

### Sisekelo 3

Insert 66

Unedited.

Ndabezinhle's POV

I've been with Gogo for 2 days now, she can see that something is wrong but I haven't said anything. It was already hard for me to convince my manager to grant me a leave, because it's December and all that, but I told him I needed this and I had never asked him for leave ever since I worked there.

I'm in the kitchen washing dishes and listening to the radio.

Gogo: Zinhle I think we don't have bread, only about two slices left.

She says from the sitting room.

Me: Okay Gogo I'll go to the container

As I rinse the dishes and finish it off.

Gogo: Ey but I am craving porridge with lemon today

Me: Me too Gogo, count me in. But I'll go buy the bread for lunch.

Gogo: Okay sisi.

I dry my hands with the cloth and head to my room.

I grab R20 from my purse. I check my phone and I have a couple missed calls from Sbu.

I've been ignoring his calls. I put my phone back on my bed and head out to buy bread.

I'm taking a slow walk to the container, I'm just thinking about stuff. I get there and call the Ethiopian guy who sells.

Me: Can I have white bread.

Him: Okay sisi, R14. I hand him the money.

He gives me the bread and change

Me: Thank you.

I take a walk back. I see Nomzamo approaching. I will ignore her. She folds her arms and stands in front of me, lord not today.

Me: What? I say in the lowest voice and gave her a bored look

Her: Trouble in paradise already? Aw I didn't see Sbuda dropping you off that day.

Me: And how is that your business.

How does she even know who he is?

Her: Oh well I guess you found out he wasn't what you thought he was. He got you looking dumb, who doesn't know Sbuda, one of the most feared guys around. Who would have thought, you out of all people, would date a killer.

She claps her hands once.

Me: Can you leave me alone Nomzamo nx. I say trying to walk past her. She grabs my arm and I yank it from her

Her: You think you better wena eh? You've always thought that!

Me: What the hell is your problem! You ruined our friendship with your jealousy! Was I supposed to stick around and beg you?!

Her: No! You were only my friend because you wanted to look better! The one who never got pregnant in school, the one who went to University while I stayed here! You've always wanted to be the one out shining me.

Me: What? You are delusional! I've always been there for you! I never wanted to outshine you. You Nomzamo, went after Sihle after I told you I liked him in highschool and got pregnant by him! You never said sorry for that but I forgave you and acted like nothing happened and supported throughout your pregnancy. I used to send you money from my meal allowance in varsity whenever you told me Sihle didn't pay child support. I was there! But you've never done the same back! If anything you are the one who wanted to look better of off me. Nx you're a parasite. I don't know why I'm even wasting my time with you!

Her: Bullshit Zinhle! You must learn to move on! Why are still stuck on Sihle.

Me: And you must learn how to use a condom instead bringing these innocent children in to suffering.

Her jaw dropped. And she charged to me. She stood up at my face, I was ready to beat the crap out of her, I was going to whoop her, even for Sbusiso's sins.

Suddenly a car stopped next to us.

Him: Baby what's going on. He says puffing his cigarette.

I look at him with all the disgust I feel nauseous. It's my ex-boyfriend, Lindo. So they are dating.

Her: Baby it's this piece of shit who thinks the world revolves around her.

Him: Please Nomzamo get in the car, I don't want any trouble from her gangster boyfriend.

Her: But babe-

Him: Now! She flinches

Her: Wena Fuck you! She spat on the road and got in.

He drove off.

Nxx let me get home, I don't have time for people like Nomzamo.

I get home and put the bread in the bread bin.

Gogo: The porridge is almost ready

Me: Okay Gogo I'll check it.

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Sandile's POV

I'm having drinks with my older brother. When was the last time we actually sat together and had a drink. We are talking, Sbu was supposed to show up I guess he is really in a bad space.

Him: Yeah so things are not going well on his side he fucked up.

Me: He did, but she'll come around, she just needs sometime to adjust to all of this.

Him: So how is school

Me: oh well I'm graduating next year Spring

Him: Really? So you completed your degree and never bothered to tell us

Me: You guys don't always take something I say seriously, so I was just going to rock up with my qualification.

He chuckles

Him: It's just that you are always playful. But I'm proud of you.

Me: Thanks I guess. I say shrugging.

Him: Everything is happening so fast, it was yesterday when you used to sneak and sleep in my room and pee on my bed.

Me: Come on not that again! Don't embarrass me like that.

We laugh.

Then there is silence.

Him: But I'm glad you're making our parents proud you know.

Me: Yeah I guess.

Him: You are a grown man now, and you'll realise that being a man is not easy.

Me: I know, I've seen it. I say staring at him

He squints his eyes.

Him: Don't throw shade.

I chuckle.

Me: What did I do now.

Him: Nxayi voetsek. He says smirking and drinking.

We chill for about 30 minutes more and part ways.

I get in to my car and drive back to the flat I'm renting. I considered living with Sbu but since he has a girlfriend, no thank you, I don't want to listen any of their moans, so I rented. I don't live off "my father's money", okay atleast not anymore. I actually have shares in one of Sbu's clubs, but I wasn't just entitled to them, I have to manage the money we generate, payments of alcohol all that, since I'm good with numbers and accounting, well it's what I did in college.

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I don't think I have anything to do today, I just want to chill and laze around in the house.

I park my car and take an elevator up to floor number 21.

I throw myself on the couch and browse through Netflix.

I put on some movie and take off my shoes and jacket while laying back.

My phone rings as I'm about to settle. It's Khethiwe.  
Me: Hello  
Her: Hi, are you in? I was wondering if I could come over.  
I know she wants sex.  
Me: You want to fuck  
She giggles  
Her: I'm not going to deny that, I miss you being inside me.  
Me: Thought as much, yeah come over.  
I say smirking.  
Her: Okay daddy. She giggles and hangs up. This one is suck a freak.  
I continue to watch the movie.  
Minutes later there is knock on my door I know it's her.  
I get up and open up for her. She looks pretty.  
She hugs me and I peck her lips.  
Me: How are you? As I close the door.  
Her: I've been good thanks.  
I sit beside her on the couch.  
Me: Oh well there is nothing much I'm doing, just watching some movie.  
Her: I'll be something you'll do. She says leaning over and kissing me. We kiss for minute.  
She then goes down on me.  
I always enjoy sex with her, I guess she knows her thing.  
She take out a condom and puts it on my dick.  
She is riding me crazy and suddenly my mind trails off, "She is so beautiful" as I picture her in my head.  
Khethiwe's pat brings me back.  
Her: I need it from the back, she says running out of breath. As she turns around.

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#### Sisekelo's POV

I'm on the phone with Yamkela.  
Her: That's one can be a handful.  
Me: Tell me about it. But I can handle him.  
Her: You've always handled him.  
Me: How is Nonkazimulo?  
Her: She is growing so fast I tell you, she is 2 months now and she looks like she is 5 months.  
I smile  
Me: Kids grow so fast I tell you. I remember Ntsikelelo.  
Her: You remember? Yoh that's one was a man straight.  
I giggle.  
Me: Oh well I'm glad things are going well on your side.  
Her: Yes, I'm also looking for a job you know, but I'll wait until my baby is 8 months. I don't want to be financially dependent on Samkelo forever. I also have to help with baby things.  
Me: Well that's wise, so you can have your own money on the side. But I'm glad that Samkelo is supportive.  
Her: Yes he is, not a week goes by without him checking on his daughter. Anyways how are you and Andile? And of course your bundle of joy.  
I smile rubbing my little bump.  
Me: We are well thanks for asking, I'm still scared to give birth you know.  
Her: Babygirl ain't nothing you can do, that baby can't stay there forever.  
Me: I know!  
We giggle.  
We continue to have a light conversation and what not. We bid our goodbyes.  
Me: Ntsikelelo let's go! I say calling out on him.  
I have a doctor's appointment today, Andile won't be able to join us today.  
He comes down with chocsticks in his hands.

Him: I was putting on my jacket.  
Me: yeah it's a bit chilly today.  
I open the door for him, and close it behind me. Well the door is autolock.  
I unlock the car and we get in.  
Me: Seatbelt.  
He buckles up and I drive off.  
On my way to the doctor's my phone rings.  
It's MamZulu. I answer and it connects to the Bluetooth speaker in the car.  
Me: Hello ma  
Her: Hello Makoti, how are you?  
Me: I'm good Ma and how are you?  
Her: Oh well what can I say angithi you kids abandoned me.  
Me: Aowa Ma it's not like that, I love you, you know that and I miss you.  
Her: Well I'm getting old and you know how lonely it gets sometimes. But you can make it up to me.  
Me: Of course I can make it up to you. I say giggling.  
Her: This Sunday is Christmas...  
Me: Yes....  
I know where this is going.  
Her: So Christmas lunch and dinner at my house in fact at home.  
I giggle.  
Me: Okay ma you know u don't have a problem spending some time with you. We will definitely come.  
Her: And also invite Ndabezihle that's if she doesn't mind spending Christmas with us instead spending it with her own family.  
Me: I don't think she is going to make it ma  
Her: Oh okay?...Of course Sbu.  
Me: I never said that.  
Her: What else can be the reason.  
Me: No no no ma. They are just going through a rough patch, she needs sometime off.  
Her: Ai yazi! I hope he doesn't loose that girl, I really liked her.  
Me: Me too. But Sbu is having a hard time also so please ma don't be hard on him.  
Her: Well He..  
Me: Please ma.  
Her: Okay, only because you told me so. My sons can be a lot waitisi, mcm they take after their father.  
I giggle.  
Me: Aowa ma.  
Her: yes Makoti haaa. I've had my fair share of problems.  
I giggle  
Her: Whuuuu ngiyaphathisa!  
I guess the Zulu's are a handful, even my mother in law is complaining. I guess it runs in their veins.  
Me: Don't scare me away ma.  
She giggles.  
Her: I'm not hawu. She says laughing.  
We laugh.  
Her: But anyway take care of my son, and my grandchild. Can't wait to meet my grandchild.  
Me: I will ma, I'm on my way to my doctor's appointment.  
Her: okay my daughter. Be well.  
Me: You too Ma, bye.  
She hangs up.

I just love MamZulu, you'd swear she is my friend the way I can easily talk to her.

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Ndabezinhle's POV.

I'm sitting on the couch and we just had dinner. I'm waiting for Isibaya, I know I won't watch it, it will be the one watching me with all these crazy thoughts in my head. Suddenly the TV switches off, hawu. I turn around looking for the remote. And I see Gogo with it. Oh.

She sits next to me while I drill the floor with my eyes.

Me: Oh Gogo, I was about to watch Isibaya.

Her: Forget Isibaya, you still haven't told me why you are here.

Me: Hawu can't I visit you?

Her: you exactly that's not what I mean. What happened.

I sighed. I took my legs up the couch and held them. My chin resting on my knees.

Her: Tell me my daughter, I can see you're hurting, what did he do? I'll break his bones.

Me: Gogo I'm hurt. My heart is so broken, I don't know what to do. I love him so much but but... I say breaking while my tears roll down my face.

Her: Oh nana, woza kuGogo. She says pulling me to her embrace.

I'm in her embrace. I didn't know Sbu had this much effect on me, I've never cried for a man like this, unless that man was beating me.

She calms me down. While I sleep on her lap and tell her everything, except the gangster part.

Me: I'm so inlove with him Gogo, but how will I be in a relationship with him while my trust is gone. He broke my trust. It will be just a lot of arguing and that is draining.

She sighs

Her: Let me tell you Zinhle, men are very very stupid. Nx yazi uSbusiso ngizomufaka induku for breaking your heart like this.

She keeps quiet and breaks her silence.

Her: But he loves you.

I get up from her lap and look at her.

Her: It's funny but he does. Men make mistakes, they take us through pain Zinhle, but them mcm, these ones are weak. I'm sure if you was to do the same he'll have a fit and kill himself, even kill you.

But the way he looks at you, he shows you are his world, you grandfather used to look at me like that. Love doesn't come easy Zinhle, it never was. It's kind of unfair that us women, have to make sacrifices within to make relationships work but that's just the way it is, all that matters is to find a man that will die for you, I hate to say this but Sbu can die for you my daughter. I know he will, I feel it. The only thing I've always wanted when I leave this world, is to leave you in loving arms, someone who'll take care of you and love you, protect you. Sbu's situation is complicated, he is has a son to fight for while he is able to love you unconditionally without any mood swings or what. All I'm saying is that he is not in the right space to love a woman, but he loves you my child, he was willing to sacrifice all that and love you.

I keep quiet.

Me: Ngiyakuzwa Gogo, as I'm deep in my thoughts.

Her: Hayi but don't go back to him right away. He must understand the consequences of lying to someone you love. He must understand the consequences of being unfaithful. I want him to feel like he is loosing his breath.

Me: Yes Gogo.

Her: Yes, Makanye nje! Munyise mntanami.

I let out a soft chuckle.

But Gogo is a drama queen. But I'm grateful to have her.

Insert 67

Unedited.

Sisekelo's POV

I'm cooking pap and chakalaka, with some salads on the side and of course grilled chicken.

Me: Ntsikelelo!

He comes running into the kitchen.  
Him: Yes sunshine.  
Me: Can you please help me dress the salad, and please don't be messy.  
Him: I can do that, it looks easy.  
He takes the dressing.  
Me: Don't pour to much now  
Him: I got this. He says closing the dressing and mixing it.  
Me: You do got it. I say lifting my hand so he can hi five me.  
Him: Told ya! He says hi fiving.  
I roll my eyes.  
I think chicken is ready. I turn of the oven. Taking it out.  
I see the hear the car engine.  
My husband is home.  
He come in with his ties loosen and his white shirt folded. I still can't get over how sexy Andile is.  
Ntsikelelo get up and gets his bag  
Ntsi: Malum Andile.  
Him: Unjani boy. He says rubbing his head  
Ntsi: I guess I have to brush my hair again. He says running with his bags leaving him amazed.  
Me: Don't look at me.  
Him: Wow. He chuckles. While he comes over to me and stands by side. He kisses my cheek.  
Him: Unjani sthandwa sam. He says caressing my back  
Me: Ngiyaphila sthandwa sam. As I turn and peck his lips. He is talking really close to me, he is on my neck, I already know today he wants me.  
Him: How did it go at the doctor's? He says asking in sexy low tone, caressing my bump.  
Me: Our baby is fine, the doctor asked me if I to know the gender and I said we'll see when I give birth, unless you want to find out now?  
Him: It's okay my love, I can handle a suprise gender. As he lowers his hand, spansks me and grabs.  
Me: Nkosenye behave.  
He bites his bottom lip.  
Him: The way I'm hungry mabhebeza.  
Me: Well food is ready. Are you going to shower first or?  
Him: No, I'll shower after. He says kissing my cheek.  
He helps me set the table, while I dish out the food.

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We just finished eating and I'm grabbing the dirty dishes.  
I go to the kitchen.  
Him: I'll help you with that. He says grabbing the sponge  
Me: aww thank you. I'll go tuck in Ntsikelelo, he already has had a bath.  
Him: Okay babe  
Me: Ungarobhi njalo. I say pointing at him while he chuckles  
I walk in to the living room.  
Me: Ntsikelelo bedtime.  
Him: Why do I have to go to bed this early?  
Me: Cause you're seven, come on. Don't want to hear it.  
Him: Aw man. He says in a low tone.  
He looks cute in his Spiderman sleep jumper.  
We climb the stairs going to his room. I open the door for him. He get in and gets in his bed.  
I tuck him in.  
Me: Goodnight. I say kissing his forehead  
Him: Goodnight.  
I switch off the lights.

I go into our room and ran a bath for my husband.  
As soon as I finished he came in. And held me from behind.

Him: You two are joining me right?

I lay my head back.

Me: No Sthuli sikaNdaba we already showered.

Him: Mmmh no

Me: mmmh.

We both undress and we get in this humongous bathtub.

I first scrub him, well I don't need scrubbing back, I already showered

After that I layed on his chest with my back while he was touching my breast, caressing it.

Him: They are getting bigger by a minute and I like it. He says nibbling on my neck.

Me: I don't like big boobs, they make me feel sweaty when it's hot.

Him: I don't mind cooling you off.

I let out a soft laugh.

Me: You know my mother-in-law asked us if we could come over for Christmas.

Him: My mother couldn't let us just spend our first Christmas together?

Me: Andile don't be mean, you know how parents are when they are getting older, they like to bond.

Him: okay okay fine

Me: Speaking of Christmas, when are you guys closing the company for the holidays? Or you work throughout year?

Him: We actually stop working on the 24th and come back around the second week of January. But this guy Osama, he's Arabic, he has a meeting with us on the 25th.

Me: Well I don't like him whoever he is why he wants to meet on Christmas?

Him: He doesn't celebrate Christmas, but anyway Leon will be handling him.

Me: Poor Leon, no Christmas for him.

Him: It's his client. He says shrugging behind me.

He nibbles on my neck.

Him: I want you. I feel him getting hard behind me.

Me: I'm cold.

Him: come on let's dry you up. He says kissing my cheek.

He helps me get up.

He wraps me in a towel. I leave him in the bathroom while he drains the tub.

I dry myself and lotion my body.

He comes out and dries himself.

I take out my night dress.

Him: No, I want you naked. I smile putting it down.

I turn off the lights, leaving only the side lamps on.

I climb into bed.

Him: Give me a kiss. I love it when the way commands me. I lean over and kiss him.

He caresses my body.

My heart skips a beat, I will never get used to his touch. I let his lips sink into mine. He pulls me over so I can straddle him, the second I sit on him, my nana gets wet and he is not even in. He lets out a groan and slaps my butt grabbing it, it turns me on even more, I hold his face and suck the life out his lips. He is caresses my sides. He is hard as a rock, I know how bad he wants me. He breaks the kiss and goes for my neck. I bite my lips and hold his shoulders.

Me: Andile. I say in a whisper

He slightly lifts me and I feel Mageba rising with me underneath. I lay back a little from his face so I could see him, I lock eyes with him, his eyes are lazy.

I feel the tip at my honeypot entrance. I slightly open my mouth, holding my breath. He slides me on him, and my walls expand to welcome him. I let out the breath I was hold and moan biting my lips.

Him: Yes. He says in a whisper.

Me: Make love to me. I lean over and claim his lips. I put my arms around him, hugging him. because I know what he is about to do to me. Immediately he holds my ass and thrusts me.



The pleasure is beyond me.  
Moans and groans fill the room, but subtle enough for Ntsikelelo not to hear.  
I hold on for dear life and he fills me up with his manhood.  
No crazy positions, just me sitting on top of him, while he satisfies my feels. I still don't understand how he is able to do that. My feels a gathering up.  
Me: I'm cum-ming. I whisper as my voice breaks.  
He rolls me over so he could be on top of me. I feel him way deeper in me.  
Me: Andile. I moan out his name. He puts his hands besides me, balancing himself while he thrusts. His muscles are flexing, with his beautiful body art, he looks breathtaking.  
I grab the sheets harder. I feel it coming and it's big, I don't know why.  
Him: Let it out for me. That alone sends me to another world. I grab the sheets way harder and feel my toes curl. He pulls out and something splashes on Mageba and his torso. Did I just pee on him?  
But I'm too tired to utter and words as I let go of the sheets and catch my breath.  
Me: Did I just pee on you. I ask lazely waiting for embarassment to hit me anytime now. He smirks and inserts himself, I haven't even fully recovered.  
Him: No you just did any what any man would love to see. He pecks my lips  
I hold his face.  
Me: mmmh?  
Him: You squirted. It does not happen all the time, it happens spontaneously when you cum.  
Me: Oh?  
Him: And excuse you mam It doesn't mean I don't make you cum properly. Because I know I do.  
I giggle.  
Me: You so full of yourself.  
Him: And you love it.  
Me: I do. I say smiling.  
Him: Let me prove it to you.  
As he starts thrusts me and I moan.  
I love him.

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#### Anelisa's POV

I just finished washing dishes. I dry my hands.  
Me: Ma goodnight I'm going to sleep.  
Mom: Okay goodnight it's good to sleep early.  
Me: Yeah  
Mom: So you won't be able to hear me and your father.  
Me: Come on Ma do you have to be TMI, ay ay ay.  
She giggles.  
Mom: Yoh it's good that now you are grown, do you know how hard it was to be strict and playful at the sametime. Now I don't have to be strict, I've done my part so I automatically go back to being young myself.  
Me: Oh wow wooooowwww. I'm going to bed  
I leave her giggling.  
I lock my room. Yes I do lock my room when I sleep, so people can learn to knock. I hate disturbance.  
I take my phone out the charger and get in under the covers. I switch of my side lamp.  
I didn't close the blinds, I want the moon light to light my room a little.  
I put on my earphones. I should probably call Sisekelo and check on her, but I know she is asleep. She's pregnant now so fatigue is her middle name, I'll call her tommorrow. I just put some on some music.  
I log in to Instagram and just browse through. I tap the heart button on Sisekelo's photo with her husband Andile. She only has posted one picture eversince she started using intsa and the photo has over 360k likes. Abo Sisekelo have become intsa models now. I



comment on her picture with sunflower and rainbow emojis. I scroll and read some comments, his name catches my eye. He commented "Mageba".

I click on his name. I'm curious.

He has 464k followers.

What does he do?

I check and he has posted once and that is his profile photo, it was updated 2 years ago.

It's a picture of him wearing a cap and only his side of the face is showing, while his elbows rest on his knees. He is sitting down at some island judging by the background.

The thirst comments on his picture from beautiful Instagram models.

Why am I stalking my friend's brother-in-law?

I immediately log out like someone saw me looking at him.

I lay back and close my eyes while I listen to my favourite song of all time.

Lorayne- Something about you.

The moon is full

and I wasn't sleeping like you thought I'd been

Your heart is cold and all your secrets are frozen within

(and it's your mystery that has made me realise)

There's something about you

I wanna know what it is

Something about you

Insert 68

Unedited

\*\*\*\*\*4 days later\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV

It's the day before Christmas. I just finished eating lunch with Ntsikelelo. The way it's so hot today, I'm definitely having ice cream.

Me: Ice cream budd?

Him: Yes please!

I take the vanilla ice cream from the fridge, drop a few scoops each on our bowls.

I take our bowls and walk over to the lounge.

I hand him one bowl.

Me: Here you go budd.

Him: Yum, thank you.

I lay back and we both enjoy our ice cream date, well the three of us, while Ntsikelelo is making me watch Avengers, I'm not even concentrated on this.

I look over at him and he is staring at my bump, well it isn't so small now, it's getting bigger.

Me: What? As I shrug my shoulder with a bit of ice cream in my mouth.

Him: You are having a baby?

I never expected that's.

Me: Yes sunshine I am.

He nods in slow motion

Him: I believe that's a good thing.

I giggle

Me: Ofcourse it's good thing, God gives us babies, babies are blessings.

Him: So Malum Andile is God?

Oh my Gosh this child.

Me: No he is not Ntsikelelo

He shrugs

Him: I mean he is the one who put the baby in there.

Me: Ntsikelelo!

Him: What sunshine? You don't expect me to believe babies come from planes? I mean it's in you then Malum Andile is the father.

My jaw dropped.

Me: No no no, you are way ahead of your age young man.  
Him: I'm sorry.  
Me: As long as you don't go around saying such. I say poking his nose.  
He giggles.  
This kid is going to be a brilliant man. I know so. He is maturing very fast and it scares me.  
I continue eating my ice cream. Bontle crosses my mind. Eversince she moved, it has been hard to keep up on each other, I mean she hasn't even seen me with my bump in person. But that's life, she is married, I'm married, we are far from each other, we both focusing on our families.  
Anyways I grab my phone and call her.  
It rings for a while, it rings and it's rings, at last she answers.  
Her: Sweetie  
Me: Afternoon honey? How are you doing? How's is Matt? The kids?  
Her: It's a jungle, having 3 babies crying at the same time is no joke, I'm going crazy babe  
Me: but its the beauty of it  
Her: Yeah yeah kind of.  
I giggle.  
Her: How about you mother to be oh wiii.  
Sh says excitedly  
Me: Oh well I'm okay, I'm able to do everything, I haven't been restricted off anything. I'm okay friend.  
Her: I'm glad you're okay, you'll be alright. And the... You know  
Me: No I don't.  
Her: Urgh, the sex. She says whispering  
Me: Oh that! OMG Bontle. As I giggle.  
Her: Girl I remember when I was heavily pregnant, and sex was the hardest thing I had to do. I would just lay there on my side. Same damn position.  
We both laugh. As I walk away from Ntsikelelo.  
Me: Well I'm not heavily pregnant now, so the sex part is not so hard, I'm still able to do a lot of positions actually.  
Her: Soon you'll see for yourself, especially when you're married to sex addicts.  
Me: Tell me about it  
Her: Girl!  
We giggle.  
We are having a good catch up session, I'm laughing so hard, I've missed Bontle shame and her craziness.  
After that long phone call we bid our goodbyes. The sun is scorching outside. I need to sit outside by the pool. The aircon is on but I need fresh air. As I'm about to do so the gate slides open.  
Andile is home.  
Within seconds he walks in.  
Me: You're home. I say walking to him to hug him.  
Him: Yes I'm home and today we swimming.  
Ntsikelelo jumps in the lounge.  
Ntsi: Yes! I'm going to change to my swim shorts.  
He runs to the stairs and greets Andile while running.  
Ntsi: Hello Malum Andile! He says running up the stairs.  
Him: Hi. He says smiling  
Me: I'm out voted already come on I'll help you take this off.  
He says pulling my hand.  
We get into our room and I change into this neon green bathing suit. At least it still fits me, just a little tighter around my boobs.  
My belly is so out there, I am getting bigger.  
Him: Our baby is getting bigger. He says crouching and kissing my belly.  
I smile, while looking down on him.  
Me: I know, it's crazy.

He stands right up and spanks me, and it hurt.

Him: Come on let's go swim.

Me: Ouch Andile. I say rubbing my butt cheek.

He smirks and opens the door. Making his way out.

I follow him shortly after rolling my braids in a bun.

On my way I drink a glass of water.

I walk to the backyard and these two are the having time of their lives. Water splashing everywhere.

I walk over to the edge and dip my legs in.

These two are competing on swimming from one end to the pool to another.

Andile is bigger so obviously he is going to win. But he stops in the middle and let's

Ntsikelelo pass, so he can be like he won.

I laugh at the idea. Ntsikelelo is so convinced he beat Andile.

Andile laughs and swims to me.

Him: Woza. He says lifting my waist.

Me: No Andile the water is cold. I say giggling he doesn't care. He dips me in. Oh my the water is so cold.

Him: You didn't die.

Me: I thought pregnant people drown.

He laughs

Him: Even if they drown, I wouldn't let that happen to you. He says kissing my cheek.

Ntsikelelo is splashing water everywhere. We having so much fun in the water. Nothing will ever make up for family time.

After 30 minutes of swimming.

Me: babe I'm tired I'm going by the rest edge of the pool

He pulls me over to steps of the pool.

I sit on them, but I'm still kind in water, half of my body is.

He sits behind me, so I can lay on his chest.

Me: Ntsikelelo doesn't get tired doesn't he?

Him: He loves swimming.

We watch him while we enjoy each others company.

I feel a little movement on my belly. My eyes light up and I lay my hand over my belly, the movement happens again.

Him: Are you okay?

Me: Babe

I grab his hand and place it on my belly.

Him: What is it.

Me: Shhhh. As I wait for the movement to happen again.

We stay like that for seconds.

Me: Well the baby mov-

Movement again.

Him: our baby is kicking. He says taking his other hand .

I hold his hands on top of it.

Me: Our baby is moving.

Him: Yes!

Me: aww babe.

The baby kicks for a couple of times and the stops.

Andile smudges my cheek with hard kisses as I giggle.

Him: Thank you thank you thank you!

My day is made. Totally made.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ntsikelelo is taking a nap after that hard swimming session. It's almost 4pm now, I'm sleepy myself. I'm disturbed by Andile.

Him: My mother just called she was wondering if we could come today so we can not drive

on Christmas day, and I said no.

Me: Andile

Him: What

Me: Don't be like that lets go, I'm tired but ehe marn I also want to see my mother-in-law.

Him: But we'll be there tommorrow

Me: I'm going and you're taking me.

He groans

Him: fine.

Me: I'll pack our bags.

Him: Okay, Ntsikelelo is dead asleep though.

Me: we'll sleep in the car, it's a 3 hour drive

Him: Let me call Sbu and Sandile.

Me: Okay.

I get my tired self up the stairs. At least we already took showers after our swim.

I take 2 bags and pack our overnight necessities, and extra stuff in case our stay is longer, always do that, never be to sure.

Him: I don't think Sbu is coming. He says entering the bedroom placing his phone on th bed.

Me: Oh?

Him: He'll come tomorrow morning, you know the clubs are busy and he has to keep an eye.

Me: understandable, how is he though?

Him: Well what will he do, Ndabezinhle is still not talking to him.

Me: Shame, but it's a lot for her to take in she'll come around.

Him: He has been at Umlazi twice, hoping that she'll come out and go to the store or something, but nothing.

Me: it must be hard for the both of them, I really hope they sort it out and get back together, I really like her.

Him: Oh well.

I feel sorry for the both of them, mostly Ndabe.

Him: Let me wake up Ntsikelelo so he can change.

Me: Okay hun.

I continue packing our clothes and go to Ntsikelelo's room to pack for him.

Me: Andile! I call out for him

He comes up seconds later.

Him: yes?

Me: Please take the bags to the car while I change.

Him: Okay.

He takes the bags while I get ready. I put on a white A-line dress with gold sandals. I just apply clear lipgloss. I spray my perfume, one squirt is enough, don't wanna feel nauseous now.

I take my phone and head downstairs.

Me: Okay I'm ready.

Him: Okay let's go.

We all get in the car and drive off. We will probably get somethings along the way for Christmas lunch tomorrow.

\*\*\*\*\*

Anelisa's POV.

I got a call from Thandeka, they invited me to another house party, it's a Xmas Eve party. Well the previous one wasn't that bad, of course subtract that weird guy and the short dress. This time I'm wearing what I want. Just some washed up torn jeans, a blouse and strap heels. This time I let my curly afro loose, some red matte lipstick. And I'm good to go. As I put on my glasses.

I go to the living room.

Me: I'm leaving now, please don't leave the key on the door. I got my spare key.

Dad: Come back before 10, I'm not joking with you.

Me: Yes Dad.

Dad: I'll be waiting for you otherwise you'll go back where you were.

Me: Okay baba.

My cab is already here, my friends texted me the address.

\*\*\*\*\*

A couple of minutes later my cab is here and Khethiwe is already waiting for me outside.

She looks sexy, as always.

I hug and greet her.

Her: No skin-nyana.

I give her the look.

Me: We talked about this

She lifts her hands up.

Her: Okay okay I'm sorry. Come on let's go, the party started a few minutes ago.

We walk inside the house, I don't know whether my eyes are deceiving me but I see some celebrities here as we walk in the house through the back yard.

Me: Is that Black Coffee on the decks?

I say nudging her.

Her: Yes, hun. Sbo throws the mother of all parties.

Me: Oh nice, I'm such a fan.

Black coffee is mixing my jam- Manno remix

Berveli Brown- I don't know why I feel this way.

All ready this song got me in my mood. People are dressed up everyone looking good, and here am I plain Jane.

We go to this outside lounge area where the rest of Khethiwe's crew is. Sbo comes to me.

Sbo: I see you brought your beautiful friend again. How are you?

Me: I'm good thanks how are you?

Sbo: I'm good.

Thandeka comes and hugs me.

Tha: Babygirl what do you want to drink.

Me: A mocktail please.

Tha: I forgot you don't drink alcohol, mocktail it is.

Minutes later she gets my drink, and we chilling, the music is good.

As I'm enjoying myself, I see him. I lay my eyes on him for a long time, he looks nice, he has good taste in clothes.

Khethiwe nudges me.

Her: Yini sisi you want him?

Me: No no, my eyes were just wandering in the crowd.

Her: Well I don't blame you Sandile is a snack, in fact a whole meal.

Me: Oh you know him?

Her: Of course hun that's the Sandile we've been talking about.

There is a sharp ache in my heart I don't know why.

Me: Oh

Her: What you know him?

Me: Um kinda. That's the guy who took me home, in fact he is my friend's brother-in-law.

Her: Oh what's her name again? Sisekelo? Yeah right that one was lucky, married to the mighty Andile. I used to crush on him, infact all of the Zulu's, including their father uuuu!

She says squeezing her hand biting her lips.

Oh my God he is coming. I turn the other way.

Khethi gets up and throws herself into him.

He greets her and then looks my way

Him: You know each other?

He says looking at me just as I'm about to answer, Khethi beats me to it.

Khethi: Yes we do ever since we were kids.

Him: Oh okay. But you good Anelisa?

Me: Yes I'm good thanks and you?

Him: I'm okay too.

I look at my watch and it's 9:40pm

Me: Khethi my time is up I have to get going.

Khethi: So early.

I get up and grab my sling purse.

Me: My dad is going to flip.

Khethi: You're 19 but you're still given curfews, daddy needs to chill.

Me: Not in that household. Bye babygirl.

He doesn't say anything he just looks at me.

Me: Tell Thandeka I left.

Khethi: Suit yourself.

I request my cab and make my way out. It looks like the real party is about to start and I'm here leaving. But I respect my parents. So I make my way out.

I stand by the gate and my cab is here within a flash.

Him: Can I take you home?

I turn and it's him.

Me: You scared me, my cab is here. So thank you.

He smells so good.

Him: I'm actually leaving myself, I'm going to Pietermaritzburg.

Me: At this time of the night

Him: Yes.

Me: Oh okay drive safely. I say attempting to open the car.

Him: I mean it. He says holding my hand.

My spine shivers.

Me: But he is already here. I say in a weak voice.

He takes out a R200 note and hands it to the driver.

Him: Sho bafo.

Driver: Kubonga mina mfethu.

I look at him.

Me: That wasn't necessary. As the driver drives away.

Him: Come on. He says.

I follow him to his truck. We get in I put on my seatbelt.

Me: Thank you for the ride.

Him: No worries. He says looking at the mirror reversing.

He plays some music while he drives me home.

He keeps stealing glances of me. I act like I don't see him.

About 20 minutes later. We about to reach my house.

Me: Umh can you please drop me off there, I don't want my dad getting the wrong ideas.

Him: Okay.

He parks a house away.

Me: Thank you once again. I say unbuckling the seatbelt.

Him: Anelisa.

Me: Hhm? I say looking at him.

Our eyes connect, my heart skips a beat.

Him: You looked beautiful, I mean you always beautiful.

Me: Thank you, I just...

He leans over me and kisses me. His lips sink into mine. Oh why is he kissing me. Why am I responding. I pull out quickly.

Me: Sandile what are you doing. I ask in a soft tone close to a whisper.

He looks at me and caresses my cheeks slowly.

Him: What I wanted to do when I first laid my eyes on you.

I look at him. I can't afford drama

Me: Sandile you can't-  
He shuts me up with another kiss.

Insert 69  
Unedited.

Anelisa's POV

I close the door after unlocking it. My heart is beating fast I don't know why.

Dad: Well I'm glad you came home on time. I'm off to bed the match just finished.

He says getting up putting on his slippers.

Me: Goodnight Baba.

As I look at the beautiful Christmas tree my mother put up. She is always a pro when it comes to that. I miss putting up the tree with my old sister, I miss our bond. She is not even home, I doubt she'll be even spending Christmas with us tomorrow.

My mind trails off to the kiss Sandile and I had. I shake my head off and walk to my bedroom.

I close the door behind me, take off my heels and walk over to the mirror. I undress in front of it, slowly.

Look at me, I don't have a body like hers. She is way more beautiful than I am. And these glasses urch. She is more fashionable than I am- (sigh) What am I doing? we are friends, I can't complicate things between us like that, in fact I'm starting to feel guilty.

Oh no Anelisa what have you done. I hit my forehead number of times.

Girl code for goodness' sake.

I can never let something like that happen again.

Besides how can Sandile go from a girl like Khethi to a girl like me? What do I know. If anything Sandile is playing me. (Scoffs)

I'm flippen bore, what do I know about sex. If he knew how inexperienced I am he wouldn't even attempt come for me. In fact why am I thinking of sex with him, it's never going to get to that.

I take my towel and wrap it around my body. I'm going to take a quick shower.

I turn on the shower and let the water fall on me. I scrub my body with soap.

I'm scrubbing in slow motion. I can't seem to forget about that kiss.

Sandile what have you done to me.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV

We just arrived here in Maqongqo. It's almost 10 pm. Mam'Zulu was kind enough to prepare a Christmas Eve braai for us. I guess Ntsikelelo is having a late night today, he will be thrilled.

We are eating, just Mam'Zulu and I. Bab'Zulu and Andile are outside at the porch.

Mam'Zulu: I can't wait to meet my grandchild.

Me: I can't wait too but aowa ma I'm scared.

Mam'Zulu: Labour pains? My child, I'm telling that ain't no joke, that's why men must respect women.

Me: The anticipation is killing me.

Mam'Zulu: All my son's had big heads so my vagina tore.

We burst into laughter

Me: Ma

Mam'Zulu: Habe, yeyi. I thought my vagina was never going to be normal again and Sizwe was going to leave me to find a tighter one.

Me: that means Baba loves you ma.

Mam'Zulu: No honey it means I have a gun in the safe and he was stuck to this for the rest of his life. He was never leaving me.

We burst into laughter. Oh my gosh Mam'Zulu is a character.

Me: I can't breathe. I say tapping the table.

She giggles.



Mam'Zulu: Haaaa singaphela sidlala amadoda. What's the term? Um um what do y'all say.  
Niggas ain't shit!

I'm literally Rolling on my gosh I can't take it.

Me: I can't believe this. I can't stop laughing.

Mam'Zulu: Come on say it

Me: No ma. I'm still laughing.

Mam'Zulu: Say it aowa!

Me: niggas ain't shit.

We laugh so hard.

Mam'Zulu: Yes always remember that, when a man starts thinking he is better without you.  
Always know he ain't nothing without you, the nigga ain't shit without you.

Me: Rodger that. I say lifting my glass up and grabbing my steak on the other hand.

I love how she never makes me feel like a daughter-in-law. She treats me like her friend.

I can never exchange her for anything.

As our Christmas Eve dies down.

\*\*\*\*\*1 DAY LATER\*\*\*\*\*

Ndabezinhle's POV

The sunlight hits my eyes. What the-

Gogo: vuka! It's Christmas!

I scoff rubbing my eyes

Me: what time is it. As I reach for my phone on the side

Gogo: Time for food!

I look at time: it's almost 7am

Me: Gogo you know it's just the two of us in this house there is no need for us wake up this early. I say dragging myself off the bed.

Gogo: Don't be salty I know you miss Sbusiso.

Me: Gogo!

Gogo: Salt! That's why you like this, itswayi.

For some reason I look at her and scoff smiling.

Me: Gogo stop speaking like that!

Gogo: I'm still busy with breakfast. You did a great job on our small Christmas tree.

She says leaving me shook.

Gogo is something else.

Anyways I wake up and I make my bed.

Then my phone buzzes, it's a message.

"Ndabezitha♥ "

I don't why I still have a heart next to his name.

I open and read.

"I didn't call cause I knew you weren't going to pick up. I hope you enjoy your Christmas.

Um yeah I was just checking on you. I love you"

I miss him. I really do, but it's hard, everything is complicated at this point.

But it wouldn't hurt to wish him a merry Christmas back.

As I'm about to reply

Gogo: Woza Zinhle!

Me: I'm coming!

I leave my phone on the bed and grab a carrier bag from my wardrobe.

I go to the kitchen.

Gogo: Okay take those grilled potatoes and put them in here.

Me: Gogo.

I say handing the carrier bag to her.

She takes it.

She opens it.

Gogo: How did you get this? She say looking at the watch as tears fill in the well of her eyes.

Me: I bought it back Gogo. I knew how Mkhulu's watch was special to you.

Gogo: Come here. She says pulling me in for a long hug. I'm getting emotional as well. Gogo had to sell Mkhulu's expensive watch, so she can pay for my high school outstanding fees. Mr Dlamini bought it from her for R15 000, I had to get it back for double the price. It was already hard enough for me to convince him to sell it back to me, because these type of watches don't sell anymore.

Gogo: Thank you my child. This is the only thing that brings me close to your grandfather. I wipe her tears with my thumb.

Me: Thank you Gogo for raising me, I'm really grateful to have you in my life. You've raised me for 24 years. You are my real mother. I love you.

Gogo: My daughter is a fool for abandoning such a beautiful daughter.

Me: I'm grateful it was you who raised me. I love you Gogo.

Gogo: Ngiyakuthanda my baby. She says hugging me again.

Gogo: Go and take a bath so we can eat.

Me: Okay Gogo.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV

It's Christmas!

I'm so excited to spend Christmas with my family. This is going to be a wonderful Christmas!

I've already took a shower, me and Mam'Zulu woke up early. We are obviously the ones to prepare the food. I left Ntsikelelo in the bathtub.

Andile is still asleep I think.

We are busy in the kitchen

Then Sandile makes his entrance still in his sleep wear. He is smiling.

Him: Good morning good morning. He says grabbing a bottle of water in the fridge.

Me: Morning, when did you get here cause we literally slept around 12

Him: I came around one in the morning, ate the leftovers and slept like a baby. He has this smirk

Mam'Zulu: I've been warning you about arriving at night, I hate that and you know cause it's not safe.

Him: it was a smooth harmless drive. He says gulping his water.

Me: Somebody is in a good mood. I say eyeing him

Him: it's Christmas spirit! He says smiling.

Me: Well I guess you love Christmas.

Him: Who doesn't? Uphi Ntsikelelo, I'll show him something he might like.

Me: He is in the guest bedroom on the left.

Him: Sure

He says leaving us in the kitchen

Mam'Zulu: When is this one getting a girlfriend

Me: I don't know ma this one is still in his own zone.

Mam'Zulu: He is using his looks to his advantage. He is the best looking out of his brothers afterall, I guess because he is the last born.

I laugh. She is right though, they are all attractive but Sandile is the most attractive, in fact he is beautiful if I may put it like that.

Me: I guess so too, besides he is still young so he can have whomever he wants.

Mam'Zulu: Mcm. I want them all to get married before I die.

Me: Aowa ma you'll live long and see all of your grandsons

Mam'Zulu: But life is unpredictable

Me: It is but a little faith doesn't hurt.

We continue cooking and we have already served them breakfast.

The house is filled with voices, you can tell we are a big family.

Sandile can't get enough of Ntsikelelo. These two are crazier than I thought.

Sbu hasn't arrived yet. I'm not sure whether he is coming, whether he can deal with a crazy bunch like us in a time like this.

Mam'Zulu: The cheesecake has set. Please take the turkey to the table. So we can feast a real meal.

Me: Okay ma. Keep an eye on the grilled potatoes in the oven.

Mam'Zulu: Got you.

I lift this heavy turkey to the table.

Andile: You should have asked me to help you.

Me: Thank you but I can handle it.

Him: Okay babe.

I get back into the kitchen and finish up. I wished a lot of people a merry Christmas on my phone, but I haven't checked my phone to see if I received them back.

While we in the kitchen we hear Sbu's voice. I guess he made it. I'm glad he came, ma will be happy. But he is still greeting on the otherside of the house.

He then comes to the kitchen and greets us.

Me: I'm happy to see you when last.

Him: Yes it's been but I'm here.

He is not okay completely but at least he came.

Mam'Zulu: It's a pity you missed the braai yesterday.

Him: Eish you know the clubs.

Mam'Zulu: It's always the clubs and pubs with you.

Him: Kahle bo ma, in fact I got you one of your favourite chocolates from Switzerland.

Mam'Zulu: Now you're warming your way into my heart and I love it!

We laugh.

Mam'Zulu: Lunch is almost ready and it will be served.

Him: I can't wait. I need decent food. He says walking out of the kitchen.

Minutes later everything is set and I cannot wait to dig in. We'll open the Christmas presents under the tree after.

Everyone is coming together in the table. We are a big family, and I know this turkey will be destroyed.

We are sitted together.

Mam'Zulu: Okay let's hold hands and pray.

We all shuffle and hold eachother's hands.

Mam'Zulu: Lord thank you for bringing us together on this wonderful day of Christmas.

Bless the food we are about to eat. And God's people say.

Us: Amen.

Bab'Zulu: Let's dig in family!

Andile: Please pass me the salad.

Sandile passes it to him.

Me: Ntsikelelo, what do you want me to dish up for you.

Ntsi: I would love to have the potatoes, the turkey, that salad over there.

Me: Okay sunshine.

We are all dishing out food, my mouth is watering now, I can't wait. As I take one potatoe in my mouth, mmmmh nothing beats Christmas food.

Everyone is eating a light conversation is carried. We are enjoying ourselves. It gets a little quiet as everyone is focused on their food.

Ntsi: Hey Malum Andile what's that on your shirt. He says taking a bite of his Turkey.

Him: Mmmmh? He says gulping his juice

Ntsi: That. He says pointing at the right of his chest.

I look up at him and he looks on his shirt.

I look back at my plate and Andile drops his fork.

Sbu: That's a fuckin sniper!

Andile: Get down!

Then shots are fired into the house. I scream Andile Tackles Ntsikelelo and I to the ground.

Glass shattering everywhere, more that 5 shots are fired at a time.

Him: Fuck!!!

Sbu: God damnit

Mam'Zulu: Jesus!

All we hear is groans and curses. Oh my god what's happening. Andile's white shirt is immediately bloodied, oh my God he is shot, he is shot. Ntsikelelo is screaming under me, as the a rain of bullets spray over us. I'm holding him so tight as we lay there, nothing that can be done. Today we are dying. Death is hovering over us.

We can't even move from the ground, they way these people are shooting. I'm crying so much, I'm afraid they going to shoot the baby.

It does even take a minute for the shooting to end. And then there is silence. We hear cars screeching outside.

Andile: Come on get up! Go on the otherside.

I lift Ntsikelelo like a bag of feathers and we run to the passage.

Andile doesn't follow us.

I'm crying so much

Me: Is everybody okay! I say screaming from the other end

Please God don't do this.

Me: Get in her okay, I'm coming back for you. I say putting Ntsikelelo in the coat closet. He is crying so much.

Him: I'm scared, please. I'm scared don't leave.

Me: I'm going to come back for you okay.

I say closing the door.

I run into the dining area.

I can't believe this. There is blood everywhere. Mam'Zulu is holding her breast and crying and she has Bab' Zulu in her arms She has been shot.

I look over and Andile is kneeling over someone.

I run there and I hold my mouth trying not to scream.

It's Sandile lying in a pool of blood.

I kneel over.

Me: Oh my God. As tears drop crazy from my eyes. My heart is beating fast. I'm numb.

Sbu is coughing blood in another corner.

I quickly rush to him.

I don't what to do. I'm panicking.

Me: Sbu are you okay, please stay awake.

He is shot in his stomach.

Sbu: I've been shot twice on my stomach. He says spitting blood.

Andile is slapping Sandile

Andile: Wake up budd. Come on, please don't don't do this.

I run over to them.

Mam'Zulu: Lord why have you forsaken us! Why! Sizwe don't die on me please.

Sbu crawls over leaving a trail of blood.

Andile: Sisekelo he is not breathing call the ambulance! My brother is not breathing!

Sbu: He has been shot in the head. Dad is unconcious, but he is breathing. He say panicking.

I blacked out.

Andile: Sisekelo I said call the ambulance!

As he shouts and I regain my senses and rush over to the phone and call the ambulance.

I rush over.

Me: they on their way.

I rush over to Mam'Zulu and she is weeping

Me: Ma you've been shot.

I look at Bab' Zulu laying there unconcious.

I'm numb, tears are falling from my eyes. I don't know what to do.

Andile screams on the top of his lungs.

Him: WHAT THE FUCK HAVE I DONE!

Sbu: Andile he is not breathing, Sandile is not breathing do something!

Everything is happening in slow motion. I'm about to pass out.

Insert 70

(Sorry for the typos, I'm sleepy)

Unedited.

Andile's POV

I can't lose my brother like this, I can't. It should have been me. I lean down on him and I perform CPR. He has stopped breathing but his heart is beating faintly and slowly fading. I have to keep his organs alive, they will die after 5-6 minutes after he has stopped breathing.

Me: come on buddy. As I pump his chest. I lean down and give him mouth-to-mouth.

Mother: Andile don't let my son die please, help him, help him!

I'm frustrated and I'm trying to keep it together.

I look at Sbu across holding his stomach, he is losing a lot of blood.

Me: Sisekelo. As I turn and look at her by my mother, while pumping Sandile.

No one answers.

Me: Sisekelo!

She shakes her head and rises up quickly out of shock. She keeps blacking out. She rushes to me.

Her: Yes, yes.

She is shaking like a leaf.

Me: Put pressure on Sbu's wounds, he is losing a lot of blood.

Her: Okay. She gets up as tears drop from her eyes.

I call her before she gets to Sbu.

Me: Hey! I need you to get it together, okay? I need you! Everything will be okay, no one is dying. Just keep it together, I can't do this alone.

Her: Okay, I'm sorry. As she kneels down on Sbu and puts pressure on his wounds.

Me: Where the fuck is the God damn ambulance!

\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV

Sbu is fading.

Me: Everything will be okay, please stay awake. As I am putting pressure on his wounds

He coughs blood, he can't talk properly.

Him: I want to rest my eyes.

Me: No no no please! Don't rest your eyes, they are on their way.

Him: Just a little.

Me: Sbu please don't, please don't. I say crying.

I hear the sirens outside. But Sbu closes his eyes

Me: Sbusiso no!

The doors fly open, as the paramedics walk on top of the shattered glass.

Me: He just closed his eyes!

As I look at the paramedics coming in

Paramedic: Mam I need you to move to the side okay.

I get up as paramedics swarm over Sandile, Sbu and Bab'Zulu.

I hold my mouth in disbelief. What happened. Why why why.

They are talking really fast and working really fast. I can't hear a thing.

I hear a helicopter.

Paramedic: Rush both these men on the helicopter.

They put 4 of them on the stretchers. Everything is happening so fast. The paramedics dash off while I run behind them. One paramedic stops Andile.

Paramedic: Sir you've been shot, you need medical attention.

He is shot on his back, and seems the bullet exited on the right side of his chest. His white t-shirt is bloodied

Him: No! He shouts at the guy.

He then turns to me.

Him: Listen I'm going to go with them. Gasa is on his way, he will drive you to the hospital

and protect you. Nothing will happen to you okay, nothing!  
He says grabbing my cheeks and running in the helicopter.  
Mam'Zulu and Bab'Zulu were put in ambulances while Sbu and Sandile where placed in the helicopter.

I look up as the helicopter flies up.

Ntsikelelo!

I run back into the house and open the closet.

I scare him.

Me: I'm so sorry. As I hug him.

Him: Is everyone okay? He says wiping his tears.

Me: I don't know sunshine. I say hugging him. While we both cry.

Man: Mrs Zulu!

Who is that?

Man: Mrs Zulu.!

Me: Yes. I say holding Ntsikelelo's hand, as he walks behind me. I'm so scared. I appear and there stands a tall grey beared man.

Man: I am Gasa, Ndabezitha sent me to get fetch you.

Me: Oh okay okay. I say pulling Ntsikelelo with me. Blood has dried on my hands. I follow Gasa. While police vans surround the house.

I guess the neighbors called them or the ambulance service.

One police officer runs to us

Police: Hey hey don't go, I need a statement from you mam.

Gasa: Hey voetsek marn!

He says opening the door for us. He gets in the drivers seat and drives off.

Ntsikelelo's leans on me as I rub his head.

We drive to the hospital.

\*\*\*\*\*

Andile's POV

I'm sitting in the waiting area, mad as hell. The doctor wanted to admit me but I refused, they just cleaned my wound and bandaged me since the bullet came out of my right side chest area. I've been trying to see at least one of them, but the doctors won't allow me to. What am I going to do.

I've been trying to get a hold of Leon, but I'm failing. He has a meeting with Osama, that's why. Fuck we are in deep shit. Look what's happening to my family.

I see Gasa and Sisekelo holding Ntsikelelo's hand while they rush to me.

Her: Andile is everyone okay? I'm so worried. She says as I see tears starting to form on the well of her eyes.

Me: I'm still waiting I don't know. I bite my bottom lip so it will stop from trembling. She touches my bandage.

Her: Are you okay, does it hurt?

Me: I'll be fine. She hugs my side.

Gasa: I am really sorry.

I just nod. While we hold each other.

The doors open and the doctor makes his way to us, we ambush him.

Me: What's happening?

Doc: We managed to remove the bullet and we have sedated Mrs Zulu. Bab'Zulu has been badly injured, there is chance that he might not walk, he is undergoing surgery as we speak. Sbusiso was badly shot, he lost a lot of blood, but at least the 2 bullets exited his body, but he is in a coma.

Me: Okay okay, Sandile?

He sighs

Doc: Sandile's situation is really critical, he is on life support, emergency surgery was performed on him by our neurosurgeon. The bullet exited his head also, but his brain tissues we torn abit, and now swelling closing up.

I swallowed hard.





Her: please let me go, I never saw anything. She says sniffing. She is shaking like a leaf.  
This girl looks young, why is she not in college.  
Me: Let the poor girl go marn, ungenaphi kulento?  
Man: I have an idea.  
Man4: We are listening  
Man: She is beautiful you see?  
Them: Yes  
Man: Young and probably wild.  
Man2: Where are you going with this?  
Man: The headlines "Leonardo Zuma's sextape with one of the cleaners"  
He is fucking crazy  
Me: You're out of your mind nx.  
Man: That will definitely drag the Zulu Corporation through the mud. They'll loose all the clients.  
She covers her mouth and weeps harder.  
Me: I'm not doing shit.  
Man: If you don't do it I'm killing her, it's her blood on your hands.  
Me: I'm not sleeping with her!  
Man: Okay, your call. He lifts his gun. I jump in front of her, and he fires a shot to my left hand.  
She screams.  
Me: Shit! Are you out of your mind! Were you going to kill her!  
Man: I'm not joking. I'll shoot again.  
Me: No don't shoot again! I lifting my bloody hands.  
Man: Okay, lady take of your clothes.  
Me: I'm the guy you want what does she have to do with anything!  
Man: Lady take off your clothes. She slowly reaches for her buttons while crying.  
Me: Don't do it. I look at he behind me, we lock eyes.  
Her: Sir he is going to shoot you again. She says unbuttoning her cleaning uniform, she is shaking and crying.  
I turn around.  
Me: Fuck all of you!  
They laugh  
Man: Both of you go check the coast to see if anybody is coming our way.  
Them: Sure. As they leave, there is only the four of us in the room.  
  
The man takes out his phone.  
Man: Hurry!  
She quickly finishes unbuttoning. And she slowly drops her uniform. Her perky boobs emerge and I turn around.  
They blow whistles.  
Man2: Yoh Leon uzodla kamnandi mm  
Man: Definitely when you're done with her I'm having her also.  
Man2: Me too mfethu. As he licks his disgusting lips.  
  
She is still crying. I can't do this, this is rape.  
I clench my jaws in anger.  
Man: Undo your dreadlocks sisi. Let them fall, you must look sexy in the video.  
I feel movement behind me. I guess she doing what she is told.  
Man: Mr Zuma, azishe! As he adjusts his phone to record.  
Me: Nx.  
Man2: We'll shoot you. He says pointing his gun.  
I don't care they can kill me, but I'm not dragging this innocent girl with me. She has done nothing.  
I turn around, while I hold my other arm putting pressure so it's doesn't bleed.  
Tears are like a river on her face, her lips trembling. This must be a nightmare on her. My eyes are fixed on her face, I will not disrespectf her and look at her body.  
Man: Grab your man sisi and take him the couch!  
I look at her. I don't know what to do.

She is shaking, she attempts to come to me.  
Me: It's okay, I'll walk myself. I say softly.  
I walk to the couch and we look at each other.  
Me: This is stupid! How am I going to have sex with her I'm not even hard.  
Man: Sisi, you heard your man. Make him hard!  
She flinches.  
Man2: Grab his manhood and play with him!  
I'm so disgusted the other man is carrying a phone recording all of this. These people make me sick.  
I look at her and close my eyes, I can't look at her, she is crying for heaven's sake.  
She she takes of my blazer.  
Man: What are you doing? That's not his zipper.  
Her: I'm trying to stop his bleeding, he is bleeding too much. She says in a whisper pleading. I open my eyes. She is shaking so bad.  
Man: Take care of your man, I like you already. After that you're going to take care of me.  
Me: Nxx.  
She takes off my shirt and tears it into smaller pieces so she can tie my wounds. She is doing it slowly, you can tell she is passing the time so she doesn't have to be raped.  
After a few minutes she's is done.  
Me: Thank you.  
She looks at me with pain in her eyes. Then she unbuckles my belt. I hold her hands and stop her. I can't do this.  
Me: Leave her out of this, you can take my money, all of it  
Man: We will take it, but we also want you to do what we want. Lady hurry up. He says laughing pointing a gun at her.  
Nx this is pointless.  
I let her continue. I close my eyes. I can't watch this.  
I feel her hands touching my manhood, and he deceives me, I thought he will not get hard, but he is getting hard. I can feel her shaking hands as she rubs him up and down. I don't know whether she doesn't know what she is doing or it's her nerves.  
After seconds of what she is doing.  
Man: That's enough, penetration now! Don't bore us. And take off your panty.  
Her: Please I-  
Man: Yeyi wena sfebe! I open my eyes and he is pointing a gun on her.  
Me: yeyi wena don't talk to her like that, she is doing what you want so back the fuck off.  
I say clenching my jaws. If only, if only these men knew what I'm capable of nci.  
She takes of her underwear and I look the other way.  
Man: Lie down, Leonardo on top of her. You are going to rip her intestines, I feel for her.  
He says looking at my dick.  
I'm so angry!  
I close my eyes in frustration and hold my nasal bridge.  
I get in between her legs. She covers her whole face crying.  
I lean towards her side and whisper.  
Me: don't cry it's okay, I'm not going to penetrate you, I'll trick them.  
She uncovers her swollen face and nods.  
I do it on her thighs at first they seem to believe me but the bastard catches me.  
Man: Penetrate Baba! Stop wasting our time.  
I stop. I'm not raping this girl.  
She looks at me and whispers.  
Her: It's okay, just do it. I don't want to die. Please just do it.  
I look at her as tears drop on the side of her eyes.  
I swallow hard and position myself at her entrance.  
I lean more closer to her so I can whisper.  
Me: I'm so sorry. Please forgive me.  
She whispers back as she grabs my shoulders for dear life.  
Her: It's okay, just be gentle I'm a virgin.  
My eyes pop out and look at her. No fuck no I'm not taking her virginity in this painful

manner no way.

I attempt to get up. She holds me down while looking at me with tearful eyes.

Her: Just do it sir. They are going to kill us.

I attempt to talk

Her: it's okay I forgive you, it's not your fault. Just do it. I want to get it over and done with.

I look at her for the longest time and attempt to penetrate her.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ibanathi's POV

It is painful, it hurts so bad. Emotionally and physically, but what can I do. They'll kill us. My lady part is burning. He keeps apologizing in my ear everytime I flinch in pain. I can't scream cause it will scare him. I have to be strong and get it over with. All I can do is grab him hard when he thrusts me.

After a long 10 minutes of silently crying and pressing my lips together out of pain. He lets out this white cream top off my abdomen.

Man: You pulled out? You were supposed to cum in her nxx.

Mr Zuma takes his blazer and covers my body while he zips his pants. He is so angry.

Veins are popping out. He is about to eat this man alive

This man makes his way to us.

Man: Look at how awesome your sextape is, you're going down! As he is distracted on the phone. Showing us the video.

I don't know what happened next but Mr Zuma broke his neck so fast. I By the time that other guy shoots, Mr Zuma used this man as a shield and took his gun and shot the guy in the head.

I cover my ears. Shaking.

He takes my uniform and throws it to me.

Him: Dress up. I'm going to get us out of here.

I dress as quickly as I can still shaking on what just happened. Two people where killed Infront of me, I've never seen anyone die.

Him: Lie down behind the couch I'm going to the kill the other 2.

He says making sure I lay down.

He closes the door while I remain in the office with two dead men.

I'm crying softly.

What am I going to do. I just lost my virginity. In about a month that old man my father sold me to, is going to take me. He has already paid for me. I'm forcifully marrying him. My father told him I was a virgin. If they find out I'm not a virgin anymore they going to kill me, that old man made sure that I am still a virgin cause he paid so much for me.

Insert 71

Unedited.

Leon's POV

I shot the other dead, dragged him to the storage room and this one just on his arm and leg. I gagged him so he can't scream in pain. I'm dragging him to my office. No one is supposed to see this, this could tarnish this corporation in a flash. I think Ibanathi was responsible for this floor, I haven't seen another cleaner.

I open my office and push him to the floor. I peek behind the couch and Ibanathi is still laying there with her stomach. Maybe I shouldn't do this in front of her. I hold this bastard by the jaws and scold him with my jaws clenched.

Me: You're so fucked!

The pain on my biceps is starting to be unbearable. I need some pain killers.

I grab my phone and call Gasa. He picks up.

Me: I need you to clean up a mess for me, I've been shot. Come to my office now.

Him: Nxamalala.

I hang up.

Gasa has always been our right hand man, we trust him.

I dial Dr Nzama.

Me: I've been shot please meet me at my house in 15 minutes.

Him: I wonder what happened this time. Okay I'll be there.

I hang up.

What do I say to her. I raped her for heaven's sake. I breath out and call on her.

Me: It's okay you can get up now.

She gets up slowly, still shaking. Her eyes are red, she's been crying. I feel so bad.

Her: Can I please go home.

I won't lie I'm a little worried she'll go to the police and sing everything. But how do I tell her not to go, it will seem like I want to get away with what happened.

Me: Is there anything I can do to compensate you for what happened? Name your price, I know it won't amount to the damages but I don't know, just to-

Her: No sir, I didn't sell my body to you.

I swallow hard. What was I thinking asking her that.

Her: I want to forget what happened today. I never saw anything, nothing happened. I was caught in a wrong place at a wrong time. You took a bullet for me, thank you.

She says as tears fill on the well of her eyes.

Me: Everything is my fault, I'm really sorry for what I did to you.

Her: It's okay. I'll be fine, I'm fine. I think it's best I don't ever work here again.

Me: Why?

Her: I want to forget, I'm sorry but I don't want to come to work and be reminded of what happened. I want to heal. Like nothing happened sir.

I think hard, it's fair.

Me: whatever you think is best for your well-being.

She nods.

Me: atleast can I pay you your salary while you look for another job?

Her: No sir, as I said I'll be fine.

Me: But-

The door swings open and Gasa enters interrupting me.

Him: What the fuck happened.

Me: I'll explain later marn. I'm in pain for now. Who you're with.

Him: Ngihamba noNdlovu.

Me: listen, can he take her home?

Him: Sure.

Ndlovu appears behind him.

I look at her.

Me: He is going to take you home and he'll make sure you're safe.

She nods.

Me: I really apologize for what happened.

Her: It's all in the past now as from now sir.

Me: Ndlovu. He nods and walks away with her.

I look at Gasa

Me: Keep this bastard alive, we'll pay him a visit tommorrow. I need to rest I've been through too much.

Him: Nxamalala.

I leave Gasa to clean up the mess. I get in my car. I call Andile, he doesn't pick up. I send him a text and drive off.

What a fucked up Christmas.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ndabezinhle's POV

My Christmas has been delightful with Gogo, never gets old. I haven't been on my phone since morning.

I go grab it on my bed and walk back to the sitting room to chill with Gogo.  
I open my phone and I left an unfinished message to Sbu. I never wished him a merry Christmas back, I continue to type the message but my phone rings. It's Sisekelo.  
I answer.  
Me: Honey. I smile.  
She keeps quiet and sniffs.  
Me: Are you okay? Are you crying? What's wrong.  
As I adjust myself on the couch. Gogo is already looking at me.  
Her: We were attacked, there was a shooting.  
I stand up my palms sweating.  
Me: Oh my goodness, is everyone okay? Are you okay?  
Her: No Ndabezinhle, the entire family is in the hospital, they are hurt. Really bad.  
Me: uSbusiso, uSbu- as tears fall from my eyes, Gogo stands up.  
Her: He is in a coma. I'm sorry.  
Me: No!  
I drop my phone.  
Gogo: Kwenzenjani!?  
I'm sobbing so hard, I can't breath.  
I attempt to run out of the sitting room, Gogo holds me.  
Me: Gogo he was shot, Sbusiso was shot, I have to get out of here.  
I'm shaking.  
Gogo: Nkosi yami!  
I get out of her grip running to my room to pack a quick bag.  
Get yourself together he is not going to die, is what I keep repeating in my head as I pack my bag.  
I can't stop my tears from falling, I'm so broken.  
I rush to the dining room and pick my phone up.  
Gogo: I'm so sorry mntanami. Phephisa. She keeps rubbing my back as I request a cab to the hospital  
Me: I should have been there, Gogo, bheka manje.  
She hugs me tight for a couple of seconds.  
I have to get out of her my cab is here.  
Gogo: Be safe Zinhle! Call me. Nceyi nkosi yami.  
I get in the cab and bury head in my hands weeping.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Sisekelo's POV

I'm tired and sleepy. The doctor did a check up on me and the baby, we are okay, I'm just in shock. Ntsikelelo is sleeping on one of the waiting couches.  
We've been in here for hours. The doctor make his appearance again  
Doc: I suggest you guys go and rest you've been in here for hours.  
Him: I'm not leaving here without seeing them. Period.  
Doc: Maybe tomor-  
Him: No, now!  
The doctor sighs  
Doc: Okay, just a couple of minutes. Follow me.  
I attempt to wake Ntsikelelo up.  
Doc: Don't wake him up, Gladys watch him. He says looking at the receptionist.  
I'm a little hesitant but I let it be. We follow him  
He opens up one of the wards.  
Doc: We put Mr and Mrs Zulu in the same ward. Sandile is in ward no. 223 and Sbu is in 220. Please make it snappy I'm not allowed to do this.  
We walk in closer to the bed. At this point I've run out of tears. My heart is aching.  
Mam'Zulu is awake.  
Me: Ma. As I hold her hands sitting beside her. While Andile hold her other hand.  
Her: I'm okay, where are my sons. No one has been telling me anything. She says as

tears form in her eyes.

Me: Sbu is in a coma, Sandile is on life support.

She sighs deeply.

Her: Who would do this, on Christmas day? So evil. I grab her hand tighter as she stares into blank space, as tears fell from the sides of her eyes.

Him: I'm sorry mother. I'll get to the bottom of this.

This is so painful.

Andile then walks over to his father.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Andile's POV

I'm looking over my father and I'm trying to be strong but this is weighing up on me so much. We have to check on my brother's too. The clock is against us.

I hold his hand to say goodbye but he squeezes hard and pulls me closer

Me: Father you're awake? I say looking at him with shock. He is still closing his eyes.

Him: I need you to kill who ever did this. Do you understand me. He says in a dry whisper. My father has never condoned our dirty ways, never. So for him to mention the word kill surprises me.

Him: Do you understand.

Me: Yes father.

Him: I trust you to protect this family, Protect it Nkosenye.

Me: Yes father.

He then let's go of my hand and goes back to look like he is unconscious.

I'll do anything to protect this family.

We leave the ward and check on Sandile, he was just laying there, lifeless, with all these machines around him, I could not bear to see him like that, I panicked and we made our way out to see Sbu.

Sbu is a champ I know he'll wake up within 2-3 days, we're used to getting shot all the time. Just then the door opens slowly, Ndabezihle appears.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Ndabezihle's POV

I slightly open the door and Andile and Sisekelo look at me.

Me: I'm so sorry about what happened. That came out as a whisper.

Sisekelo comes up to me and we hug each other. I can't stop crying.

Her: It's going to be okay.

Him: It's okay Ndabe, we'll be okay, he is going to be okay. He says looking at him Laying in bed.

Her: Do you want a moment with him.

Me: Ye yes please.

Her: Okay. She looks at Andile and they leave me alone in here with him.

I walk slowly to his bed.

Me: I'm so sorry.

I let it out. My heart is broken.

I hold his hand close to my face.

Me:How I wish you could wake up and hug me, tell me everything is going to be fine and that you love me. I want you to kiss me. I want it all back. I should have been with you, I'm so sorry Ndabezitha.

I can't leave him here alone. The doctor will have to drag me out of here. As I lay my head on his bed.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Anelisa's POV

We are sitting at home and the news is about to come on. I don't watch news. So I get up and put on my slippers

"Leading on the headlines today, the Zulu family of the Zulu Inc. were gunned down this morning, they have suffered some serious injuries"

What?!

Insert 72

Unedited. (Something short)

Ibanathi's POV.

I'm walking home it's already dark, I asked the driver to drop me off at the bus stop, then I'll walk from there. I'm numb. I lost my virginity, I saw people dying in front of me, I lost my job, what am I living for? Now I'm going back to that hell hole, I should've died with my mother. I'm sniffing along the way.

I see his van parked at the yard, I'm so disgusted, I don't have time for him today.

I wipe my tears.

I first take my clothes from the drying line. I then make my way to our small 3 roomed house. I get in, they are having a conversation.

Me: Sanbona. I say passing them

Dad: Haibo Ibanathi don't pass us like that, I'm sitting here with you husband and you just pass us, in fact why are you 2 hours late.

Me: I'm sorry father, I missed my bus. How are you Bab' Khumalo. I say looking down.

Him: I'm good honey, you should've asked me to fetch you. And please for the last time call me Zimisele.

Me: I'm sorry Zimisele.

Him: That's more I like it. He says smiling with sweat in his forehead. He is so disgusting. I mean he is 26 years older than me, shouldn't he be ashamed.

I bow and go to my room. I feel tears stinging, I hate him so much. He lives around the area, he owns a market here. He is old and I don't like him, why my father did this I don't know.

I fold my clothes thinking about everything that happened to me. I need to change this uniform, I can smell his expensive cologne on me.

Dad calls me on the other side.

Dad: Ibanathi come say goodbye to your husband.

Me: I'm coming father.

I throw my clothes angrily on my scrap bed.

I compose myself and walk back to the living room.

I follow him outside while my dad sits on the couch, smoking.

I'm walking him to his van. I'm walking behind him, I don't want to walk beside him. We reach his van and I attempt to walk back to the house.

He holds my shoulders and chills of disgust run through my body.

I fake a smile

Him: I can't for you to move in with me. I wanna show you how much I love you.

I fake a smile, trying to blush.

Me: I'm really tired I want to rest so goodnight. I say removing his hands from my shoulders slowly.

Him: Just like that? When are you kissing me? I want to taste your sweet lips baby.

The thought of me exchanging spit with him make me urgh.

Me: I'm not ready Bab'Khu- Zimisele. We talked about this.

Him: Okay sthandwa sami, our house is almost done, they are finishing up the roof, then they'll put the windows.

He is talking about the 2 bedroom house he said he'll build for me before moving in with him. That's the only thing that has been preventing the whole moving situation, I wish it could take longer, I don't want to be with him.

Me: Okay.

He attempts to peck my lips but I look the other way, he ends up kissing my cheek. He then forces a hug.

Him: Your breasts are so soft, can wait to lay on them. He says inhaling my scent. He



pulls out it the hug quickly and looks at me. I fake a smile again.  
Him: You smell different, (sniffs) you smell like a man( sniffs) I smell his expensive cologne.  
I stuttle, I should have changed.  
Me: What are you talking about?  
Out of nowhere he grips my dreadlocks roughly and tightly.  
Him: Uqomile? (Are you seeing someone)  
Me: No no I would never. I feel tears stinging.  
Him: Then explain this cologne.  
Me: It must have been someone next to me on the bus, I didn't mind them, please let go of my hair. I say pleading softly .  
He seems to be softening  
Him: You know what will happen if you cheat on me. Angizwani neyfebe. I paid a lot for you.  
Me: Yes I know. It's nothing I swear Khumalo. As I hold his hand attempting to soften the grip.  
He lets go and brushes my hair  
Him: You should let your dreadlocks down more, I like them like this, not tied up. You are beautiful.  
I nod trying not to cry. I bite my lip as it trembles.  
I see my father walking out to empty his ash tray.  
Him: I love you. He says attempting to to peck my lips, I move my head again.  
Me: Goodnight.  
As I slowly walk back to the house. While his van skitters away. I attempt to walk past my father.  
Dad: Yewena.  
Me: Yebo baba.  
He stands up. My body tenses up.  
He slaps me. I hold my cheek and look at him, then look down, cause eye contact is direspect, so he says.  
Dad: I saw you avoiding to kiss Zimisele, he has been very patient with you, he is building you a house god damnit.  
Me: I'm sorry father, I'm just not ready.  
Dad: Well you have to! He paid R30 000 for you! Which girl in this village has been paid for that much!  
Me: No one father.  
Dad: Nxx then get your act together!  
Me: I'm sorry.  
Dad: I'm hungry.  
Me: I'll bring your food when it's ready. He says nothing and sits on his couch. I go to the kitchen and start cooking.  
My tears are coming out voluntarily. I know I'm going to cry all night.  
I cook something quick and serve him.  
I go outside and fill the metal basin with water. I'm bathing with cold water because I'm numb.  
I carry the heavy basin to this small shack we use as our bathroom.  
I take off my clothes and sink my whole body into basin. I cry.

\*\*\*\*\*

Anelisa's POV.

I'm in my room and I call Sisekelo, my hands are shaking. It rings for a couple of minutes. She picks up.  
Me: Oh my God are you okay? I saw it in the news? I thought you were hurt. As I feel tears threatening.  
Her: I'm home now, I was not injured but I'm not okay, my family is hurting.  
Me: I'm so sorry, is there anything I can do to help.

Her: For now I'll cope, thank you.  
I'm hesitant to ask but I'm curious.  
Me: How is Sandile...and umm your husband and the rest of them  
Her: Sandile is on life support, he is in a critical state and...  
My mind just went completely blank, I didn't hear the rest.  
Her: Hello?  
I shake my head as tears stream down.  
Me: oh I'm sorry, I'm here, I'm here. I'm really sorry for what is happening to your family.  
There is this huge lump on my throat and k want to let it out.  
Her: it will all pass.  
Me: Be safe okay, I love you.  
Her: Thank you, I love you too. I drop the call and a loud sob escapes my mouth.  
What if he? What if he...  
No no no.  
I lay on my bed and grab my pillow crying thinking about him and our kiss.  
Sandile why would you kiss me and try to leave me. Why God why? I'm still trying to figure  
my feelings for him. I can't take this. I feel my heart ripping apart.

\*\*\*\*\*

Insert 73

Unedited

Leon's POV

I hardly slept I've been thinking a lot. Who wants to fuck us over like this. It's 4am, I'm meeting up with Andile, to question this jackass who fucked us up, now he is fucked up. I get in my car and drive to the abandoned building. Andile follows me shortly. I get out of my car. While he makes his way to me. I lean on my bonnet.  
Me: Ma-a. That is his nickname from high school  
Him: Kuyabheda mfethu.  
Me: Kodwa ngentwana yami uSandile, ey bafo.  
Him: He scares me. I should have protected him  
Me: It will all pass, like it never happened. We'll avenge.  
Him: You looked fucked.  
Me: Because they did fuck me over, nx they made me rape some girl.  
Him: No way.  
Me: Yes way, so can you imagine  
Him: This is way fucked up. How is she?  
Me: honestly I don't know man, I just, fuck. She says she wants to forget what happened. I don't wanna bother her and be a constant reminder of how I took her virginity.  
Him: She was- he says shocked  
Me: Yup  
Him: Man I can't imagine.  
Me: But this bastard inside is going to imagine. Lets go inside.  
He takes his gun and cocks it.  
There he is tied upside down like a punching bag. He is groaning and crying in pain. Andile places his foot below his chin and pushing him, making him swing.  
Him: Khuluma wenja.  
Me: Kube ikhindi namaCrop top. I say swinging him with my foot also.  
Man: Please, I have a family, please.  
Him: You didn't think we have family? They one you wiped out. He says kicking him.  
Andile flinches in pain a bit, he must have twisted his body a little hard, he was shot phela. If I was physically fit, I would have hammered his joints.  
Me: Listen I don't have time for you. I say cocking my gun. I shot his thigh.  
He screams in pain.  
Man: Okay okay okay! The diamond, this is about the Cullinan Diamond! He says groaning

We look at each other. We know exactly what he is talking about.  
Him: Who the fuck wants it.  
We know exactly who wants it.  
Man: François!  
Him: Shit! He says firing shots in his head.  
I clench my jaws.  
Me: We are fucked! What are we going to do?!  
Him: We can't give it back you know that!  
Me: I know, he fucked us over first!  
Him: That piece of shit got a whole mafia.  
Me: We don't even have half the men he has. What the hell does he want. He got the Koh-i-Noor diamond, it's worth more than the one we have.  
Him: It's a \$2 billion dollar diamond, who wouldn't want it.  
Me: But that wasn't the agreement. We are the ones who got ahold of both diamonds, we were supposed to split. But he wanted to fuck us over, he wanted both of them to himself, after the hard work we went through to get ahold of those from Mikal!  
Him: Selfish bastard.  
Me: Fuck.  
Him: We need to be careful and plan our attack.  
Me: This time we kill him  
Him: And his entire family.  
Me: Wipe out.  
We nod in frustration.  
That diamond we keeping is for our legacies. Should anything go wrong, we have \$2 billion dollars in back up.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Anelisa's POV

I haven't been able to sleep, I didn't even eat dinner yesterday. My head is pounding. I get up and look at my face at the dressing table mirror, my eyes are swollen, it's the crying plus my sight problem itch. I walk to kitchen and find my mother making breakfast.  
Her: What's wrong? She says drying her hands  
Me: Nothing. I say in a dry voice.  
Her: I haven't seen you like this, you look drained, tell me, you can talk to me. She says caressing my arm.  
Me: it's okay ma, it's nothing, my eyes are acting up again.  
She pulls me to the couch.  
Her: I wasn't born yesterday, I know you and I have never had the talk but is it a man?  
Tears well on my eyes.  
Me: It's complicated ma.  
Her: Did he cheat?  
Me: You wouldn't understand he is not even my man, I'm sorry I can't do this. I say getting up. She sits me down.  
Her: Explain, I'm your mother I'll understand. Try me.  
I look at her still gathering the strength.  
Me: I don't know, we kissed but I'm not sure if it meant anything to him, we are not even that well acquainted, I've seen in more or less than 3 times. At the same time he was, he is the guy Khethi is messing with, I'm such a bad person, she is my friend! On the other hand he got shot. (I'm now sobbing) Now he is on life support, we didn't even talk about our situation! Is he even going to wake up. Is he just going to leave me feeling all sort of emotions. I don't even know how I'll see him at the hospital, he is my friend's brother-in-law. She doesn't even know anything happened between us, or am I even friends with him. How do I even ask permission to see him, "Oh hey I'm the girl he kissed the other day, can I see him?" I'm not even his girlfriend!  
Do you know how difficult it is for me to even see him, I'm not even family, what will the Zulu family say. Now I'm stuck in this house feeling all sort of emotions and the least I could do is cry! I say running out of breath.

Wow I vented, that was a lot for my mother to take in.  
She looks at me with her eyes out and her mouth slightly open. She doesn't know what to say.

Her: I didn't know it was that a lot, oh poor baby come here. She says pulling me in for a hug.

I cry on her shoulder.

Her: I'm so sorry, I'm sorry. She says rubbing my back.

Me: I want to see him ma, I really do, I need to.

Her: Your situation is hard but the first step is to talk to your friend, she will be able to understand you better, and she'll make a way for you to see him. If she is truly your friend, she'll understand you.

Me: I don't know ma, I really don't know.

Her: Just go to her. She says brushing my hair.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm dressing up to go Sisekelo, I really have to check on her, what she is going through his not light, I must be there for her before my own feelings.

I put on my glasses and request a cab.

I get in our group chat and Thandeka texted the group.

Tha: Yoh guys did you hear what happened to the Zulu family. It's so sad. Khethi how are you. It must be hard.

Khethi: It's really sad but life is like that, it's unpredictable. But life goes on.

Tha: Poor Sandile.

Khethi: I really wish him a speedy recovery.

Tha: Are you going to see him

Khethi: No, we are not personal like that.

Tha: okay.

I really don't know how I'll respond so I just keep quiet

I grab my sling bag and make my way out.

\*\*\*\*\*

After 30 minutes I'm here by her gate, I didn't even tell her I was coming, because I know she always says she has it together but she does need support.

I buzz her gate.

A couple of seconds it opens. I make my way inside.

She opens the door.

Her: Anelisa.

Me: Sisekelo. I say hugging her tight. She looks exhausted.

Me: I'm so sorry. As she pulls me in closing the door.

Her: I'm sorry it's a mess, I didn't clean.

Me: It's okay you just sit and rest, you need to. I'll take care of everything.

Her: I really don't want to-

Me: It's okay honey, you need to rest. Have you eaten?

Her: No, oh my I've forgot about Ntsikelelo, he must be hungry how could I-

Me: I'll take care of everything. Just go and rest

Her: Thank you. I really do need a break. Andile is not here, I'm not sure when he is coming back.

I rub her shoulder and she makes her way upstairs.

Okay what to do first.

I follow her shortly and go to Ntsikelelo's room. He is awake.

Me: Hey budd, I'll make you something to eat, do you want take a bath first.

Him: Okay sis Anelisa. He is the cutest. Shame I wonder how he must be feeling.

Me: Sharp. I say shooting a smile at him.

I know what will cheer him up.

I go downstairs and tidy up, there isn't much cleaning to do. After that I make some breakfast for them.

Ntsikelelo makes his way down looking clean.

Him: I'm done.

Me: okay budd come and take a seat so you can eat.

He does so.

I hand him his breakfast.

Him: Thank you sis Anelisa.

I rub his shoulder.

Me: You're welcome.

I put Sisekelo's breakfast on the tray and take it up to her.

I first knock and let myself in.

She turns on her bed

Her: Awww you didn't have too.

Me: I told you today I'm taking care of you. I say putting it beside her.

Her: Thank you, it really means a lot.

Me: Ngisayohlala noNtsikelelo mina, if you need anything call me.

Her: Okay.

I close the door behind me.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's is now noon.

I'm watching Avengers: End game with Ntsikelelo. I don't even know what's going on.

Him: I have been watching this over and over again.

Me: I can tell by how you know the lines.

He smiles.

I swear he knows it line by line.

He watches it until he falls asleep. I grab a throw and put it over him.

I sit back and scroll my phone

I see Khethi and Thandeka are at some place on Instagram.

I log on WhatsApp and look at their statuses, Khethi is so cozy with this guy, he is even kissing her cheek. "Maybe it wouldn't be so bad" I say to myself thinking about our situation, it's clear she doesn't love him.

I go back to instagram. And search his name.

I look at his picture repeatedly, for a long time. I wonder what you think of me. I say blanking in my thoughts.

Her: Are you okay? I hold my phone on my chest.

Me: You scared me. I didn't even hear her walk up to me.

Her: Are you Okay? She says in a soft tone because Ntsikelelo is asleep.

I feel tears and fight them really hard. Today is not about me.

Me: yeah I'm fine you want juice? I say getting up.

Her: No. She pulls my hand to the dining area.

Me: What's wrong?

Her: Anelisa I saw you.

Me: Saw me doing what? I say shrugging in nervousness

She folds her arms.

Her: You were looking at his picture.

Me: I wasn't- she grabs my phone unexpectedly.

Her: See? She says flashing it on my face. Tears well on my eyes.

Her: Do you want to talk about it?

Me: No I was just-

Her: Anelisa.

My lip trembles.

Me: I ummm I, we. No I . Tears fall involuntarily.

Her: Hey what's wrong, Anelisa why are you crying? You can talk to me. She says pulling me and grabbing a chair.

Me: I don't know Sisekelo, we kissed and I think I like him and now hearing that he, he might not make it, aches my heart. I don't know what to do. I'm sorry

Her: What are apologizing for. When did this happen.

I tell her the story.  
She holds my hand.  
Her: This must be hard for you. I'm so sorry. I didn't know he tried something with you.  
Me: But I don't want to exaggerate, maybe it was just a kiss, maybe it didn't mean anything to him, and now here I am acting like his girlfriend, wanting to see him and all. Don't you think I'm extra?  
Her: No sweetie, it's okay to figure out your feelings, but if you want to see him, I'll arrange that for you soon.  
Me: It would really mean a lot.  
She smiles.  
Her: I'm sorry. She mimes.  
I nod.  
At least she now knows.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Ndabezinhle's POV

I haven't eaten anything. I've been sitting beside him this whole time. I really want him to wake up, so we can work things out. I don't want another man. I want him, this has to work. I love him. Security has been trying to get me out but Andile made an arrangement for me to stay longer.  
I'm burying my head beside him sobbing.  
I feel a hand brushing my head.  
This can't be happening. I'm hallucinating.  
Him: Ngiyaxolisa. I shoot my head up.  
Me: Sbusiso. I say letting out a loud sob and moving closer to his face. I hold his face.  
Me: I thought you were going to leave me, I'm so sorry for what happened. I say sobbing freaking out.  
Him: Hey hey shh woza la. He says bringing me closer to him.  
Him: Ngiyaxolisa sthandwa sami. I really regret what I did to you. I broke your heart.  
Me: I don't even care about that anymore, I just want you to hold me and love me. I want you back. I want it all back. I should have been there.  
Him: No, I'm glad you weren't there, I could not imagine something happening to you. I really am sorry Ndabezinhle, I want you back, I need you in my life. I love you. I'll never hurt you like that again. I promise to be truthful from now on.  
He is talking but I'm just shook he woke up.  
I bring my face down to his shoulder while he caresses me.  
Him: Ngiyaxolisa babe. Ngiyakthanda. Stop crying.  
Me: I love you too. As he calms me down.  
It has been hell for me.

#### Insert 74

Unedited.

#### Ndabezinhle's POV

I've calmed down, I've been leaning on him for quite sometime now. He called Andile to bring him clothes, I don't why because he is going to be here for at least one more week if not two. I'm so hungry I can eat a whole cow.  
The doctor walks in. I get up from his shoulder.  
Doc: Ah Mr Zulu, I see that now you're awake. He says holding his writing board against his chest.  
Him: All is left for me is to get out of here.  
Doc: I'm afraid that's not possible. He says checking these weird machines or monitors.  
Him: I'm going home, tonight.  
Doc: You just woke up, you need to heal a little.  
Him: No need to worry doctor I've been shot way to many times.  
I stare at him, and he doesn't look at me at all because he knows I'm staring at him. What kind of shady business were these men doing kanti to risk their lives like this.

My thoughts are disturbed by Andile swinging the door.  
Andile: Sanibonani. He says shooting his Colgate smile at Sbu. He places this small bag on the floor.  
Doc: Another Mr Zulu.  
Him: Bafo.  
Andile: It's good you're awake, you and I need to talk.  
They are giving each other a body language they can only understand, bayaseqisela thina.  
Him: how is everyone.  
Andile: Our parents are getting there, mother is supposed to be discharged in about a week, father has to stay a little longer.  
Him: Sandile...  
Andile: Yeah, we don't know. He says biting his bottom lip.  
There is silence in the room  
  
The doctor breaks it.  
Doc:Mr Zulu I can't let you go tonight.  
Him: Ay ngiyahamba mina. He says pulling his drips from his arms.  
Me: Sbusiso! I say with my mouth open.  
Doc: Take it easy. You're very stubborn, let me go fix your medication.  
He says opening the door.  
He is now sitting up. I grab his bag so He can put on his clothes  
Andile: How are you. He says observing his bandage around his stomach.  
Him: I'll be okay, you know me bafo.  
Andile: okay ima ke manguza njena. He says slapping his stomach. I gasp.  
Him: WeAndile marn.  
Andile laughs, he slaps his stomach again pressing his wounds.  
He groans.  
Him: Hawe mah. He say swinging a punch on him Andile dodges.  
Andile is dying in laughter  
Me: Ay Andile. I say giving him a look.  
Andile: What? Angithi yena he is a strong man, he is discharging himself. He says slapping him again.  
Him: Andile fokof!  
Andile continues. These ones are just full of games, who plays like that. It's not normal, they are men. Smh.  
Him: ngizosukuma la engathi kade ngasukuma ngiktshela nx.  
  
I can't deal, I'm too hungry for this. I hand him his clothes. I help him here and there.  
  
The doctor walked in and gave us instructions, he is not yet allowed to eat very solid foods, I'll be watching him to make sure he follows instructions.  
The doctor discharges him and we make our way to Andile's car. I'm exhausted.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Sisekelo's POV

I'm not cooking anything, I don't feel like cooking, so I just order in Nando's.  
Andile has been gone since morning. So I don't really know where he is at right now, so we eat without him.  
Anelisa was really helpful, I needed that mini break, what happened was a lot to take in. I feel like sometimes I act like I'm too strong, but at a point I do really need someone to lean on, and Anelisa was just that. Bontle wanted to come but I told her not to, I don't want to put her life in danger and the triplets. You never know what will happen next.  
Some men arrived at noon, like 12 of them, they said they are here to guard the house and monitor movement. I don't even know why Andile is not communicating these things to me, I just see things happening, he got me mixed up cause I'm his wife, he is supposed to tell me what's going on, ngingavele nje ngibone ngabantu betheleka.  
  
After eating I go to our bedroom to change into my pj's. He walks in as I'm thinking of him. He takes off his jacket.  
Me: Awusho Nkosenye, why didn't you tell me that some men are coming?



He takes off his shoes.

Him: Oh? I didn't think it would be an issue considering you know what happened.

I fold my arms

Me: I know exactly what happened, but that's not the point. The importance is communication, I'm your wife.

Him: Okay I'm sorry, I should have told you.

Me: Infact where were you?

Him: I fetched Sbu he is awake.

Me: Well I'm glad he is okay but for the whole day?

Him: I was with Leon, what's for dinner?

Is he going to disregard the fact that I'm asking him questions.

Me: Andile why were we sprayed with bullets the other day. I say walking close, I deserve to know, he promised he'll never let something like that happen again and it did.

Him: Listen Sisekelo I've been through hell okay, I don't wanna talk about it. He says walking to the closet.

Me: And I haven't?

Him: That's not what I said.

Me: We almost died because of you. You Nkosenye, promised not to let something like that happen again. What's going on tell me. I say raising my voice.

Him: I did protect you didn't I?! He says throwing his hands in the air.

Me: The whole family is in the hospital! Can't you see you're putting our lives in danger?! What is going on!

Him: I'll handle it okay, please for the love of God stay out it!

Me: I'm traumatized! I can't afford stress.

Him: I know that okay, I'm going to handle it. Just let me handle it.

He walks out of the door. I feel tears stinging.

This is so unfair.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*3 WEEKS LATER\*\*\*\*

Anelisa's POV

I'm here at the front of his ward. My palms are sweating, I'm so nervous, I don't think I can't handle seeing him in such a lifeless state. Sisekelo wanted to come with me, but I refused, I told her I'll be okay. She did ask permission from Andile, he was a bit skeptical but he agreed. I was supposed to see him last week but I kept procrastinating. I'm here now, I can't turn back. I bought flowers, 9 white roses in a vase. Wait does he even like flowers. Maybe I should throw these away. I turn around making my way.

Voice: Those are lovely flowers who are they for? A nurse asks me.

Me: Thank you, these are for a friend.

Her: They are beautiful.

She says continuing with her way.

Maybe I shouldn't throw them out. I turn and put my hand on the handle. I adjust my glasses and open slowly.

I close the door behind me.

I slowly lift my head and my eyes land on him. All these crazy machines around him, what did they do to him.

Tears well on my eyes.

I walk to his bed slowly. I'm shaking, I'm going to drop this vase.

I put it beside him. I put my hands around my mouth so I can calm down and not sob.

His head is wrapped in a bandage. He has black circles around his eyes.

His mouth is so dry. His skin is pale. I'd do anything to see his one left dimple when he side smiles.

I need a moment.

I turn around while holding my mouth. My tears fall like a river. I didn't think it was this bad.

He looks lifeless.

I have to get it together.

I take a bottle of water from my bag and gulp it down.

I calm down a little, but my tears haven't.

I turn back around and look at him.

Me: Umh hey (sniff) I came to check on you (sniff) to see how you're holding up. I'm sorry for what happened (sniff).

I keep quiet for a while.

Me: um I'm going to get going now. I hope you like flowers, these are for you. I really wish you a speedy recovery. Um bye Sandile.

I really need a moment, this was the hardest things I've ever done.

I take my bag and close the door behind me.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Ibanathi's POV

The more this house is getting close to being finished, the more anxious I become. As I look at it from a far while sitting under the shade. I'm drinking my sugared water, enjoying my own company. My father is not home, and those moments are the most peaceful. I see Msawenkosi getting off the bus. I used to work with her at the Zulu Inc. she is one of the people that made my job easy, she taught me how everything is done there, she is the one who got me that job in the first place. She was kind of sad that I don't work there anymore but I lied and told her that Mr Khumalo told me to quit since I'm moving in with him in a few days.

She is coming from a far, she is carrying some groceries. Let me go and help her with her plastics.

I gulp my sugared water and walk to her.

It takes a while for me to reach her as she is coming from afar.

Me: You look tired

Her: That because I am weZenande.

Me: haibo stop calling me that, you know I don't look like her.

Her: To me you look like Zenande Mfenyana. Yazi you would make a great doubler. Yazi uyaGlower.

Me: No stop boosting my confidence. I say grabbing too plastics from her.

Her: If you knew how beautiful you were heee, you deserve to be a TV star. Friend look how fresh, long and black your dreadlocks are.

Me: You know I worked hard to get them to look like this. It's hardwork. Thinking of a big chop.

Her: You're crazy, don't you dare! You'll have me to deal with.

I laugh.

Her: Ukube uyazi ukuthi how beautiful you are to marry that big sweaty funky ass man.

Wena you deserve those rich men we only see on the magazines.

Me: Mcm, rich man from where when we live in this village, angithi la kukho aboKhumalo.

Her: Isicefe sobaba abanukayo.

We both laugh.

She is really a distresser.

We are walking slowly as the sunsets.

We are drinking juice Msa bought along the way. She really lives far from the bus stop, she lives alone. Story for another day.

Me: Yoh friend those were the-

I stop walking

She stops laughing.

Her: Are you okay?

Me: I don't know I thought I was about to-

I feel it coming up. I run to the side and I throw up.

Her: Aybo lba are you okay? She says touching my back

I get up and wipe my mouth.

Me: I don't know where that came from (cough) it must be the juice, I had sugared water before. Bad combination.

She observes me

Her: I see

Me: It's nothing to worry about. I say wiping the corner of my mouth.

Her: hmm.

Me: Come let's go, it's getting dark. I say leading the way.

Insert 75

Unedited.

Ibanathi's POV

I'm doing laundry outside, my hands are starting to get itchy, mcm one day I'm going to buy myself a washing machine, this thing of handwashing is not cool at all. I'm bent down humming. The sunrise is beautiful, this village is beautiful but people like Khumalo make me despise it. Today I want mangoes, I'm going to go and pick them up from a neighbors tree near by, they don't like mangoes so Mam Ndlovu said I can pick them anytime, they are my favourite.

I hear our door screeching, that's how old it is. My father is making his way out, he has his newspaper under his arm, he is wearing his cowboy hats, he always does, that is his signature look.

Him: Ngisaya emakethe. He says brushing the tip of his shoe.

Me: Okay baba.

I watch him as he walks slowly, careful he doesn't mess his shoe shine by the dust. Thoughts come back quickly. My father wasn't always like this, he used to love me, he used to treat me like his princess, I remember these days, these ones when he used to go to the market, he'll always bring me KitKat, he knows how much I love it.

But after my mother's passing everything changed. I was 14 years when my mother passed, my father gradually changed on me. It's like I was a nuisance to his presence, I was so young I couldn't just understand why.

I remember one time I was 30 minutes late from school, just 30 minutes late, and that was because I had helped an elderly woman in our area with her groceries, she lived quite far, that's why I was late.

I found him waiting for me with a sjambok. He didn't ask anything he just starting beating me, I was screaming, neighbors came out, I was trying to explain myself, he didn't listen. That day I just knew he wanted to beat me and he was looking for anything little he can find to beat me for.

I always wondered why he changed, I've heard some stories that when my mother died was with her boyfriend, supposedly that was her boyfriend's car. My father has questioned my paternity since. But it's funny how he never brought it up to me, he hasn't even told me I may not be his, but I guess he shows me that by treating me this way. I really do miss my father, the one who loved and protected me, this man walking down the gravel road, I don't know him. I want my father back. My thoughts are disturbed by this nausea feeling attacking me again. I drop wet trousers back in the tub and run to the other side of the house.

I throw up.

What is wrong with me, I've been throwing up for the past 3 days, this is not healthy.

Voice: Just in time.

I shoot my head up. Its Msawenkosi.

Me: Msa, I'm not feeling well.

Her: I know and that's why I'm taking you to the clinic.

I stand up straight, I hate clinics, I've always hated them, thank God I'm never the sick type.

Me: You know I hate clinics, I'm not going.

Her: Have you throwed up 3 days in a row?

Me: No but-

Her: Exactly, it's weird, what if something is eating you up inside, you're going to loose wait.

Me: But-

Her: No buts hambo gqoka sambeni, I'm not going anywhere.

Me: Argh fine let me finish up first. I say wiping the corner of my mouth.

I wash the little clothes left, rinse them, and hang them.

I bath with cold water, just to give me that morning freshness feel.

I wear a black midi a line dress and black flipflops. I tie my dreadlocks in to a bun.

I walk to the sitting room.

Me: Hayi ngeke kuyashisa let me carry an umbrella.

Her: Please.

I take my small umbrella.

We make our way out and I don't lock, my father could be back soon.

The sun is scorching, definitely we'll buy apple much along the way.

\*\*\*\*\*

The clinic is full, just as I thought.

Me: Ay ngeke Msa asiphinde emuva, I can't wait for this long.

Her: Wait her. She says walking inside the clinic leaving me outside.

She disappears for a good ten minutes. I'm tired and here is this stupid nausea feel again but I control it.

She peeks at me through the door.

Her: Woza. She mimes.

I close my umbrella and follow her.

Me: where are we going.

Her: Phela I know one of the nurses here, we jumped the line Sisi.

Me: Soshawa.

Her: Aybo ngeke.

She opens one of the white doors for me.

Her: Ngiyabonga Sindi

Sindi: Akuve uhlupha wena Msa.

She smirks.

Her: You'll find me outside.

Me: Okay thank you. She closes the door. I grab a seat.

Me: Sawbona.

Sindi: Yebo sisi. How can I help you.

Me: Um I've been throwing up for a few days, it must be a bug. It's really tiring.

She nods.

Sindi: Okay before we do anything (she reaches for her drawer) you need to take a pregnancy test.

Me: We don't have to worry about that, I know I'm not pregnant. I can't be.

Her: Okay have you had sex before.

I was about to say no and I remember that day.

Me: um once.

Her: Enough to make a baby.

Me: But he pulled out. I say seating at the edge of the chair. It can't be.

Her: Okay then prove it by peeing in this cup. She says giving me a sealed white sachet.

I'm hesitant but let me prove it to her

I take this cup and go to the bathroom. I pee on it.

I bring back the cup.

She tells be to put in on ther table. She already has her gloves on.

She tears this sachet and dips this cardboard like stick.

She takes its out and looks at it.

She doesn't say anything, it's like she is waiting for something to happen.

I'm waiting anxiously.

Her: You're pregnant.

Me: I told you I'm not-

What did she say?

Me: Excuse me

Her: You're pregnant sisi.

Me: It's can't be! It can't, I know I'm not. How is it even- I can't be pregnant.

My eyes are all out. Tears are stinging. I'm shaking.

Her: Your reaction is normal, most people are shook. But this explains why you've been throwing up. It's morning sickness, and that is normal for pregnant women during the first trimester.

Me: How? That came out as a whisper

Her: Sisi the pull out method is 78% effective. Meaning not all couples will not conceive when using it. There is something we call the pre-cum, this is a white like creamish liquid a man secretes a little throughout the intercourse. That can pre-cum can impregnate a woman. In other cases a man doesn't pull out in time. So yes, that how you got pregnant.

My head is buzzing from what she told me. I can't believe this. What am I going to do.

Her: Please give me your hand so I can test you for HIV.

I don't respond I'm still in shock.

She takes my numb hand and pokes one of my fingers with a needle. She extracts my blood and puts in on a on another test.

She give me a cotton ball to press on my finger.

I press it.

I'm still looking outside the window, j don't care what she is doing.

Her: You're negative. That's good. Okay we need to see how far are you. When last did you have your periods.

What am I going to do. My father, Khumalo. If dead.

I get up from my chair and rush outside.

Her: Hawu Sisi! She calls on me.

The way I'm so scared I forgot I was with Msa.

I just feel her grabbing my arm.

Her: Haibo what's wrong.

Me: Everything Msa, everything!

I say lashing out and running outside the clinic fence.

She catches up with me.

Her: Iba what happened! Why are you crying.

Me: My father will kill me Msa, Khumalo will kill me! How did this even happen. This can't be.

I attempt to walk again, she holds me.

Her: Calm down! What's going on. OKhumalo bangenaphi kulento.

Me: I'm pregnant Iba! How is that even possible, I haven't slept with Khumalo.

She pops her eyes off her socket.

Her: What?! How!

Voice: Iheee haike this village never ceases to amaze me.

Oh my God. Did she hear that. My tears dry up immediately.

She continues walking on laughing. It's Londi, she is the one Khumalo was supposed to marry because they were seeing each other but he wanted me.

Oh no!

Me: Did she hear that? I say in a whisper.

Her: I don't know Iba, are you really pregnant? She pulls me closer whispering back.

I nod as tears sting me again.

Her: But how? You had a boyfriend you didn't tell me about.

I look at Londi as she sways her hips laughing. She shakes me.

Me: No I don't have a boyfriend.

Her: Then how are you pregnant?!

Me: It's a lot Msa, I can't take it.

Her: Okay okay look let's go, you need to sit down. She says pulling me.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Leon's POV

We've been executing our plan for a few weeks, we still haven't come up with a way to attack François. We are sitting in Andile's office, we can't even work properly.

Me: This is going to be one of the hardest thing we ever had to execute

Him: I know. We have to be careful. One little mistake we are dead.

Me: How are you, I haven't asked you.

Him: My mother is being discharged today, my father is recovering well, but he'll use a wheelchair for now. Sandile, (sigh) nothing. He says holding his head.

Me: eish.

Him: This is not only about the diamond anymore, I want revenge more than anything. I want to kill for my family, especially for Sandile. He doesn't deserve this.

Me: Unjani umakoti.

Him: We've been fighting a lot lately. I think I've shut down emotionally, I'm not that affectionate anymore. My heads

Has been so strained from this bull.

Me: it's also straining your marriage.

Him: you know she has been asking me what's going on and I refuse to tell her. She is pregnant and she shouldn't worry about this stuff.

Me: This is putting a strain on everything. But don't forget she is your wife, she is worried, take it easy on her okay. Especially since her life has been put in danger twice, I kind of don't blame her for wanting to know.

Him: I know.

Me: If anything she had been very patient with you very very patient. After all this she is still by you, now don't be stupid and loose her. She is your wife and your baby's mother.

Him: I'll fix it soon. After everything.

Me: Angazi Andile, I really don't know.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Ibanathi's POV

I'm sitting in Msa's bed and I told her everything. I'm sorry but I had to tell someone this was going to kill me alive I needed to vent. She comforted me

Me: This stays between me and you. I say wiping my tears

Her: I'll never tell a soul.

Me: Thank you for listening.

Her: You know I'll always be with you. But what are you going to do?

Me: I don't know Msa.

Her: I think you should tell him.

Me: I can't!

Her: Why hee? Why Iba?

Me: He was forced!

Her: And you weren't?!

Me: That's not the point.

Her: If you're thinking you're forcing him to be a father then think again, what are you going to do abort?

Me: No! Of course not.

Her: Then what.

Me: I'll make a plan okay? I'll run away or something.

Her: Haibo Iba. You can't be a single parent? What if he wants.this child, it can't be bad.

Me: No he won't, what if he follows up on me and tells me to abort? I mean he is about to have a child with a woman he doesn't even know! What will his girlfriend say or wife? Do you think they'll allow me to keep this child eyivezandlebe. I can't risk my baby's life like that. I am a cleaner! Why would he want me to be in his life for the rest of his life hee?

She keeps quiet.

Her: I understand but still Iba. We still going to talk about this. I'm not okay with your terms. She says getting up.

Me: I have to go it's getting late.

I say looking at the clock, it's almost 5 pm

She accompanies me halfway.  
Her: I'm sorry okay, just tell me when you need anything.  
Me: Okay.  
She hugs me tight.  
I make my way home.

\*\*\*\*\*

My father is waiting on the door with his sjambok. He is breathtaking fire. Oh my God what did I do.  
I walk slowly.  
He pulls me in roughly inside and closes the door.  
Him: ARE YOU PREGNANT?!  
damn it Londi. I choke on my saliva.  
Him: UZONGENZA INHLEKISA ENDAWENI.  
He slashes me. I scream.  
Him: WHOSE IS IT!  
He beats me, there is no need in responding. I can't lie and tell him it's Khumalo's.  
He slashes me after slash, my body is stinging I'm screaming in agony begging him to stop.  
Me: ngiyaxolisa Baba! Haaaaaa. I'm screaming my lungs out.  
Him: HOW WILL I PAY BACK THE MONEY! DO YOU KNOW WHAT WILL KHUMALO DO TO US?!  
He beats me. My whole body is stinking, my skins is burning.  
I'm now on the floor.  
He won't stop slashing me.  
After he is satisfied with himself. He spits on the floor.  
Him: Nx! ARGHA MARN. Suka la! We have to come up with a plan! SUKA!  
I get up, my knees are weak my whole body is stinging.  
Him: That child is Khumalo's do you understand! that child is Khumalo's! Uyezwa!  
I nod in fear  
Him:nx!

Insert 76

Unedited.

Ibanathi's POV

I have put on my mini radio on, so he won't be able to hear my sobs, because if he does might finish me. I've been on my bed since he beat me. My skin is stinging, I see swollen stripes on my thighs, legs, arms. some purple some red. I can't sleep, I walk to my cracked mirror and I let my dress fall slowly. The sight of my body scares me. I let my tears fall. Stripes on my breasts, my back, it's horrible.

As the radio goes on the background, " I hope everyone listening is having a goodnight as we play classic jams from back to back, sit back and relax and let the music speak to your soul. It's Whitney Houston-Miracle."

I wish I was having a goodnight (as the music plays in the background). I wish I could sit back and relax. Why do I have to go through so much pain. I let my tears fall.

My heart is full of pain  
How could you understand  
The way I feel  
How could you relate to so much pain  
Seems as though nothing can comfort me  
So today I pray  
That someone should listen for  
Nothing should matter  
Not when love grows inside you  
The choice is yours



There's a miracle in store  
Nothing should matter  
Not when love grows inside you  
A voice of love is crying out  
Don't throw love away  
There's a miracle in store

I hold my non-existent bump. At this point nothing matters more than my baby. I want him, and I'll love him with all that is in me, protect him and care for him.  
A smile forms on my lips and I shake my head, it could be a girl, still I'll do the same with her.

I walk to the window and look at the half full moon.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Anelisa's POV

I tie up my afro and put on my clear lipgloss.  
I walk to my door and remember I almost forgot my glasses.  
I put those on and make my way to the living room.  
Dad: Don't you think you've been seeing this friend of your too much.  
Me: He is on life support Baba, I have to be there for him a little  
Mom: Kahle Sthandwa sami, she can see him whenever she feels the need.  
Yes I have been visiting Sandile for the past 3 days  
my visit is always at 9pm, I have 30 minutes to see him, well it's not like I stay out for the full 30 minutes.

My cab is already outside. I get in make my way to the hospital. Schools are opening in 2 weeks, by that time it will be difficult to check on him.

At text comes through, it's Sisekelo.

Her: Hey honey, how are you holding up in this tough times? I hope you're okay, thank you for being there for him. We need hope.

I should be asking her how she is, she has gone through too much.

Me: I'm good sweetie, one day at a time. How are you?

I spend the entire ride exchanging text with her.

With minutes I get to the hospital. I'm walking down the hallway to his ward.  
I open the ward and find him still in the same position. It's funny how I think at least the next day he would have switched a position, but he is still there laying and doing nothing but fight for his life.

I'm no longer an emotional wreck like I was before, it's like I've gotten used to seeing in like this, it's his presence and seeing that makes me okay now.

I sit on my usual chair and crouch my legs on the chair. I take out my novel out of my sling bag. Jojo Moyes, Me Before You. I read the book in an audible voice, I know that's annoying, I'm one of those audible readers, i don't know, the book makes a lot of sense when you read it out loud, that's always been me, so me and libraries are not friends because of my reading strategy.

This is what I've been doing. Sit, read and leave.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Sisekelo's POV

I'm sitting here and I'm lonely. As schools are open Ntsikelelo had to go back to Athlone Park. So can you imagine how lonely I get, especially since Andile and I aren't exactly okay. We've been fighting a lot lately, even if it's the slightest thing.  
Mam'Zulu is out of the hospital, which is a good thing, I've missed her. We suggested she should come stay with us for a while but she insisted that she will wait for Bab'Zulu at home, Andile disputed that and he preferred for her at least to move into that old house in Balito she used live in. Andile put some men there also.

Eversince that shooting happened, I don't really have much freedom, it's like I have to get what i need very quickly (with guards ofcourse) and come back. Don't tell me about the looks I be receiving in grocery stores when I'm surrounded by 4 men, couldn't he atleast make it 2? But it is what it is.

Anyways I walk up to our room, I think he is in his office or something.  
I turn of the light and get in under the covers.  
I say my little night prayer and doze off.

I'm woken up by him as he shuffles in the bed. He holds me from behind and rubs my belly. That's the thing with Andile, he doesn't care whether we are good or not. When we go to sleep, he holds me, I've learned to stop fighting him. I continue closing my eyes, we didn't even have a decent conversation today, in fact when you was the last time.

The baby kicks and he snuggles closer to me, pressing his body against me. I put my pride aside and put my hand on top of his. Our wedding rings collide a little.

Him: Iyakthanda indoda.

It's good to hear he still loves me.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ibanathi's POV

I'm woken up by my father shouting from the otherside. I'm sure I overslept.

Him: Ibanathi! He yells

Me: Ngiyeza Baba. I try to get up as my body is hurting.

I put over my gown because I was half naked.

I walk over to the sitting room

Me: Ngiyaxolisa Baba I was asleep. I say looking down.

Him: Listen you are moving in with Khumalo tonight and you know what to do to make that baby his.

Oh no I can't.

Me: Yes father.

Him: Whose the father of that child.

My lip trembles, I don't know how to answer that. I'm still looking down.

Me: It's...it's complicated Baba.

Him: Are you saying you've been sleeping around? He say getting up from the couch

I take steps back.

Me: No no.

I can't trust my dad with what happened.

Him: Nx, that doesn't matter now because the child belongs to Khumalo. If only o believed in abortions you would have terminated that thing.

Me: Ngiyaxolisa Baba.

Him: Nx.

I see his van parking outside. I get nauseous again.

Him: I'm leaving. He says grabbing his hat.

He goes outside and makes a conversation with Khumalo. Then he leaves.

Khumalo makes his way in.

Him: My darli.

I fake a smile.

Me: Hey.

He comes close to me. My whole body cringes.

Him: Can't wait to be with you tonight.

I fake smile

Him: Forget Londi she is jealous, thats why she is spreading rumours about you being pregnant. I know tonight I'm going to be your first.

Me: Yes you'll be my first.

He kisses my cheek. I get nauseous again.

Me: Let me go prepare myself, I'll see you tonight.

Him: mmh I like that. Be good. He says grabbing my butt, he winks.. I flinch in disgust and pain from my stripes.

Me: Yeah bye.

He got out. I let out a breath I was holding.

I can't do this. I'd be damned to let the man sleep with me. I'm leaving.

I rush into my room, I change my robe and put on a maxi dress and a cardigan, to hide these disgusting marks. I took a small amount of clothes, so it isn't obvious I left.

I'm going to stay the night at Msawenkosi, then tomorrow morning I'll leave this place, I'll leave when it's still dark so no one can spot.

I grab my wallet, at least I have a little over R1500 on my bank card. Enough for me to rent some place in the ghetto.

I check the coast first and rush to Msa's house.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm panting and on her door, I know she hasn't left for work yet, she boards the 7am bus.

I knock on her door fast.

Me: Msa vula, hurry.

I hear her voice inside.

Her: Haibo. She says shuffling the door.

The door swings open and I let myself in as fast as possible.

Her: What's wrong?! She closes the door and locks it.

Me: I can't do this. My dad wants me to sleep with Khumalo tonight, so the baby could seem like it's his. I can't sleep with that funky ass man!

Her: What?!

She holds my arms and I flinch.

Me: Ouch.

She pulls the down my cardigan.

She gasps

Her: Oh my God Iba?! She covers her mouth.

I look down.

Her: I'm late I have to get going, when I get back we are going to talk about this.

She says grabbing her bags. She kisses my cheek.

Her: I'm sorry okay, I'm sorry. Lock.

She leaves.

I lock the door behind her and my thoughts flood in.

\*\*\*\*\*

Msawenkosi's POV

I've been working for the whole day fighting myself whether I should meddle in this or not. So basically my whole day has been about Iba. I see him walking across the big hallway to his office, I fight myself. What if he wants Iba to abort, she'll hate me forever. But seeing her in that state hurts me, I have to do this. I take a deep breathe, I have to do this. It's almost 5, I'm about to knock off anyways.

I take my cleaning things to the storage room. I go to my locker and change.

I'm still fighting myself within. I'm scared of Mr Zuma, I haven't even spoke to him before.

Mandisa: Okay asambe girl.

Me: Um go on without me, I'll pass somewhere.

Mandisa: Okay girl bye.

I walk to the elevator.

I'm in front of his big office door. I knock.

Nothing.

I knock again.

Him: Come in.

I slowly open the door.

He is packing up, preparing to leave. He glances at me and continues with what his doing looks outside the window, this is awkward.

Me: Umm afternoon sir.

Him: How can I help you?

Me: This is about Ibanathi.  
He shoots a look at me  
Him: Umh (clears throat) Is she okay?  
Me: She told me everything sir.  
He looks at me.  
I quickly continue to say what I want to say before he thinks I want to put in my opinion.  
Me: She's pregnant. I say that so fast without thinking.  
He looks shocked  
Him: What?  
Me: Yes she is carrying your baby but she doesn't want to tell you because of the complexness of the situation.  
Him: Wait she is pregnant? He says in disbelief holding his waist with one hand.  
Me: Listen I don't have time to explain everything but what I know is that if you don't do anything about this her arranged old funky husband her father sold her to is going to kill her for being pregnant with another man's child. She is supposed to move in with him tonight so she can pin the pregnancy on him.  
Him: What?!  
Me: Yes her father told her to, he knows. But at the moment she is at my place. She planning to run away tommorrow morning.  
I say holding my bag in fear.  
Him: Listen let's go to your place now. He says grabbing his essentials. We rush to the elevator.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Ibanathi's POV

I can't believe I'm leaving this place for good. As I look out the window.  
I'm so scared they are going to come look for me, as the night comes. Obviously Msa's place is the first place they'll look at. I'm so nervous, I'll get in under the bed or something.  
I'm sitting on the bed waiting anxiously, its cold so I put on my short night dress and my big indigo gown. I also put on Msa's socks.  
I've already cooked, I'm sure Msa is on her way and she'll be hungry.  
Eish can it be morning already I wanna get out of this place. I'm going to miss my friend.  
As I'm sitting on the bed watching the little TV she has, lights come through the window across the room. Oh my those are car lights, what if it's Khumalo.  
I quickly rush to the window to peek  
It's an expensive car, I don't even know the name. I close the curtain quickly.  
I sit back on the bed anxiously. I'm going to pretend no one is home, Msa isn't here, the person they might be looking for.  
The door handle goes down.  
Her: Friend vula imina uMsa.  
Oh  
I quickly get up and open the door. And there he stands tall behind her, with his white shirt folded up. What?! We lock eyes. His cologne fills the air I breathe.  
I'm shocked I don't know what to say. I look back at Msa.  
Her: I'm sorry I had too. She says looking nervous.  
I feel tears stinging as I remember what happened. There stands the father of my unborn child.  
She pushes me aside slowly and enters the house. I step out and close the door.  
Him: ukhulelwe ngempela? He says looking straight in my eyes.  
I look down, my lips tremble.  
He holds the side of my arms, as I feel pain.  
Him: Ibanathi ngicela ungibuke, ukhulelwe? Ingane yethu lena? (is this our child)  
I look up at him as my tears fall, I'm so scared.  
Me: Ye..(sniff) yes.  
Him: Oh my God. He says in a low tone holding his head. My tears are flowing like a river  
Me: Please (sniff) let me keep the baby, I'm begging yo-

Him: Don't even say that. I want us to have this baby.  
I just stand there with my tears flowing.  
Him: Come here. He pulls me in his chest.  
He hugs me  
Him: I'm sorry I made you pregnant okay, you must be terrified. I'm so sorry.  
I just keep quiet, only my sobs are audible. I didn't think he'll react this way.  
We hear another engine roaring. He lets me go slowly.  
Oh my God it's Khumalo.  
He gets out and slams his door.  
Khumalo: Ibanathi marn! I'm busy looking for you kanti ulana uyafeba!  
He is breathing fire, I hide behind Mr Zuma  
Him: Lower your voice ungiphathisa ngekhandanda. He say calmly  
Khumalo: Yewena! This is my wife! I payed the bride price for her, don't tell me what to do!  
Wena (he says pointing at me) Asambe, I'll teach you a lesson.  
Him: I'm afraid that's not going to happen she's coming with me and you'll never see her again you old creep.  
Khumalo: Yewena mfana! He says swinging a punch on him. He holds his fist with so much might, he even has one hand in his pocket.  
He whispers close in his ear.  
Him: I'll fuck you up, fuck you up so bad, you won't be able to recognise yourself in the mirror.  
Khumalo looks terrified. Mr Zuma pushes him by his neck.  
Him: Now fuck off.  
He stumbles back and falls down with shock.  
Khumalo: Ibanathi this is how you do me?! I want my money! I paid so much for you!  
Ngifuna imali yami marn!  
Mr Zuma grabs him by his collar. I gasp.  
He drags him to his car, beside it.  
Him: Malini?  
Khumalo: a whole R30 000.  
Him: Nx.  
He opens the passenger seat and opens the dashboard.  
He takes out a stash of cash in rubber band.  
He takes the first stack hitting him with it  
Him: Here (hit) is (hit) your (hit) fucken (hit) money(hit). He hits him with the rest of his money.  
Khumalo has his eyes out.  
Him: That R80 000, enough for you to buy yourself another one, two of them if you like.  
Just not the mother of my child.  
Khumalo: Iba you have been sleeping with him behind my back?!  
Him: Now fuck off. He says kicking him slightly so he gets up  
He picks up his trousers and picks up his money and runs to his car.  
What did I just witness, I'm in shock.  
He walks up to me. I choke on my saliva.  
Me: I-  
Him: Get your things I'm getting you out of here.  
I don't ask any questions I go back inside and to grab my small bag.  
Msa: I'm sorry friend.  
Me: It's okay, we'll talk okay, I'm leaving. I say hugging her.  
Msa: I'm going to miss you.  
Me: You'll see me again, soon.  
Msa: Take care of yourself okay? I love you.  
Me: I love you too.  
I grab my small bag and make my way out.  
He opens the door for me. He take my bag to the trunk.  
He goes to his side and opens the door.  
Him: Put on your seatbelt.

I reach for it and my thigh reveals. I quickly close it.

Him: Who did that? he says looking at my already covered thighs.

Me: umh, My father when he found out I was pregnant. I say looking outside the window.

It's dead quiet. He doesn't say anything. The engine comes to life.

Insert 77

Unedited.

Ibanathi's POV

The drive is silent. I can't believe what happened, I'm asking myself why didn't even I question him where he is taking me I don't know even know him like that, but I guess I just wanted to leave that place questions will follow. We start driving through beautiful homes, homes I only see in magazines and eventually we make a turn and get in to one of them. I'm so nervous I don't know why.

Him: This is it. He says opening his door.

I open mine on the otherside, while he goes to the back and grabs my duffle bag.

It's cold so I tighten the grip on my gown.

He leads the way and I follow him behind like a lost puppy.

He does something with his fingers on this monitor thing and the door unlocks.

He opens it for me letting me pass. The light go on automatically. Wow.

I've never seen anything like this, I'm even afraid to walk on his floors, his floors look like you could eat on them.

Him: Follow me. He says walking.

He takes me to some bedroom on the same floors (downstairs)

He turns on the light and puts the bag on top of this queen sized bed. He turns and has one hand resting on his waist.

Him: This is where you'll be sleeping.

Me: Thank you. I can't look him in the eye, I always fail.

There is silence. I don't know him but by his body language you can he is holding a lot in, he is pissed but trying to keep it together.

Him: I don't if you prefer a room upstairs, but I was just thinking for the days you'll be heavily pregnant.

Wait how long am I staying here?

Me: No this one is fine sir.

Him: Leon, you can call me Leon.

Me: Okay. Still looking past him.

Me: Umh excuse me si- Um Leon, how long will I be staying here?

Him: For as long as you need to, it could be, a couple of years, a decade or a century.

Me: A century?

Him: You can prove it you'll see.

I side smile a bit.

Me: No thank you.

Him: Your call. Have you eaten?

I haven't eaten how could I eat in this madness.

Me: No I haven't.

He raises his eyebrow and lowers his head a little so he make eye contact.

Him: You know you have to, it's important. He says looking at my stomach.

Me: I know, I'm sorry.

Him: What can I get for you.

Me: Anything.

Him: Okay let me rephrase, what do you prefer.

Me: I really don't know, anything is fine.

Him: Okay, dog food?

Me: If it's good I guess. I shrug.

He smiles a bit, he has a nice smile.

Him: You surprised me.

I side smile a little.

Him: I'll order food for you, the person will ring the gate and you'll go get it. I need to go somewhere.

Me: Okay thank you.

He leaves the room. My eyes roam around this beautiful bedroom, the paint, the light, the art. It's peaceful.

I need to take a bath. I walk to the ensuite and turn on the light. This bathroom is bigger than my room and our living room combined.

It smells nice.

I go back to the bedroom and undo my robe. I'm left with my short PJ's set. I ruffle my bag to get something. He knocks once and let's himself in. I turn quickly and grab my robe.

He looks like he is pissed.

Him: Ibanathi I didn't think it was this bad. He says walking to me while I tie my robe.

Me: It's okay.

Him: Take it down.

Me: Excuse me

Him: I want to see.

I don't know if this is a good thing or bad thing but I untie my robe slowly. I let it fall from my shoulder.

Him: For the love God. He says clenching his jaws.

He looks at my body inspecting every part of it. I'm a little uncomfortable but I know he is not looking at my body that way, he is looking at my stripes.

Him: Turn.

I turn and he moves my dreads from my back slowly bringing them to the front.

Him: Who does this? He says in a whisper.

He's seen enough, I reach for my robe and put it back on.

Me: I'll be okay, I'm okay.

Him: Do you like feel anything besides pain, like discomfort you know. He say looking at my stomach again.

Me: No, I haven't felt anything unusual.

Him: First thing tomorrow morning, we are going to see a Doctor.

Me: Okay.

He stares at me.

Me: Can I have a bath?

Him: Sorry, sure. Um I'll be back in a few.

Me: Okay.

He turns and walks to the door, leaving the room.

I hope my baby is okay.

I go to the bathroom and undress.

\*\*\*\*\*

Leon's POV

I need air, I need some air. Everything is just a lot to take in, I don't even know the right things to say to her. Her father beat her up while she is pregnant? What kind of monster is he? I'm so furious. I need someone, I need my best friend.

As I race to his place.

\*\*\*\*\*

We are sitting in his home office.

Me: She is pregnant bafo.

Him: Who?

Me: Ibanathi, that girl I was forced to sleep with.



His jaw dropped.

Him: Is it...is it yours? How did you even? I'm so confused. He looks shocked

Me: Yes bafo, me and you, same.

Him: Is she okay? I mean, I don't even know what to say.

Me: I don't know Andile, I don't know either. You know what this means to me. It's a huge thing. You know what happened.

Him: I know bafo, I know.

6 years ago, I was shot in my abdomen. It was a heist gone wrong. That day I saw death hovering over me, but I survived, unfortunately my ability to make a baby was affected. They said my chances of having a child are close to none, I have one chance in every 500 intercourses I'll have, considering a woman's body also, it will be difficult, so having is child is almost impossible for me. My girlfriend left me, because I couldn't give her a baby. For 4 years, I couldn't, so she left and got pregnant by someone else.

That's why I've been running away from serious relationships, because I know at a point they'll want a family, something I can't give. To think Ibanathi was my one in my 500 chances blows my mind. I don't know what to say, I have goosebumps.

Me: Bafo, me? A father? I say shaking my head in disbelief.

Him: It's unbelievable. Against all odds, this girl is special.

Me: She is very very precious to me. She just gave me something I thought I'll never ever have.

Him: How do you feel about this whole thing?

Me: I don't want to say I'm happy but ...I am. At the sametime I can't show it because of the way it happened. She is going through a rough time. So I'll just keep my little happiness inside me. She wouldn't understand why I'm happy anyway. She doesn't know me.

Him: these are good news that are bad.

Me: Fucking confusing. We'll see how everything unfolds.

Him: So where is she.

Me: at my place. Her father gave her a beating can you imagine.

Him: Why?

Me: Because she got pregnant by me while she is customary married to another old creep.

Him: What?!

Me; Heyi bafo njengoba ngisho, everything is a lot to take him.

Him: What the fuck is wrong with him, he could have done damage to the baby!.

Me: First thing tomorrow morning, we going to the doctor.

Him: I hope the baby is okay or else.

Me: all hell is going to break loose, I won't even consider the fact that it's her father.

Him: Nx

Me: ngabe ngiyamcima, but it's her father afterall. I don't even want to see him because I don't think I'll be able to contain myself after what he did.

Him: You need him for customs.

Me: I know. So I think it's best I stay far, very far away from him. Or I'll do something I'll regret, not becausehe didn't deserve it but because of Iba.

Him: I totally understand. He nods seriously.

Me: Wonders shall never end

Him: Not ever, especially in our lives.

He looks at me while taking a sip of his whiskey.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ibanathi's POV

I just finished eating Spur ribs, they are good. I've never had those before.

I gave myself a mini house tour, that's because I didn't finish looking at the the whole house.

I also ate an apple. Which is basically what is in the fridge. Yes he has apples and beers only. And meat in the deep freezer. What does he eat?

I'm tired but not sleepy, I keep thinking about me being pregnant and questioning whether the baby is okay.

I text Msa that I'm okay, she was worried about me.

I'm sitting on the couch, I don't know what I'm watching cartoons. I don't even know how I got to them because the TV is too complicated for me, unlike the one I'm used to. It's almost 10 pm.

I have to find a job soon, I can't just sit and depend on Leon, he only has his baby to take care of, not me, I have to take care of myself and hopefully soon I'll be able to stand in on my feet.

I turn off the TV and head to my bedroom, I need to rest my body.

I lie down on this big comfortable bed. It's like I'll sink into it, the way it feels so good.

I close my eyes enjoying this comfort.

I'm disturbed my shuffles.

He is back.

I hear him climbing the stairs, I guess his going to bed.

I close my eyes again indulging in comfort.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is a knock on my door and I sit right up, I wasn't asleep anyway.

I clear my throat.

Me: Come in.

He comes in. He has changed his clothes, wearing his sweats and a plain black t-shirt.

Him: Can we talk? He says placing something on the dresser.

Me: Yeah sure. I say nervously adjusting myself on the bed leaning on the pillows.

He comes close to my bed, he sits by me feet.

He clears his throat.

Him: Listen I havent had the right words to say or approach this situation. I know you must be scared, having a child by a man you don't even know, it must be hard for you especially considering the circumstances it happened under in. But what I can assure is that I'll be there every step of the way, I'll do whatever I need to do to protect you and my baby. From now on you are my priority, anything you need I'll do it. Its the least I can do.

He says piercing his eyes through me.

Me: I appreciate it, it really means a lot what you're doing for me. I'll be forever grateful. You stepping up shows me you're a good person. You don't know me too, but you're doing all this for me. Thank you for giving me a roof over my head.

Him: Everything will work out, you'll see.

Me: I hope they do.

Him: Can't believe I'm going to be a father.

Me: I can believe I'm going to be a mother.

Him: This is the craziest thing

Me: I know, it is for me too.

Him: Thank you for wanting to keep it. You had a choice.

Me: Thank you for letting me keep it.

He side smiles.

Him: That's for your body. He says pointing at the dresser.

Me: Thank you. I'll apply it before I sleep. He gets up.

Him: Come here. He says.

I stand up and he pulls me for a hug.

Him: I promise everything will be okay, I'll do my best. I'm sorry.

Me: It's okay, everything happens for a reason. I say disappearing in his chest.

He smells good.

I hated men, especially after everything that happened, but I trust Leon. I don't know why but I trust him.

Him: Goodnight. He says pulling out.

Me: Goodnight.

He leaves me to apply this wound cream he bought for me. Immediately I feel my body cooling down.

\*\*\*\*\*

Leon's POV.

It's morning already and we are at the doctor's.

Doc: Everything looks fine, she is perfectly healthy and is fit to carrying this child. She is 4 weeks pregnant and we have to wait 3 more weeks so we can assess the heartbeat. Either than that she is good.

Me: Thank you doc.

I can't tell she was curious why Ibanathi had those marks maybe she thinks I'm beating her because she looked uneasy.

Her: Um thank you doc.

Doc: You are a very beautiful couple, this baby is going to look cute for sure.

Ibanathi looks away.

Me: Yeah sure.

Wonder why she ways does that, she can't even make eye contact with me.

Her: That's it for today. Have a great day.

Me: Thanks doc.

We make our way out.

We walk to the car.

She looks uneasy.

Me: Are you okay?

She runs to the nearest bin and throws up.

Her: Yeah I'm good, just a little nauseous.

Me: Oh okay, sorry.

I give her a napkin.

Her: If this is how drunk people throw up and they continue to drink alcohol. They've got issues.

This is bad.

Me: Sorry.

I chuckle a little. She is a character I didn't think she had in her.

Him: Come on I'll get you water.

It's going to be a journey.

---

Insert 78

Unedited.

Ndabezinhle's POV

I just got off work. I'm on my way to our flat.

Minutes later I get to our place and find it messy.

Me: Zisanda!

Her: I'm going to clean!

Me: ave winuku, clean-a nje, I'm not doing it.

I say kicking her pair of pants on the floor.

Her: You're back and grumpy. She says laughing.

Me: mcm

Her: Sorry I was hungover.

Me: Yeah right. I say going to my room.

I throw my bag on the bed.

I haven't heard nothing from Sbu today, I guess he is busy. He has healed completely, it's been a month since that incident, so I have been spending my time here at my place. I

hear my phone ringing from my bag. I shuffle it and get ahead of my phone. It's Gogo. I answer.

Me: Gogo

Her: Zinhle kodwa unjani. (How are you)

Me: I'm fine Gogo, I'm just came from work I'm tired. As I take off my shoes.

Her: Okay, how are things? Sengisho nalomfana wakaZulu.

I sigh

Me: Things have been okay Gogo, we're working things out. One day at a time. But at least he has gotten well.

Her: That's good news but Zinhle are you saying you're back with him.

Me: Yes Gogo, but we're figuring things out.

Her: Awusho you have slept with him after what happened?

Me: Gogo!

Her: Yini?

Me: Ay no Gogo I don't know want to talk about that. I say mumbling.

Her: Zinhle akuve niwathanda koda amadoda.

Me: Hawu Gogo that not true.

Her: It is, I thought you and I talked about that kumele anye, savumelana. Now you're back in his bed. Getting back together doesn't mean the sex is a part of it too. Mekmele anye.

Me: Please Gogo I don't want to have this conversation, you're making me cringe.

Her: Cringe wani wena. Lomfana komele ahlawule.

Me: Hayi Gogo he didn't find me untouched.

Her: Who said anything about that, I'm talking about emotional distress.

Me: Gogo.

Her: Yes, he must also pay me for comforting you after what he did, cause I was distressed as well!

Me: Bye Gogo!

Her: Uvale imlenze wena uyeke ukubhayiza.

She hung up.

Gogo is so extra, there was no need for all of that. Yazi lesalukwazi. Smh laughing.

I undress and head to the shower.

I take a quick shower and get in my night dress.

Me: Zisanda did you cook? I say walking in the living room.

Her: No I'm tired aowa, I'll order something what do you want.

Me: Umm pizza is fine, please add extra cheese.

Her: Imali yami yiii.

Me: Triple decker!

Her: hawe mah kusho umuntu onendoda ongathenga wonke uDebonairs. (Says a person who has a man that can buy the whole of Debonairs.

Me: It's just one pizza!

Her: Hayi shame.

As she orders pizza.

I sit beside her on the couch and we watch TV together.

After an hour, the pizza was here, and we are chowing it down.

Her: Chomi if only I can have your hair.

Me: You always say that.

Her: Because

Me: Because what. I say laughing.

Her: Buka nje oe nehwanqa lakho.

I shrug.

I don't know where I got this thick black straight hair. Because my mom and Gogo have afro's. I guess I inherited it from my unknown dad.

Anyways.

After eating that pile of pizza I went straight to bed. I'm exhausted.

I turn off my side lamp and doze off.

\*\*\*\*\*

I woken up by my phone vibrating and ringing. Only one person calls me by this time. I reach for my phone while squinting my eyes as the light of the phone brights up my face.

Me: Ndabezitha. I say in a crusty voice

Him: Please come down, I want to see you.

Me:mmh

Him: Woza babe. He hangs up.

I take my robe and put on my slippers.

I keep rubbing my eyes. I take the stairs down.

He is leaning on his car, ankles crossed, wearing all black.

Me: This never gets old with you doesn't it? I say lazily.

Him: No it doesn't. He says pulling me to him holding my waist.

Me: mmh. As I lay my head on his chest.

Him: I'm going to be gone for a couple of days.

I get up from his chest.

Me: Why? I look up at him

Him: We have some business to take care of.

I'm uneasy.

Me: What business?

Him: It's best if you don't know but I'm taking you to my brother's house. It's safer.

Me: Wait what's going on? I say letting him go.

Him: I just want to make sure you're safe okay. It's just a couple of days.

I stare at him. I don't like this.

Him: And I don't want you going to work while I'm not around. So lay off a bit.

Me: What?

Him:: Please just listen to me and trust me. I need you to stay at Sisekelo's house until we get back. I don't want to talk about this Ndabe. Please just do as I say and trust me.

It's 12 o clock at night. I'm not trying to argue. So I just go back to pack some things.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ibanathi's POV.

I was sleeping when I was woken up by a knock. I rub my eyes.

Me: Come in.

He lets himself in the dark and I turn on the side lamp.

Where is he going dressed like that in this time of the night.

Him: I'll be gone for a couple of days. I have some business to take care of.

I'm going to be alone in this huge house?

Me: Oh okay

Him: I've put some men outside, for security reasons. And please while I'm gone, don't go anywhere, don't even go outside.

I swallow hard, I can't even catch fresh air.

Me: Okay

Atleast he bought groceries.

Him: Yeah, Goodnight.

Me: Bye.

He closes the door behind him.

This man is dangerous, I don't know but I feel like he's doing something he's not supposed to. I once saw him kill men Infront of me, and that part of him scares me to death.

I snuggle my pillow close and stare into blank space in anticipation.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV.

He didn't come to bed tonight, I kept telling myself he would but it's already midnight. The bed feels cold without him. I haven't been able to get much sleep but eventually I doze off.

I feel him slightly shaking me.

Him: Babe. He says in a soft deep tone.

I open my eyes and he is fully dressed in black.  
I sit up in confusion.  
Me: Where you're going? It's almost 1 am  
He sits besides  
Him: To take care of things.  
I know what he means. I feel tears stinging.  
Me: How long will you be gone.  
Him: A couple of days. He says away  
There is silence.  
Me: What if you don't come back. I say wiping my already dropping tears.  
He holds my cheeks.  
Him: Don't cry. I hold his hands on top of my face.  
Me: You didn't answer me. (sniff)  
Him: I will okay.  
Me: No I don't want you to go. I say pulling him to me hugging him.  
Him: Shh babe it's okay, I have to do this, for our family okay. For Sandile.  
Me: Please God no. I say holding him tighter crying while he calms me down.  
Him: It's okay sthandwa sami. Shhh it's okay.  
Him: Sbu is already here with Ndabe you'll be fine okay?  
I pull out of the hug and look him straight in his eyes. My arms are around his neck.  
Me: Promise me you'll come back.  
Him: Babe I-  
Me: Promise me!  
He keeps quiet for a second.  
Him: I promise.  
I look at him and hug him again.  
So much bad things have happened and he has been slipping away, what if he doesn't  
Come back. Stop it Sisekelo he will, he promised me.  
Him: I have to go now. He says pulling me slowly away from him.  
I look at him with tears.  
Him: Mama stop crying.  
He wipes my tears.  
He leans over and pecks my lips.  
Him: It will be okay (peck) you'll be fine. He says kissing me deeper. I kiss him back  
passionately. He pulls out.  
Him: ngiyakthanda uyezwa. He says rubbing my belly.  
Me: (sniff) Nami ngiyakthanda. I peck his lips.  
Him: Come on lets go downstairs.  
He holds my hand helping me get up.  
We go downstairs and we find Sbu and Ndabe waiting. She looks a little mad, I am too.  
I greet them.  
Him: bye I love you. He say putting on his black swoosh cap. He kisses my cheek. And  
they make their way out. The door closes.  
Her: Are you okay?  
Me: Yes I'm fine. I say wiping my eyes dry.  
Her: Do you know where they are going  
Me: No he won't tell me anything.  
Her: He didn't tell me anything either.  
Me: Oh well. I say rolling my eyes.  
She rolls them back.  
Her: Tell me about it.  
Me: Let me show you your room hun. I say leading the way.

Insert 79

Unedited.

## NARRATED

The guys meet at some dodgy building in town. They rented a room.

Leon: This isn't luxury. He says lighting the room

Andile: You have to suck it up. As the roaches scatter.

Sbu: Fuck me.

Andile: As long there aren't any rats.

Sbu and Leon bursts in laughter. Andile has a weird fear, Andile isn't scared of anything in the world, you name them, snakes all types of shit, but a rat, he'd die.

Leon: There are chances there are rats here. He says holding his stomach laughing. Sbu is dying in the corner.

Andile: nx.

Leon: You Zulus have weird fears, Andile-rat, Sbu-Frog and Sandile is afraid of what konje?

Sbu: Sandile doesn't like roaches.

Leon: Tell me what the fuck happened to y'all.

He says chuckling hard. Sbu joins him

Sbu: I'm better mina but Andile ay ngeke indoda engaka ebalekela igundane.

Andile is pissed, he hates that part of him. Imagine if Sisekelo found it about this.

Andile: Jokes aside let's get to work. He says taking out his laptop.

Leon wipes tears at the corner of his eyes from laughing.

Andile: Uphi ulba?

Leon: At my place

Sbu: Uba ulba manje.

Leon: That lady who was caught up in my shit.

Andile: She is alone?

Leon: Technically yes but I put some men there.

Andile: Aye man I don't think it's wise for you to leave alone, she's pregnant. What if something happens or she stresses the fuck out whether you're going to come back or what.

Sbu: Wait a minute, she is pregnant?

Leon: Yes, with my child.

Sbu drops his jaws.

Leon: come to think of I didn't give that much thought.

Andile: Doesn't she have somebody she can stay with, like a friend.

Leon: She does have a friend, but she lives far. How the fuck am I going to get ahold of her at 3am. I don't even have her contacts.

Andile: Will she have a problem going over to my house? I mean Sisekelo is there, so is Ndabe.

Leon: The thing is I don't know whether she'll feel comfortable. She doesn't know the

Andile: You're right but ask her, if she doesn't want to, we'll try and get her friend before the end of the day. All I'm saying she mustn't be left alone.

Leon: Okay.

He takes out this small phone he got today.

He dials in private number.

It rings for a couple of seconds and she picks up.

Iba: Hello?

Leon: You are not asleep I see.

She is still to figure out who is this.

Leon: Listen, I didn't give this much thought but I don't like the idea of you being alone. So I don't know I was wondering if you could go to my friend's house. His wife is lovely, and so is his brother's girlfriend.

Iba: Oh okay

She doesn't like questioning him, she always feels like he knows best and she trusts him.

Smart right? Trusting someone you don't know.

Leon: You don't have a problem?

Iba: No I don't.

Leon: Okay Gcaba is going to take you. I'll contact him right now.



Iba: Okay thanks.  
He hangs up and walks back to the guys.  
Leon: She is fine with it.  
Andile: Okay let me let my wife know.  
He takes the same phone Leon was using and dials Sisekelo's number. It rings once and she answers.  
Sisekelo: Hello and why private number?  
Andile chuckle a little  
Andile: It's me babe, is that how you answer private calls.  
Sisekelo: hey are you okay?  
Andile: I see someone hasn't been sleeping much since I left. But I called you to let you know there is a lady coming and I would like you to welcome her.  
Sisekelo: Today?  
Andile: Now  
Sisekelo: Oh okay...  
Andile: Yeah It wouldn't be best if she stays by herself at Leon's house.  
She seems puzzled. Wondering who is she, she's never heard of Leon having a girlfriend but she plays along  
Sisekelo: Well I don't have problem.  
Andile: Okay babe. Thanks.  
Sisekelo: Bye.  
He hangs up.  
Andile: Sorted.  
Leon: Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Ibanathi's POV

I guess Gcaba is one of the men outside because he rang the door to let me know when I was ready. I got my things, God knows how long I'll be staying there. Imagine meeting new people at 3am. I tried and put on a knit sweat and black leggings, and tied my locks up.  
I go outside and Gcaba opens the door for me. I get in the engine comes to life.

\*\*\*\*\*

Get the hell out.  
As I glue my eyes on this huge mansion. It's bigger than the one I was in. The architecture of this house, I've never seen anything like this. Those zillion lights lighting the entire yard. He stops and makes some sign to one of the men.  
He drives in further.  
Him: Okay we're here Mam.  
He says opening his side of the door. I open mine slowly. I'm so nervous, what if they are snobs and be rude to me.  
I take my bag and Gcaba close the door for me.  
Him: Follow me.  
He says leading the way.  
I'm nervous. I'm definitely of a zero standard.  
He rings the door and we wait for a couple of minutes.  
The huge wooden door opens and a pregnant lady opens the door. I've seen her before.  
Him: Mrs Zulu.  
Her: Thank you, come in Sisi. She says shooting a Colgate smile, it's 3am and she shoots a smile. Yes I've seen once at the Zulu Inc. She is Mr Andile Zulu's wife.  
I walk in and she stretching her hand.  
Her: Welcome, I'm Sisekelo. She says shooting a smile  
Wow she has a beautiful smile.  
Me: Hey I'm Ibanathi.  
Her: Screw formalities. She says pulling me for a hug, I giggle.  
Her: Now that was a proper welcome.

Me: Thank you, I feel welcome.  
She closes the door.  
Her: Do you need anything to eat? Juice?  
Me: No thank you. I'm fine.  
Her: Well let me show you where you'll be sleeping, but I'm not sleeping now. I have insomnia. I'll probably watch some TV.  
She says leading the way.  
She got personality for days.  
Her: Oh I like your dreads. She says turning and back and turning forth again.  
Me: Thank you.  
I'm a little nervous.  
We climbing the stairs and making our long way through the passage. She opens one of the doors.  
Her: Here it is, get comfortable.  
Me: Can I watch TV with you, I don't feel like sleeping either.  
Her: Well the more the merrier. You'll find me downstairs.  
I hope I don't get lost.  
I put my bag on top of the bed and follow her.  
So I don't get lost.  
  
We get downstairs and I sit on these huge couches. They so comfortable.  
She puts on some movie on Netflix. She rather chills on the fluffy carpet with a throw over her.  
This lady is too cool.  
  
Voice: So y'all going to have a party without me.  
I turn my head to this beautiful caramel skinned girl with a doek on her head.  
Sisekelo: I have insomnia.  
She comes over to me.  
Her: I'm Ndabezinhle. She says smiling.  
Wait where all these women come from, they are beautiful.  
Me: I'm Ibanathi.  
Her: We take hugs here. She says opening her arms. I get up and hug her. They are so welcoming.  
Her: I wish I had dreadlocks, I tried it was a total fail. She says taking of her headwrap and her straight black thick hair falls.  
Wow.  
Her: See?  
Me: Wow.  
Sisekelo: Hayi hayi hayi, you guys busy flaunting your hair, making me miss mine. She says pulling off her headwrap.  
Sisekelo: Ndabe ngicela ungiqage leStraight up.  
Ndabe: mm oe that should have been done a long time ago. It's bad.  
We laugh.  
Sisekelo: Mcm I'm pregnant  
Ndabe: Let me go get the scissors.  
  
I keep glancing at her belly. It's hard to believe mine will get to that size also.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Anelisa's POV

I'm at the mall, at Woolworths, to get little groceries. My phone rings from my bag, I shuffle my bag to get it. It's my mother.  
I answer.  
Me: Ma?  
Her: Don't forget the almond milk and mushrooms.  
Me: okay got it. I hang and continue pushing the cart.  
  
I get things and pay.  
I'm craving for a big Mac.

I go to McDonald's and order.  
I decide to take a takeout. I'll eat it at home.

Pushing my cart drinking my drink. I've already requested a cab.  
My eyes land on Khethi and Thandeka approaching me. I smile as they come, they aren't smiling.

Khethi gets to me first. She looks disgusted.

Me: Hey guys what's going on?

Khethi: How could you Anelisa?

Me: What are you talking about?

Khethi: Don't act stupid, so you've been visiting Sandile behind my back?

Eish

Me: umm I can exp-

Khethi: Save it, uyamfuna Anelisa?

Me: That's not important, I thought you said you don't like him like that.

I say looking away

Khethi: So? Does that mean put your claws in him.

Me: Don't be selfish Khethi, you know I've always let you have guys, some of which I liked!  
I'm just being there for him that's it!

Don't you have someone to keep you busy?

Khethi: That's none of business, but since you want my leftovers go on and have them.  
She says splashing my drinking on my face.

I gasp.

Khethi: Sandile is dead anyway you can have him for all I care nx!

Thandeka looks at me with sympathy but she is more of her friend than she is to me.

They walk away.

I take my soaked glasses off and wipe them. I feel tears stinging, people are staring.

I can't believe she called Sandile dead.

Maybe he is, he won't wake up. I rush out of the mall with my tears falling.

Insert 80

Unedited.

\*\*\*\*\*A couple of days later\*\*\*\*\*

Sisekelo's POV

I'm pacing up and down in nervousness. He hasn't reached to me, I know very well I won't be able to reach him but is he okay? Are they okay? Are they fine? I'm so anxious.

Voice: You okay?

I turn around and tug my cardigan it's Ndabezihle.

Me: Umh yeah?

Her: You're a bad liar. Sisekelo don't do that.

Me: What?

Her: Trying to be strong all the time.

Am I? I'm lost of words as I attempt to talk and nothing comes out.

Her: Listen it's okay to breakdown, if you feel like it's hurting you let it all out. Stop trying to keep it together all the time.

I look at her and look up so I can take them back.

Me: It's just I've learnt to be strong, I always had my own back. Let other people breakdown and be their strength.

Her: that's not okay Kelo, for now can you allow me to be your pillar of strength. Allow me to have your back, and not always play strong woman. I'm here you can vent.

There is a moment of silence.

Me: I've been thinking about his safety, and the others. What if he doesn't come back? I haven't heard nothing from them. I have a bad feeling, I'm anxious.

Her: honey Sbu is also out there, I'm also going through it, I also have those thoughts. But why didn't you want to talk about it? It would have weighed a little lighter on you, than carrying all these bad thoughts by yourself.

Me: I didn't want to be the one to make any of you loose hope. I didn't want be a bummer.  
Her: You're pregnant with this lovely child, if anything your mental health matters the most than all of us.  
Me: But do you think they are okay?  
She sighs.  
Her: I don't know Sisekelo, I don't wanna think of it. I know they'll come back right?  
Me: I don't know  
We stare in to blank space.  
Me: Andile and I have been having some problems in our marriage.  
Her: I low-key kind of knew that it wasn't the issue we talked about only, I didn't want to pressure you.  
Me: Well, it's been about the shooting. I've been asking him about it. He never says anything, he shuts me out, acts cold. And does his thing on the side.  
Her: Sbu didn't tell me nothing either, I asked him once and he tensed you know, I knew he didn't want to talk about it.  
Me: It's not like I wanna know every single detail of their dirty deeds, but a heads-up. Some sort of solid reason why these things are happening you know. Because he said he was done, meaning if something happens to us it's always revenge. It's like we living under their death shadow. I don't want that around my baby. Things are way different now, they not just single hotheaded bachelor's anymore. What happens to them affects us.  
Her: That's where the selfish part is right.  
Me: I know. But it is what it is.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Ibanathi's POV

I was going to watch TV but I heard Sisekelo and Ndabezinhle talking. I didn't listen to the rest of their conversation. But today I conclude that Leon is a gangster.  
I know it's crazy but it's something dodgy.  
Hearing them worrying if they are going to come back made me wonder whether is be okay where ever he is.  
Suddenly I don't want to watch the television. I just go back to bed and hold the pillows.  
Thinking about everything that involves him. He is the father of my child, I don't want anything to happen to him either.  
I need him.  
I can't do this alone, I need him. My baby needs him. We need him.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Anelisa's POV

I'm in my room, thinking hard. My heart is heavy. I haven't checked on him since that encounter with Khethiwe, she blocked me on every social media platform, so did Thandeka. I guess it's official, we no longer friends. It's almost 8pm, I haven't eaten. I was trying to sleep but I can't stop thinking about him, whether he'll ever kiss me again. I'm fighting myself whether to go see him or not. Seeing him like that hurts, it's hurts a lot. I get and get my grey hoodie and sweatpants. I put on my sleep boots. I look like a mess, today I'm not even trying to look good for him.  
I'm so crusty.  
I wear my glasses and take my sling bag along side with my novel.  
I walk to the kitchen and mom looks over me with worry.  
Me: I'm okay.  
I say before she bombards me with questions.  
I walk to the door and go outside.  
My cab was already waiting for me.

\*\*\*\*\*

It's not even 9pm yet but the nurse lets me through, she is used to me, she doesn't worry about what time I come or leave at. She has been sweet, I don't know, maybe she just

feels sorry for me.

I greet her and make my way to the elevator.

The elevator reaches the floor and I go to his ward.

I open the door slightly and first look inside, then open the rest of the door.

There he is, laying there with a ventilator covering his mouth and nose, to help him breath.

That tube that goes in his nose is not in today, he eats through his nose. I guess it's being washed or something.

Me: Hey.

I say with the driest voice.

I sit on my usual seat.

Me: I'm sorry I wasn't able to check on you.

I say with the lowest voice.

I clear my throat and open my book. I slouche back while stealing glances at him.

Today I don't feel like reading aloud, so I just put on my earphones and continue reading the novel.

I'm not feeling it today, I can't seem to concentrate on the novel properly. So I Just close it and put it back on my bag.

I cross my legs on this and face my head up.

Bryan Adams' song comes in.

I glance at him while the song continues to play in my headphones.

I don't know but I just feel like being next to him, more close to him than I am.

I walk over to his bed slowly. I reach for his hand slowly. I'm scared. I haven't touched him before. My fingers brush the top of his hand, I slowly lay my hand and touch his hand. For a moment I loose my breath, I swallow hard and look at the door, then back at him. I look at his face, and I do the unexpected. I climb on his bed, his bed is big enough for the both of us. I climb slowly and hesitantly, not sure what I am doing, I'm careful not to touch his ventilator and drips. I make a little space for myself. I slowly let my self lay besides him.

I'm so careful, my heart is beating fast. I've never been that close to him.

Once I've settled, laying on my side. I'm not close enough. I slowly bring my chin on the top of his shoulder, I'm not resting on top of him but my chin is touch his shoulder.

I slowly put my hand over him, over his chest, carefully.

Once I think I've settled, it's like I'm waiting for something to happen.

All of a sudden relaxation hovers over me.

I let my breath I was hold and exhale.

I can't believe he is in my arms.

I take off the head phones and put the phone of speaker, but on a very soft volume.

Enough for only him and I to hear.

Look into your heart

You will find

There's nothin' there to hide

Take me as I am

Take my life

I would give it all

I would sacrifice

Don't tell me it's not worth fightin' for

I can't help it, there's nothin' I want more

You know it's true

Everything I do

I do it for you.

He smells good, I guess they gave him a bed bath today. For some odd reason I can smell his expensive cologne. I guess the scent of his cologne doesn't go away easily.

I close my eyes, and I feel relaxed, having him this close to my skin gives me hope.

My eyes get heavier and heavier. I haven't had proper sleep in days. Today I'm not stressing about him, because he is beside me. I feel peace. As my eyes get heavier and heavier.

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NARRATED.

The guys have managed to surround François house, with so much security, it will be tricky to make it in.

It's just the 3 of them.

All the other men are secretly surrounding their location, around his garden and forest surroundings. They whisper to each other.

Sbu: Lwazi and Sambulo are lucky they didn't get themselves involved in this life.

Leon: Luck is an understatement, they are blessed.

Andile: No time to sulk. We have to get this shit over with.

He touches his ear device and looks at Sbu and Leon. They nod.

Andile: Ndosi, lights out.

Ndosi: Rodger that.

The lights go off the entire neighborhood. They put the power off the entire estate. This mansion so big that he has no neighbors. It's surrounded by trees.

The guards growl in irritation.

Andile: Ready. He says in a whisper.

They nod.

Andile: Okay lets split.

They do so.

They climb over the tall wall, monitoring every guards movement, because if they get caught they going to die.

Red lights have come on inside the monitor.

Andile can hear François screaming on the top of his lungs in his french accent in irritation.

François: Fuck South Africa! Get the generator, hurry you dick heads.

Andile jumps and lands on the garden. He pulls one guard by the tree and twists his neck and carefully dragging him under the tree.

He reaches for the device in his ear. Whispering.

Andile: He has sent for the generator. We have to get inside the house in 30 second.

Sbu: Shit okay.

Leon: Fuck.

They are well armed, bullet belts across their body's, knives to slits throats, bombs. Everything.

They move fast. Careful not to be caught.

They all make they way in the house in different rooms.

Leon: Everybody in

Andile: Yes

Sbu: Sure.

The lights go on. They can't afford to stay in the light for more that a minute, anyone can come in, in any of their rooms.

Leon: Gasa, fire.

Gasa: Nxamalala.

Gunshots are fired outside the house.

Snipers on trees, it's a battle

François: What the fuck is happening! Kill them

He screams in the mansion.

Gunshots are fired from every angle.

Andile is breathing heavily.

Andile: Let's move. I need to get to him first.

Leon: Rodger that.

Sbu: Sho bafo.

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