, on it..." Ginger sounded happy. "I will call you back."

After a few minutes, Ginger called Lesedi back, "I caught the pilot and the flight attendant, I bought you some time."

"Thank you, thank you Ginger, I owe you one." Lesedi cut the call and requested an uber.

"Uhm Naison, please do the same for my apartment too, okay? My sister has the keys, she will be coming to check it, uhm just take care of it okay..." Lesedi took her stuff, dragged her travelling case and went downstairs to ride in the uber.

"Let me drive." Lesedi said to the uber driver.

The young man looked at her, he was not about to risk his car. Lesedi opened her purse and pulled out a couple of hundred-rand notes. "Let me drive."

The guy opened his door, "You wreck it, you buy it." The young man said as he went to the passenger side.

"Whatever." Lesedi jumped into the driver's seat and left to the airport. The uber driver was amazed at Lesedi's driving skills, he was thrilled. She was badass behind the wheel.

* *

At the airport, Mason had just boarded the plane, it was only him, the pilots and the flight attendant, Lisa.

He was looking out the window and thinking about the good times he shared with Lesedi. He loved her; he didn't think he'd be able to stop loving her. If their paths ever cross, he'll kiss her. He wouldn't be able to stay away from her... but she didn't choose him.

Maybe it was time he became selfish too.

Maybe he should choose himself. Maybe, he will meet another girl in New York, and this time it will be different... he will be opened to the idea of love.

"Lisa... why are we not leaving yet?" He asked Lisa who was passing by.

"Oh, we will in a few minutes, we are just waiting for another flight attendant." Lisa smiled.

"But why? You only have me here, and I won't bother you much..." Mason responded.

"Oh uhm, she's going back to New York, not on duty. So, she's running a little late... but I believe she will be here soon." Lisa then walked past.

Mason sighed, he needed this plane in the fucking air so he could forget about that chocolate skinned beauty with a cute chin dimple and sparkling brown eyes, and her apple scent. He also needed a stiff drink.

His heart was broken. He wasn't going to lie... but he believed with time, he will be fine.

"Oh! There is she is..." Lisa said behind Mason, and he heard her heels click away to the door of the jet. Sounded like she was helping someone with their luggage, he couldn't care as long as the other lady had arrived, and they'd be on their way.

"This seat taken?"

His heart threatened to leap out of his chest at the voice. He turned his head away from the window in a slow motion and found Lesedi standing there.

He opened his mouth, but nothing came out.

"Is it?" She asked again.

"No, uhm... what's going on?" Mason asked. He closed his eyes and then opened them, she was standing there in baby blue trackpants and a loose-fitting white t-shirt.

"You left without me, and I don't understand why."

"You left me." Mason stood up. "I woke up and your car was gone, I figured you couldn't tell me to my face that you didn't want to leave with me."

Lesedi shook her head, "If I didn't want to go, I would have told you, not run away. I am not a coward Mason."

"Where did you go?" He asked, almost breathless.

"To say goodbye to my mom, Tracy and Sofia." She answered, a small smile dancing on her face. Seeing him brought joy to her heart. "Did you forget they exist?"

"Are you leaving with me?" He asked, he was in shock.

"Mason, you killed a man for me, I will go to the ends of the world with you." He kissed her right after those words. He just had to. His heart was beating too fast. He couldn't believe she came.

"Well now that she's here, we can go right? Please buckle up and prepare for take-off." Lisa winked at Mason when he realized that Lisa played him.

They sat down and held hands. Lesedi was ecstatic that Mason was happy to see her. She also felt like she was doing the right thing. The man made her happy.

Once in the air, Mason unbuckled their seatbelt, asked Lisa not to disturb them and he went into the bedroom and closed them in.

His lips were on hers before she could even say anything. He pushed her to the bed, and she giggled happily.

He went on top of her and slowly kissed her. He channeled all his love into the kiss, how he felt about her, how happy he was that she was there with him...

His hand travelled from her boob to inside her pants... he sneaked a finger inside her panties and rubbed her gently as he kissed her.

Lesedi moaned into his mouth, loving the kiss and the feel of his finger on her pussy. She was getting wet with each rub.

"Baby!" She called his name out when he inserted the finger in her warm and wet channel.

"Yes baby..." Mason responded huskily. He pulled back and took off Lesedi's shoes, pants and panties and left her with her top on.

He took off his shoes and pants and t-shirt...then hovered over her again, kissing her. She enjoyed his lips on hers. His kisses were so damn good. She kissed him back with the same passion, the love she had for him, the appreciation... and the need. Mason stroked his dick and slapped it up and down her wet folds... "Please baby...get inside." She said to him. Her voice was so breathy and sexy. She was horny as fuck.

Mason crawled over to her and carefully entered her. He filled her up to the last inch and she couldn't help but moan aloud.

Mason kissed and started moving in and out of her. He kept a steady pace, by now he figured how she liked being fucked. Start off slow, then pick up pace.

He built up the orgasm... he pulled out to the tip then rammed back inside, watching her eyes open then close... watching her mouth open as nothing came out.

They locked eyes, and he lost it. His lips covered hers as he picked pace, ramming dangerously fast inside of her.

Her pussy made wet sounds as she convulsed and came around his hard rod. She screamed in his ear, creamed around his dick and held him in a tight grip, locking her legs around him.

Mason made animalistic sounds as he came inside of her. "Fuck! Fuck!" He cursed as he twitched inside of her hot mound. "Fuck baby!" He kissed her.

He pulled out and slumped next to her. "Thank you." He said after a while. He held her hand and kissed it. "Thank you for coming with me, it means a lot to me."

She turned to face him, "Mason, I love you, I just needed to know if my mother will be okay with it. I am happy with you." She confessed.

"Uhm... just back up a little... you what me?"

Lesedi rolled her eyes but broke into a huge grin, "I love you silly, I love you Mason... I do, otherwise I wouldn't be crossing the ocean with you."

Mason grinned and kissed her. They made out for a few minutes and pulled apart for some air.

"I panicked, I already told myself that you were not going to come with me. When I woke up and saw your car on the move... I thought you were making a run for it. I thought I'd take you to say bye to your family after you tell me you're coming with... If you had decided to come with. I am sorry, I should have waited." He kissed her hand as he apologized.

She pecked his lips, "I am here now... and they were happy to let me go."

"I'm glad they did. I appreciate them for that. Did you have time to pack?" He asked.

"Yeah a little, but you're going to buy me a whole new wardrobe when we get there... I am thinking Thebe Magugu, Rich Mnisi, some Gucci... some Balenciaga...some Tom ford... I want all the good stuff." She happily told him.

"Your birthday is coming in ten days... I am getting you the world baby." Mason promised her with a kiss.

"So where will everyone live when I get the world?" She asked.

"I don't know, they will make a plan." Mason said followed by a kiss...

Lesedi couldn't help but giggle. "You're silly!"

"But you love me..."

"That I do Mr..." she pushed him down and straddled him... "fucking on a plane is a fantasy I never thought I had... so let me tick it off the box... but after this." She winked and then sank down on his dick and he released a sexy groan... Loving the feel of her pussy walls clamping around his dick.

This girl was his and he intends to make that, a forever thing.

THE END!!!!

AUTHOR'S NOTE

We are at the end of the ride. This is so bittersweet man. When I introduced these two in #BreatheAgain I had no idea how their story would unfold.

I loved how soft Mason was, how he was in touch with his feelings, he may have been a coward by running away from his issues, saying no to love, but at least he knew himself... And Lesedi changed him. Lesedi made him crave that feeling of loving someone... He was strong in all aspects, smart but very fragile.

I loved how Lesedi developed. I loved how she was breathing fire during the funeral preparations... And I loved how she was able to judge people, she knew and trusted Mason would come through for her. And now he made her one of the richest people in southy...

I wished she could take the therapy route, maybe one day she might do that, but she doesn't see why she needs to go to therapy when she has a knife and rolled and ready to hit fists 🙄😭😂🙊

I loved her spunk even when she hated her sister, I just knew that there was something worth exploring with her and I am glad we got to join them on this ride...

Bonnie and Clyde... Oh no, sorry... **The Lord and his firecracker**



It has been real, thank you for believing in my work, for giving me a chance. Thank you, guys, for helping me turn this into a series. It was only

MATSHIDISO BELLA

supposed to be Loraine and Greyson's book but you guys saw something and here we are... Third book later.

I appreciate your support so much. I love you guys so much. Y'all make writing worth it!!!

See you on the next ride. (No don't ask me when that will be.)



Please do join the Facebook group to talk to me or other lovers of my work: **Matshidiso Bella reader's lounge** 🍷 😊