

THEIR LIVES BEFORE THE THRONE S5

S5 >> EPISODE 01

“Mama?” Buhle called her mother out, Nandipha was in their room putting them to sleep. The four other sisters had fallen asleep and Buhle was the one who wasn’t asleep. She was calling her mother as she was laying on her cot, Nandipha’s face was closer to her covering her.

Nandipha: “Yes, baby.” she called back and smiled as Buhle was touching Nandipha’s cheek with her tiny left hand. It was adorable and it made her melt.

Buhle: “Uyaphila, mama? Awuguli?” (Are you alright?)

Nandipha smiled and she sent her face down to her daughter to kiss her face. Buhle giggled and flinched her tummy as Nandipha was tickling it. “Ngiyaphila, Buhlezi futhi angiguli. Lala manje.” (I am fine and I am not sick) She replied and brushed her face with her hand, soothing her with a hum... Nandipha sighed and looked at them all as they were peacefully sleeping. She then left their room to get to her bedroom. It was a Monday night and Dalingcebo was leaving the following morning, she was also leaving to find time for herself.

“Nandipha, you’ve been quiet and even my brother can notice that you are quiet. I know that I didn’t speak with you the right way.” Ngcebo said to Nandipha who was joining him in bed. She was on her night dress.

Nandipha: “I have nothing to say that’s why I am quiet.”

Ngcebo: “I know that I wasn’t supposed to speak to you the way I did. It was wrong of me but now that I have stated the problem, can we work on it?”

Nandipha: “I will be going to my mother’s house tomorrow. I will be working on my book over there and I will leave the children here.” She announced and turned to look at him.

Ngcebo had his eyes already fixed on her.

Ngcebo: “WHAT! You can’t be serious!”

Nandipha: “I am serious and maybe that will help you see how much time I get when I am with the children since you told me that I have time to work on the body that’s not so attractive anymore.”

Ngcebo: “You are leaving because you want me to see that. How can you take such a decision alone and how long will you be gone?”

Nandipha: “I will be gone until I am done with my book.”

Ngcebo: “That’s ridiculous and you can’t be away from the children leaving them with MaZungu because you know that they’re not used to her yet.”

Nandipha: “You’ll be here, you are their father, right? I am tired of you always making me feel like what I am doing here is like reciting ABC in some day care. You’ve pretended as if you understand where I come from but you don’t because it’s what you do that’s tiring and important. I have tried working on my body before in this house but I failed, you turn to forget that I have been in this house alone without any helper. Each time when the children

take their day nap I have to either take a rest as well, or clean the house, if not that I have to use that little time to do my school work. I cook for them, bath them, clean for them, when they cry I have to keep them all calm, I run around the house trying to get them to keep still, sometimes I have to force them to eat and they would throw their food at me throwing tantrums. I begged you to hire help for me but you refused.”

Ngcebo: “Nandipha-” he held her hand as she was crying.

Nandipha: “No, let me speak! I am not supernatural but I tried to make it work I didn’t tell my mom for a long time that things are hard for me here and you are making them hard. I didn’t tell her because that was going to have a bad influence on our relationship. You would away from home for a month Ngcebo leaving me here alone with the kids, where was time for me to work out? I would come in my bed after a long day seeing that I am not clean I would lie down telling myself I will go shower but I would just fall asleep because my body would be tired. And you compare that with you trying to sleep in here smelling alcohol? You know how much I hate that smell and if you saw I was dirty why didn’t you wake me and tell me?”

Ngcebo: “I was drunk Nandipha I wasn’t speaking on a sane state and I know that I have hurt you.”

Nandipha: “How about you do what I do then, work on your album while you look after our children? It would be better for you will have a helper but I had no one I was supposed to give her time off and leave you here alone to do what I do and we will see you if you will have time for yourself.”

Ngcebo: “Don’t gamble with our money like this Nandipha I am begging you not to go and leave the kids behind.”

Nandipha: “No, if I stay, you will never respect me Ngcebo and you will never see what I go through. I won’t stay I am going home tomorrow and you’ll see how you cope. I have had enough of you treating me like this and I have been quiet for so long. And if you want some hot sex and all the sex styles in this world, you can go sleep with whomever you wish. I don’t care they can do monkey styles on you if they wish I don’t care. I may be like this today but just know that I don’t regret choosing my children over working on my body. I don’t regret it even though you have hurt me I don’t feel like should have done this just to please you. I chose my kids over everything, over myself love and even over satisfying your needs since I give you whack sex now.”

Ngcebo: “I didn’t mean it that way, nana, can you please hear me out? I am not saying that-”

Nandipha: “I am not going to change my mind and just because I love you that doesn’t mean I deserve this treatment. If you were the one in my shoes I was going to come here with a gym membership card and tell you ‘Babe, I have signed you up into a gym let’s go work out. We can drop the kids at mom’s place every time for our gym time since we can’t hire a helper.’ I wasn’t going to wait for alcohol to give me balls to talk everything that you said to me. I am not changing my mind I am going home tomorrow and you’ll be the one to explain to the kids why I am not home like I have always done when you are not home while you are supposed to be home and you expect me to believe you didn’t cheat on me. I am leaving

tomorrow, goodnight.” She said and laid down facing the other side that gave Ngcebo her back. She wiped her tears with her hand and she convinced herself that she was going to be able to do this. She needed to do this because if she didn’t Ngcebo was always going to take her efforts for granted. She wasn’t about to allow him to do that to her.

Ngcebo laid his hand on her shoulder and his face closer to her face. “I can’t prove I haven’t cheated on you but believe me when I tell you I haven’t. I know nothing stays hidden forever and if I was cheating it was going to come out. I have had my fun with different women when I was still a boy, thinking like a boy but I am a man now and I don’t want to go back to that life. I love you, Nandipha and there’s isn’t a time where I regret being with you. A man can have one woman and be satisfied with her that’s what dad told us but I never believed him that time until now, I am satisfied with you. And yes, I wasn’t happy with how things were in our relationship but I preferred to stay here because I wanted to, I believed that things would change.” He told her looking at the side of her face that was visible to his eyes. He then kissed her cheek and wished her goodnight. He laid down after switching off the lights and he closed his eyes, he didn’t know how he was going to pull this off because clearly Nandipha wasn’t going to stay. He needed to work on his album but he also couldn’t leave their children with the helper that they were not used to. He couldn’t do that and he couldn’t even hire a second one because it would be the same story. They were going to give her a hard especially with their mother, gone...

Tuesday morning, Dalingcebo was on his clothes now ready to hit the road and go back home. He’d had a wonderful time with his brother and the girls that he could hear now laughing as he was inside the guest bedroom. He shook his head and noted that he needed to get to his mother’s palace and take his little girl. He wanted her to spend the rest of the week in his house. She was grown now, a well-mannered girl and he was forever grateful to his mother for raising her. It wasn’t pleasant that she was going to have a sibling that she was never going to know because Dalingcebo didn’t see himself confessing his crimes to his parents... He sighed and left the room only to bump into Thando, Nongcebo and Similo running around in the mezzanine open space balcony upstairs, they were naked and the helper was running after them calling their names out. Dalingcebo laughed and took a few steps to get to them before they could get to their room. He was also to hold Similo and Thando.

Similo: “Hawu, baba! Shibeke phansi!” (Put us down)

Dalingcebo: “No, where is your mother? Nongcebo, come now!” he commanded looking back at her and she sulked folding her lips but she followed Dalingcebo who had her sisters in his arms.

Thando: “Mama, uyapheka shifuna ukugezwa umama.” (Mom is cooking and we want her to bath us.)

Dalingcebo: “No, you will have MaZungu bathing you not your mother because after bathing, you should eat. Do you understand?” he asked putting them down inside their bathroom with two bath tubs. Ngcebo got the bathroom changed to accommodate the girls. He didn’t want to buy babies’ bathing basins that are usually used.

“YEBO!” The three of them chanted and went to MaZungu who placed the three of them in a free tub. She did that after thanking Dalingcebo for his help. She wasn’t a young woman and she wasn’t an old woman either but she was on early 40s. She’d worked as a nanny for Thembelihle with Mntwana. But she found it very challenging to look after Nandipha’s girls. And she couldn’t imagine how it was going to be as Nandipha was going to leave her. She found it hard to believe that she’d been looking after these children alone, to her she seemed as a strong girl and she wasn’t pleased that she heard them fight with their prince in the morning. She didn’t know if she was supposed to call Thembelihle and tell her that things were not going well or she was supposed to keep quiet. Or maybe she was supposed to speak with Ngcebo because he knew him a little better than Nandipha...

“We had a good time with you here, Dalingcebo and we are hoping that you’ll come and next time you’ll be coming with Qalokuhle.” Nandipha said to Dalingcebo who was ready for the road. She was standing outside the house with Ntokomalo next to her while the others were running around.

Dalingcebo: “We will have to plan that and you will keep well with the children. I will call Ngcebo when I get home.”

Nandipha: “Okay, thank you.” she said and gave him the lunchbox that she’d prepared for him. He thanked her and moved away to his car.

Ngcebo: “I will find you here when I come back?”

Nandipha: “Yes, I think. I asked my brother to come and fetch me when he comes back from campus.” She replied.

Ngcebo: “You barely cope when you have left the children with me for the night. How will you do it now since you’ll be gone for a long time?”

Nandipha: “I will manage just fine.”

Ngcebo nodded and went to his brother who was waiting for him. They were not going to drive together. “Bafo, thank you for coming and drive safe back home.” Ngcebo said to his brother and they shared a shoulder hug.

Dalingcebo: “Don’t worry about your girl she’ll be fine just don’t stop showing that you were wrong she’ll forgive you. I think she’s still angry.”

Ngcebo: “Yeah. Give this money to Qalokuhle for school pocket money.” He gave

Dalingcebo the R200 note.

Dalingcebo: “I will give it to her.” they hugged each other last and Dalingcebo stepped inside his car leaving Ngcebo to run to his kids to restrain them from running towards the car... He then sent them to their mother and he left them.

“What happened because I thought the children were coming here?” Faith asked Nandipha who was inside her bedroom after she’d placed her bag in her room. Faith was changing her clothes she’d just gotten back from work.

Nandipha: “Nothing happened mama but I decided that I will come here instead and leave them with their father.”

Faith: “You’ve never done that before. Did you two fight and what did Ngcebo say about this?” she asked and looked back at her as she sat on the bed.

Nandipha: “No, we didn’t fight mama and he had to accept it.” She replied, she was never going to tell her what really happened. It was between her and Ngcebo, she didn’t want her mother to know.

Faith: “Okay, but I am not convinced. We will eat out then because you are home, just go and put on something warm.”

“Yes!” She exclaimed delightedly and got up from her mother’s bed. She marched to her bedroom and bumped into her brother. “The old lady is taking us out and so, get into something warm I’m doing the same.” She told him.

Randall: “Thank God!” he was now -21 years old and doing his final year in Varsity. He would visit Nandipha and the girls at time because he liked being around the girls, for him they were entertaining because he would play with them and they enjoyed his company....

“Hello?” Nandipha answered Ngcebo’s phone call, she was walking out of the house to get to her mother’s car as they were waiting for her.

Ngcebo: “You didn’t call to tell me you arrived safe.”

Nandipha: “I was going to text you but I am home now.”

Ngcebo: “Okay.” There was total silence on the line.

Nandipha: “The girls are sleeping now?”

Ngcebo: “Yes, I have just put Thando down now they’ve cried from the minute you left until now.” he informed her.

Nandipha stepped on the front seat of the car. “They will be fine and it’s better because MaZungu is inside the main house with you.” she said.

Ngcebo: “I guess... Nandipha?”

Nandipha: “Yeah?”

Ngcebo: “What does this mean for us? Are you leaving me again?”

Nandipha: “No, I am not and I never said that I am. I just need time for myself as well and for you to understand everything I have been doing alone.”

Ngcebo: “I love you.”

Nandipha: “I love you too and goodnight.”

Ngcebo: “Goodnight.” They hung up the call and Nandipha took her mother’s handbag that was next to her. She placed her phone inside and joined in on the conversation her mother was having with her brother. She would avoid her mother’s searching eye whenever it reached her...

“Bhuti, I wanted to speak to you about something.” Banele informed his brother who was heading out of their parents’ house. Banele was home because he needed to speak to his parents.

Mnotho: “What’s wrong?” He asked and sat down on the couch next to him.

Banele: “I know that sis Happiness is nowhere to be found and we are all worried about her and Njabulo. I just wanted to know if it would be a problem if I speak to mom and dad about my plans with my girlfriend now. Or should I wait until Njabulo and his mother are found?”

Mnotho: “Hhayi, I don’t think there’s a problem. I don’t have a problem with anything you

can speak to mom and dad then you'll hear from them."

Banele: "Oh, okay, thank you."

Mnotho stood up from the couch. "You want to start with taking the first wife now?" he asked walking up to the door and Banele laughed without giving him an answer... Mnotho walked up to his car, he stepped inside the car and drove his car to Danielle's house. He was playing music in his car with his mind thinking that as Valentine was coming up by now he would be searching online for the gifts he was going to buy for his wives. His cruelty had always given Happiness an empty box and he was thinking this now that she was gone. He hadn't been having peaceful nights as his mind would remind him of all the bad that he'd done to Happiness. He would sleep at night for a few minutes and wake up in the middle of the night, getting back to sleep would be a hardest mission for him. He'd tried to search within himself that what went wrong? Why did he hurt Happiness that much? And it is now that he wishes that he listened to his mother when she told him to treat her right for the sake of his kingdom. What was he thinking? What if...

He sighed as he'd reached his house. "I have sinned beyond Lord and I don't know if there's still redemption for me. But I hope that you'll listen to my prayers and maybe one day I will have strength to confess my wrongs even though my father wouldn't even stand with me then..." he said a short prayer before stepping out of his car. He then marched to the front door...

The front of the house was quiet and that meant Pearl was already asleep. He was going to see her the following day he told himself that as he was hoping that he was going to find her awake. The lights in the house were still on and that signalled that his wife wasn't asleep as yet.

He stepped inside his bedroom and Danielle was on her feet with two suitcases on top of the bed. "Sawubona, MaNkosi." He greeted Danielle and looked at the suitcases that were on the bed. He sat on the bed.

Danielle: "Sawubona, Zulu, how was your day?" she moved forward to get to him and they shared a short kiss. Danielle then moved back to the wardrobe.

Mnotho: "It was a good day and how was yours?"

Danielle: "I finished the order of the dresses for those women who asked that I sew dresses for them." Danielle was sewing and she was working in her yard. She had an open one room where she was worked in, Mnotho had built it for her in the yard at the back of the house.

Mnotho: "That's a good thing and now, why are you packing?"

Danielle: "Hawu! What kind of a question is that, Mnotho?"

Mnotho: "It's a straight question. I am just asking because I need to know that why are you packing. I don't know."

Danielle: "We have our honeymoon coming up or maybe you have forgotten about that? Why would you ask me about packing?"

Mnotho: "You can't possibly expect me to take you on the honeymoon while I don't even know where Happiness is with my son."

Danielle clapped her hands once. "You can't be serious right now! We will postpone our trip

now because your wife chose to be selfish and leave her house without telling anyone about it?" she asked.

Mnotho: "Yes, we will postpone the trip because of that and just because Happiness left, that doesn't mean she's selfish. She's selfish about what?"

Danielle: "She only thinks about herself clearly because now, I can't have my honeymoon because of whatever selfish reasons that she had for leaving her house with your son. Why didn't she leave after the honeymoon?"

Mnotho: "Hee! I don't want to fight with you, MaNkosi just unpack these clothes and forget that we will go on the honeymoon while Happiness's whereabouts are not known."

Danielle: "Oh, and what about Valentine's day. Do you expect me to cook with Elena and have this gathering you always do for us?"

Mnotho: "No, I don't expect that because there'll be no Valentine's celebration for any of you. I don't care what you have to say about that but that's what will happen and you won't change my mind."

Danielle: "Wow! I can't believe I have to suffer because of one selfish woman who wanted everything to stop because she's not here. It's clear that she did this on purposes and you'll see she will come back after this. I have always seen that she hasn't accepted me I don't know about Elena-

Mnotho: "Just shut up! Ntandokazi, shut up! You are talking nonsense about Happiness and she's not that kind of person who schemes." He shouted.

Danielle: "I won't keep quiet while you are being unfair to me. I deserve this holiday after everything that had happened especially in my wedding."

Mnotho: "Okay, pack your things then and go have this holiday that you want desperately. I will give you money and you'll go alone. I will stay behind and keep worrying and looking for my wife. And you, just go have your holiday I won't argue with you anymore." he said lastly and left the room to get to the bathroom. He was clicking his tongue repeatedly as he marched to the bathroom. He couldn't believe half of the things she had to say...

S5 >> EPISODE 02

He came to this place because he wanted to distress after a long day trying to get his second business together and it was failing dismally. He was angry and demotivated, so, he wanted to get drunk tonight. He was inside a club in Cape Town the club was a few kilometres away from his apartment. He didn't want to live in the Suburbs but he wanted to be in the heart of the city. He'd been living in Cape Town for years and he was used to the city by now. He'd been too busy getting his business together but he always made time for fun. His busy life made him decide that he was not going to be committed to any woman for now. He had flings with the same type of women he liked, older women and he liked them more here because they were not clingy. He'd been in love for quite a several times, had been

disappointed but that never stopped him from loving again.

He was 21 years old now and he felt that he was in the right path of life...

Now, he wanted someone he was going to take back into his place and from this crowd, Mntwana only saw young girls.

“Why does it look like you are searching for something?” A tall plus size yellow bone asked Mntwana who had moved back to the bar now. He was moving his head with the music looking at the people dancing, he’d seen that dancing on the dance floor wasn’t working for him and maybe this night wasn’t going to be the fun that he’d wanted, the fun that he’d left his place to find.

Mntwana: “I am searching for a partner in crime.” He replied and looked at her as she was seated on the bar high chair now looking at Mntwana.

Woman: “Oh, I am here searching for fun and that means we have something in common and that’s searching.” She commented, pulling him closer to her because she wanted to hear him clearly and they laughed as Mntwana almost fell down. She wasn’t too strong to pull him like that.

Mntwana: “How about we dance together then?”

Woman: “We can get a drink first.” She suggested pointing the booze at the bar and Mntwana nodded. It wasn’t a problem to buy alcohol for her if she wanted alcohol he had no problem with that. His serious relationships never included him dating women who drink alcohol and for flings, he didn’t really care what they were up to as long as they maintain the fling.

He opened his wallet not realising that the woman next to him was just a crook who’d seen the money that he was carrying. She’d been here and her eyes wondered, visiting his wallet and she noted him. This was what she did best, picking on men’s wallet which she labelled as ‘easy men’

Mntwana: “What would you like?”

Woman: “A bottle of vodka would do.”

Mntwana: “A whole bottle?” he asked to ensure that she was serious about what she wanted and the woman nodded with a smile. “Okay, who’ll be having that bottle with you?” he asked while placing the order with the barman. He took out his car keys from his pocket and he placed them on the counter along with his wallet and phone.

Woman: “You are here with me and that means we will have it all together. Don’t you want to get wasted with me and maybe later we can drive to your place?” she played along seeing the car keys that he’d just placed on the counter. She fixed his golf tee shirt collar that had no problem at all.

Mntwana didn’t feel so great about this one, he thought she was playing the game the wrong way and he didn’t like it when the woman made it obvious that she wanted drinks and they would have sex.

Mntwana: “And what would we be doing at my place? Why don’t we go to your place?” he asked and gave her glass as the bottle of vodka was placed before them now. The woman took the glass and she laughed without giving Mntwana an answer. “There won’t be an

answer?" he asked.

Woman: "I don't live alone and it culture that you go to a guy's place, don't you think?" she asked standing on her feet and she held Mntwana's neck closer to her for them to share a kiss. She saw that it was going to be quiet difficult to achieve her mission with this man because he had a number of questions. And her eyes were already on the money that she'd seen. She then sent her left hand that was free, she was sending this hand to the wallet. She thought she was going to be able to take the money in there but too bad for her, the lady who was going to change the barman saw her hand doing the inappropriate thing. The bar lady held her hand. "What in the hell are you doing?" Simthande, the lady who worked in the club raised her voice.

Mntwana stopped kissing the woman and he turned his head to the one who had risen her voice on them. He thought that, this person was being crazy on him because he was just kissing the woman and there was nothing wrong with that. But all that changed when he saw 'Simthande' holding this woman's hand and his wallet was opened.

Mntwana: "What the fuck? Were you trying to steal my money?" he shouted and tried to take a step towards the woman.

Simthande: "No! Don't hurt her because she didn't take your money MR. Being aggressive with her won't help right now." she stopped Mntwana by placing her arm between them... The people next to them on the counter were already looking at them...

Woman: "I wasn't stealing your money but she just got me wrong."

Mntwana: "Don't fool me bitch, did some ghost open this wallet?" he shouted trying to remove Simthande's arm but the guy on his back held Mntwana back because he could see that he was angry and he wanted to get physical.

Simthande: "CALM DOWN! Don't make me regret stopping her." she shouted at Mntwana looking at him in the eye. Mntwana removed the guy's hands from his chest and he sat back on his seat looking at this woman who'd tried to steal from him. "I would advise that you leave this counter, sis." She told the woman who'd tried to steal. The woman fixed herself and she walked away, giving a catwalk of the world as if she could see that Mntwana was watching her as she walked away from him.

He turned his head to Simthande and clicked his tongue. "Thank you, I almost lost my money." He said to her and she smiled with a single nod. She then attended the rest of her customers who needed attention. Mntwana looked at this bottle and he didn't know if he was supposed to leave it here or find someone who was going to finish it off for him. He couldn't leave with it and now, he wanted to leave because his mood was ruined.

Simthande: "Is it your first time here?" she asked facing Mntwana after she'd attended her clients. She took the other glass to put it away.

Mntwana: "No, it's not my first time here but I don't usually sit here because I don't come here alone."

Simthande: "Oh! And what happened tonight as you are here alone?"

Mntwana: "I just had a bad day with everything that I am trying to get together it's just failing and now, I am here feeling rather screwed."

“Oh! So, you wanted someone to screw as well? Just a free fuck?” she guessed and moved away from him to answer the customer. She was leaving Mntwana laughing at the accusation that she’d just voiced out.

Mntwana: “Well, I don’t think that’s a bad thing unless if you think so!” he raised his voice looking at her as she was mixing a cocktail for a client. She wasn’t tall and she wasn’t short but her height was medium he wasn’t too sure of her complexion because of the lights in the club. But he was sure of the structure of her body, she was a slim curvy woman.

Simthande: “For some girls I think that’s really not a problem.”

Mntwana: “And it’s a problem for you?” he asked looking at the girl who was sitting next to him on the counter, the girl was the owner of the cocktail.

Simthande: “Yes and who are you going to share that vodka with?”

Mntwana: “I can share it with you after hours.” He replied and Simthande laughed without supplying a further comment. Mntwana looked at the woman next to him as she was laughing as well.

Simthande: “I don’t drink such drinks.”

Mntwana: “Which drinks do you prefer?”

“I only drink red wine.” She replied and stood back on the position that she was in, facing Mntwana after she’d given the cocktail to the client.

Mntwana: “I would like to buy you a glass sometime or I can take you to the upcoming wine tasting event in some vine in the province.”

Simthande: “That would be very nice.” She smiled.

“I didn’t know you allowed to flirt with your clients.” The cocktail girl commented getting a little jealous as in her mind she got the idea that this guy was a catch. And now, he was showing interest to this ‘bar girl’

Simthande: “And I didn’t know that you are here to supervise me.”

Mntwana laughed and lifted his wallet. “I haven’t paid for this and for helping me save my money I would like to leave a tip.” He said placing the money on the counter ignoring the girl that was next to them.

Simthande took the money. “Thank you and I hope you had a great time here.”

Mntwana: “I am not leaving yet I don’t want to get you into trouble since the supervisor is in the building.” He commented taking his bottle he left the counter with Simthande laughing at his comment... He wanted to stay until the club closes because his intentions were to wait for the girl...

“Waiting for a lift home?” Mntwana asked Simthande who was looking around after she’d said her goodbyes to her colleagues who have gotten inside their friends’ car. It was after 2am and the club had just been closed.

Simthande: “You are still here?” she asked and held her shoulders feeling a bit cold. She couldn’t believe this guy was still here and now, she didn’t feel safe. And her friend wasn’t anywhere closer.

Mntwana: “Yes, I promised you to take you to a wine tasting event and I can’t do that while I don’t have your number.”

She laughed. "You waited here to get my number?" She asked.

Mntwana: "Yes, and I can give you a lift home if you wish? Where's home?"

Simthande: "No, after talking about what brought you here I don't think I really want to get in the car with you."

Mntwana chuckled. "My name is Mntwana Zulu and I am not a serial killer or rapist. I wouldn't hurt you. You can take a picture of my number plate and tell your friends that the guy driving this car gave you a lift. Unless if you are waiting for a car." He suggested trying to convince her and he recognised that it felt bad that women didn't trust men anymore. They see a guy, they see a rapist, a murder and all sort of bad things. But who could blame them?

Simthande: "I will take the offer because it's cold and I walk to my place." She said and marched to the front of his car and Mntwana followed her.

Mntwana: "This is not good at all. You walk alone?"

Simthande: "Yes, it's not that far." She replied and took a picture of his number plate, she sent it to her flat mate there.

Mntwana: "You don't trust me but you walk by foot in the city with vultures?" he asked as they stepped inside the car.

Simthande: "I have my protector friend but I don't see him around today. He lives in the streets and he usually walks me to my flat."

Mntwana: "Where's home and who do you live with, your family?"

Simthande: "I was born here and I don't have a family."

Mntwana: "You care to let me in? Maybe I could use a friend."

Simthande laughed. "I am not looking for a fuck buddy." She replied pretty fast and Mntwana laughed along with her.

Mntwana: "No, I respect the fact that you said you are not that kind of a girl. I came here years ago to study business and I have been hustling trying to make a business. I have one now that's up and running but the one I recently tried to start it failed. What's your name?"

Simthande: "My name is Simthande and my story is long but my mom died and I don't know my father since my mother cheated on her husband to have me. I have two siblings that I don't even want to talk about because they have hurt me... My older brother wasn't the child of my mother's husband and my sister is the child of her husband. It's just a long story I don't want to talk about."

Mntwana: "I am sorry, we have arrived at your destination and can I have your number? How old are you?" he asked after parking his car on the side walk next to the block of flats.

Simthande gave her number to Mntwana.

Simthande: "I am 26 years old and you?"

Mntwana: "I am 27 years old." he lied and punched his number on her phone. He knew that she couldn't tell his real age because now, he'd grown he didn't look his age. And he had body builders helping him with looking all grown.

Simthande: "Okay, thank you for the lift Mntwana." She said taking her phone and Mntwana nodded looking at her as she walked away... He'd seen what he didn't see inside the club.

Simthande was caramel skinned...

The following morning, was a Saturday, he took his phone and saw a missed call from Ngcebo. He then decided to call him. He laid back on his bed and waited as the phone dialled...

“Mntwana!” Ngcebo answered the phone.

All the he heard loudly were cries of the girls in the background. “What’s wrong in there? Why are they crying?” He asked.

Ngcebo: “I am trying to get them to calm down because they’re actually hungry. I sent MaZungu to the shopping centre to buy their formula.”

Mntwana: “Where’s their mother?”

Ngcebo: “She’s not here I called last night because I wanted to know how it went with the business proposal... Similo! Yeka lento!”

Mntwana sighed. “How about I call you later? And where’s their mother because it doesn’t sound like you are coping over there.” he asked.

Ngcebo: “She’s at her mother’s house. Eish, we will talk neh?”

Mntwana: “Sure.” He said and removed his phone from his ear. He knew what he was thinking maybe it was wrong but his brother wasn’t coping over there... Mntwana then dialled Nandipha’s number.

“Hello?” Nandipha answered.

Mntwana: “Unjani, makoti?”

Nandipha: “I am fine, Mntwana and how are you?”

Mntwana: “I am good, hawu, yazi, I have just got off the phone with Ngcebo and the kids are crying over there. I couldn’t even speak to him but I could hear that he wasn’t really coping. I asked about you and he told me you are in your mother’s house and he didn’t explain further.”

Nandipha: “Yes, I am in my mother’s house.”

He bit his tongue as she wasn’t saying anything further. “Did something happen maybe? I don’t mean to be nosy but – eh, can you go and help him over there because it doesn’t sound good.” He didn’t know how to say because Nandipha wasn’t making things easy for him to speak.

Nandipha: “Children cry, Mntwana. It’s what they do and if they get what they want they will eventually stop crying. I am here for a purpose I didn’t just leave them for fun and Ngcebo knows that.”

Mntwana: “But – it didn’t sound like he’s got it all together.”

Nandipha: “Did he ask you to call me?”

Mntwana: “No, but I thought I should call you and maybe you can help him.”

Nandipha: “Have a good day.”

Mntwana: “Okay, you too.” He removed the phone from his ear and he wondered as he sent his head back on the pillow...

“I need to rest Banele, what is it that you want to talk about?” Thembelihle asked Banele

who was seated with them on the dinner table. Banele had just finished clearing the table for his parents and he asked to speak to them. Qalokuhle was at her father's house.

Banele: "I wanted to tell you that I have found someone that I wish to commit myself to. Her name is Candice."

Dalisu: "Candice? Is she a white woman or she has an English woman?"

Banele: "She's a white woman I have dated her for years and now, I have decided that I want to take our relationship on to the next level."

Thembelihle: "You are planning on marrying her right away or you are just informing us that you have someone in your life?"

Banele: "I plan on marrying her because I have decided that I want to go and work abroad I have spent more time doing our human history and I want to take a new turn now."

Dalisu: "Hhe! What will happen to this woman then? You'll leave her here after marrying her? That's not a wise thing to do Banele. You should be closer to your partner you can't marry her to leave her here."

Banele: "No, Mageba. We did the same course and we have planned that we will both travel and work together as a married couple."

Thembelihle: "Oh, that's a very nice thing. I wonder why God didn't give me a husband like you, my son." She commented looking at Banele shortly with a smile and Banele was just laughing with his bubbled eyes looking at his father who was looking at his mother.

Dalisu: "What's wrong with the husband that he has given you?"

Thembelihle laughed and looked at Dalisu, she held his hand. "I am joking mnyeni wami. I don't wish for another husband." She said.

Dalisu: "Oh. We hear you mfanawami and we won't stop you from doing what you want to do but for now, I think it would be better that we wait for little while because your brother's wife hasn't been found. We can't have such huge celebrations while one of us is missing."

Thembelihle: "It seems like you will have polygamy with white women and does this woman know that you want more than one wife?"

Banele: "Eh! There's something that I never told you about." He said, he'd never told his parents that he learnt that he's infertile. Ngcebo and Candice were the only people who knew that. And now, it was time that he tells them the truth and that his plans had changed.

Thembelihle: "What is it?"

Banele: "I will no longer have polygamy because I learnt that I am infertile."

"HUH?" His parents raised their voices and looked at each other. Thembelihle placed her hand on her chest and closed her eyes with her head faced down. She felt the pain for her son and tears flew off her eyes automatically. He couldn't have kids? How did he feel about that? She asked herself these questions as if Banele wasn't in the room with her.

"MaSthole, don't cry." Dalisu said getting up from his chair and he sat on the chair that was closer to Thembelihle. He pulled her to his chest and he rubbed her back. "This is not the end of the world for Banele. He will have a child, he has six more brothers and this means that his wife can be pregnant."

Thembelihle: "But baba-" she was broken off by Dalisu speaking as she was still inside his

arms crying because it didn't sit well with her that Banele was infertile. He wasn't going to have children of his own?

Dalisu: "There are no buts MaSthole. Don't cry this much but rather be proud of our son, he's done a lot for himself and he even found a woman who's willing to be with him even though he wouldn't be able to give her children. And I believe you have told her that, Banele?" He asked and looked at Banele.

Banele: "I went to the Doctor with her, baba, she knows that I am infertile and she's fertile. Mama, you don't have to cry because I have accepted this. And like dad said, it's not the end of the world." He told his mother showing her that he'd accepted this because he knew that he couldn't change nature.

Thembelihle: "Are you sure you have accepted it?" she asked looking at him now after she'd moved from her husband's chest.

Banele: "Yes, I am sure. I have known about it for years and I told Ngcebo about it. I have accepted it."

Thembelihle: "Okay, can you give us time to talk, alone?" she requested looking at him, Banele nodded his head and he left the room for his parents. Thembelihle sighed and looked at her husband. "I think that we can let Banele pay ilobolo for his girlfriend. I know Happiness that is not here but ilobolo is not a huge thing and everything shouldn't stop because Happiness is not here." She suggested because she knew that Happiness was somewhere in the world where she was happy and she didn't want her son to be kept waiting because of that. She wanted Banele to get what he wanted.

Dalisu: "Okay, I think we can do that and we could use something that's a little positive with everything that's going on."

Thembelihle: "Yes, we need to do that."

Dalisu: "Don't you think he can have children of his own if you can do what you did with mama? I mean you went to the mountain to pray and you gave me seven healthy boys?"

Thembelihle: "It's different, Ndabezitha. I wasn't infertile by nature."

Dalisu: "What do you mean?"

Thembelihle: "It was the hand of witchcraft that was stopping me from having children and that curse broke after prayer. And for our son it's nature."

Dalisu: "Okay, why am I only hearing about this now? How many years has it been, 35 years and I am only hearing this now?"

Thembelihle: "It was something that was between me and mama, Mageba. I wasn't meant to tell you and please, now, don't be angry over the past."

Dalisu: "Who casted that spell or curse on you? Just give me the name."

Thembelihle: "No! Why should I give you names now?"

Dalisu: "I want to know and I want to every detail."

Thembelihle: "I won't tell you anything and that witch died, she burnt in flames now please don't get angry over this. There's no need to dig up things about dead evil people. Yini, bakithi?" she kissed his lips and held his hand getting up from the chair. Dalisu stood up after her. They marched to their room...

Dalisu: “Okay, I will let it go because you want me to. We will let Banele pay ilobolo for his girlfriend that’s the best thing we can do for him.”

Thembehle: “I am happy to hear that and now, I want to sleep.” She said taking off her clothes as they were inside their bedroom. Dalisu held her shoulders and turned her to look at him. “What is it?” she asked.

Dalisu: “You’ve been a strong woman for me, MaSthole and with you, just you, I have a priceless worth treasure. A man can have five more women behind him but if they’re not as strong that would be just useless – what I am trying to say is, I don’t regret not following my father’s footsteps. I don’t regret choosing only you among the rest. I love you and thank you for being the woman you are.” He gave her words of appreciation and kissed her forehead. Thembehle smiled and hugged her husband...

S5 >> EPISODE 03

“How’s it going now?” Danielle asked her brother on the phone, she was inside her car driving to get to Thembehle’s palace. She’d been called by Thembehle to come to the palace.

Junior: “The work stress gets to me, Ntandokazi and you know that I usually spoke to dad about that stress.”

Danielle: “Yeah, I know but why don’t you try speaking to mom or your other mother? Or you can even speak to Liam if it’s hard to speak to them. I think it will do him good if you discuss those type of things with him.”

Junior: “Yeah, I think Liam will be the best person I can talk to because he also speaks to me as well about the shit he goes through in Varsity.”

Danielle: “That’s better and Hannah is still staying at home doing absolutely nothing for real?” she asked as she took a turn that was leading her to get to the road of Thembehle’s palace.

Junior: “If you fail to convince her I don’t know who will because she wakes in the morning to eat and sit on the couch all day. She doesn’t want to study further I don’t know if she thinks our parents’ money will sustain her forever.”

Danielle: “She’s very young not to have ambitions, I mean girls her age, have bigger dreams and some are working on those dreams but she just doesn’t want anything.”

Junior: “I think she needs divine intervention.” He commented on a loud voice than the usual and they laughed. “And how’s everything over there? The missing sister in-law has been found?” he asked.

Danielle: “No, I swear that woman got drama and her drama is affecting me now because I have to sit back and postpone my honeymoon.”

Junior: “You are not serious right?”

Danielle: “I am dead serious. He told me all about ‘we can’t go to the honeymoon while that

woman is not back' and he even said I can go alone if I am so desperate to go on this holiday."

Junior: "Just do that then."

Danielle: "You think that I should do that?"

Junior: "Yeah, if he feels that he doesn't want to go with you just take your daughter and move away from all that stress. Sis, you've been through a whole lot of shit and now, you need this holiday."

"You are right!" She supported and got off the car after she'd parked it on the parking area inside the palace. She opened the back door of the car where Pearl was sleeping. "I will do that and thank you for the call. I have arrived at the palace. We will speak some other time I will inform you when I have decided on the date that I will take my trip on." She informed him.

Junior: "Okay, bye sis."

Danielle: "Bye." She placed her phone on the car seat and untied Pearl from her chair. She was sleeping on the chair, it was 13th of February which was on a Wednesday, it was in the afternoon as she was here...

She marched to the house with her daughter in her arms. Now, she was able to do everything that she needed to do because she was completely healed and she had no fear now about the people who had attacked on her wedding, that they might come back, she wasn't scared because they were behind bars...

She placed Pearl on Qalokuhle's bed and she left the room to get to her mother in-law whom she was told she was inside her sewing room.

"Sawubona, mama." Danielle greeted Thembelihle who was seated behind her machine sewing, Thembelihle greeted her back. She sat on the available chair and she took a beautiful little dress that Thembelihle had finished sewing. "I don't think Qalokuhle will fit in here." She commented looking at the pink with brown designs dress, it was an African print design.

Thembelihle: "No, I am not sewing it for her. Similo is the one who asked that I make a dress for her but then I can't sew for her alone I should make it for the five of them, same colours but maybe I will make the designs differ because their father told me they turn to fight over clothes since they wear the same things. I don't want that."

Danielle: "Oh! And you better write their names on the dresses."

Thembelihle: "That can work as well but they can't even read."

Danielle: "That's the problem! But it's a beautiful dress."

Thembelihle: "Thank you and for coming as well. We will just talk in here because I don't want to stand up until I have finished this part."

Danielle: "There's no problem."

Thembelihle: "Since Happiness is gone and I don't know when she'll come back. I don't want her shop to be neglected and I can't even manage the shop. I called you here to ask you to watch over things in her shop. I don't know you'll see what you can do, maybe you can even have your designs added in the shop if that's not the problem for you."

Danielle kept quiet after Thembelihle had finished talking, she didn't know if it would be appropriate to tell her that she'd asked Happiness that they work together before but she refused. And now, how was she going to look after that shop after the owner had refused that they work together?

Thembelihle: "I don't know if there'll be a problem but if there'll be one you can tell me I will ask someone else. I asked you because you also working on the clothes department and so, I thought it would be appropriate if you take over." She relieved her as she was quiet now and maybe that meant she didn't want to take over the shop or maybe she was still thinking about what she'd just told her now. Thembelihle couldn't guess which was which.

Danielle: "No, no, I will look over things for her since she's gone. I don't have a problem with that. I will go see how things are at the shop tomorrow."

Thembelihle: "Okay, thank you. I won't be stressed by that now."

Danielle: "It's okay, mama, you don't have to stress yourself too much."

Thembelihle: "It just comes naturally. And now that you are here your father in-law and I will eat supper cooked by you. You'll see what you can cook inside the kitchen." She instructed looking at her.

"Okay, I will be on it." Danielle said and she stood on her feet, she'd never cooked supper for them but she was hoping that she wasn't going to cook something they wouldn't like...

She closed her eyes and laughed, the trainer laughed only because she was laughing. But he normally didn't laugh on his clients' body scales.

Trainer: "It's not that bad."

Nandipha: "Well, from size to 38 to size-" she folded her lips and got off the scale. She wasn't in the gym to work out but she was here just to check if she could be able to have a routine in certain times, get a trainer and estimate on how long it would take her to lose weight.

Trainer: "Size what?" he asked and showed her to the side of the gym with charts that showed different routines for either fitness or losing weight.

Nandipha: "Oh! I wouldn't want to tell you or I will find that on the front cover of some newspaper that 'PRINCE TEE'S BABY MAMA: INSECURE ABOUT BODY CHANGES'" She mimicked the news' person boldly and they laughed. "Seriously and that time I would be in my house eating some fries, I will scream, push the plate and think now, I will lose weight just by that!" she commented loudly and clapped her hands once, they laughed.

Trainer: "I wouldn't do that and I didn't know that you are such a vibe."

Nandipha: "I will take that a compliment." She said and bowed to him.

Trainer: "Amen! And now here are the routines if you join with us and wish that I become your trainer we work on the times in which you can come in here because I have read that you are a full time mother."

Nandipha smiled. "Yes, I am and I think that I can dedicate two hours of my time even though I feel that's a little time but I should balance things."

Trainer: "Okay, we can do that and what do you want to focus on? Or you want to work on the whole body? And you want to see changes by when?"

Nandipha: “I think that I should focus on the whole body and maybe in three months I should see some difference.”

Trainer: “Okay, that means by May you want to see changes.”

Nandipha: “Yes, and I should slay on their birthday party!” she exclaimed and made the ‘I slay!’ dance moves.

The trainer laughed and shook his head. “You’ll slay mama and if you want to work on the whole body the easiest way to see what you’ll be doing is if, maybe you can do two hours dance classes in the afternoon and in the morning you can do the workout routine, also taking weights routines to get a shape of arms and legs and then you can do the none weights ones for the tummy, calves and other things. What do you think?” he asked.

Nandipha moved her head side to side trying to think. “Okay! Do you have those dance classes in here or I will have to sign up somewhere else? I used to dance before the pregnancy.” she asked.

Trainer: “We do have ladies who come weekdays in the afternoon for dance classes. You’ll sign up with them and sign up with me.”

Nandipha: “Okay, I will leave my number here and I will come back tomorrow then because I would have spoken to my helper then and I would have the money with me. Can you, maybe speak to the ladies that I want to join?” She informed him as they moved away from the wall.

Trainer: “Okay, let me write it down.” He said and requested a pen and paper on the front desk. They gave to him and he wrote Nandipha’s details.

Nandipha: “Thank you for your time.”

Trainer: “Anytime, mam.”

Nandipha then rushed to her mother’s car. Her mother was the one who made the appointment for her at the fitness centre that was closer to Ngcebo’s house. Nandipha didn’t tell her why she’d come to the house instead of the kids but she told her that she wanted to work on her body. Faith didn’t talk much because she’d always said that she wanted to lose weight without discussing it further, she just made an appointment for her. She told her to go and she was going to pay for her. She didn’t protest but she listened to her mother...

It’d been three days since she left Ngcebo and the girls, now, she wanted to see them. Ngcebo had called her asking her to come back home but she refused to come back even after she’d received a call from Mntwana she didn’t go. A part of her wanted to go because she missed her girls but, she stopped herself and reminded herself why she was doing what she was doing...

She opened her handbag, she came back with her keys, she opened the gate and drove through... She opened the door, she could hear the giggles of her children, she smiled as if she could see them. When she showed her body on the lounge where their giggles were, she saw them seated on the single couch with their eyes on the TV, they were watching Tom and Jerry. MaZungu was seated with them on the single couch inside the lounge.

“Sanibona, magundane ami!” She greeted them and they all turned their heads to her direction. They laughed and the first three stood on their feet, standing on the couch, they

turned and kneeled on the couch. They slid off the couch and their feet hit the ground. The last two were already on their mother they took the short route to slid off the couch without standing up.

Nandipha pulled the two, which was Thando and Nongcebo she sat on the couch where they were seated on. She greeted MaZungu while on that move with her daughters. The others moved with her.

Nandipha: “Ninjani?” (How are you?) she asked kissing their faces one by one and they giggled even those whom she hadn’t reach.

Girls: “SHIYAPHILA!” (We are fine)

Buhle: “Hawu! Mama, thina ehena nalela langa lasebusku shavuka shambuza ubaba ‘Uphi umama’ wathi ubaba yena ‘Uhambile’” (That night we woke up and asked dad about your whereabouts and he told us you left)

Similo: “Ehe! SHAKHALA HA! SHAKHALA! ANITHI?” (We cried and cried, right?) she narrated and lastly asked her sisters, she looked at them waiting for confirmation with her arm placed on her forehead.

Girls: “EHE!” (Yes!)

Nongcebo: “Washishiya kodwa mama, washishiya!” (You left us)

Nandipha laughed and pulled them up one by one she placed them on the couch.

“Ngiyaxolisa, ngikhona nje manje.” (I am sorry but I am here now)

Ntokomalo: “Shiphi pho ishikhwama shakho? Uyahamba futhi!” (Where’s your handbag? You are leaving again.)

Girls: “EHE!”

Nandipha looked at MaZungu and she laughed. “They’ve missed you a lot and today, they woke up very grumpy they didn’t even eat their breakfast. They’ve just had their food now because their father forced them.” MaZungu told her.

Nandipha: “Where’s he?”

MaZungu: “He’s working down there and I hope you are coming back.”

Nandipha: “No, it’s still early for me to come back, mama.” She replied and looked at her girls who were all looking at her now not the TV. “Let’s go upstairs and play, how’s that?” she asked delightedly and the girls screamed literary. Nandipha got up from the couch and she helped them off the couch. They ran off leaving her behind but she knew she was going to catch up with them on stairs because they were going to be stuck there...

Ngcebo opened the door to girls’ room where Nandipha was on the floor with them playing. Their room was bigger and they didn’t have a playing room because the wall separating the two bedrooms was removed turning two rooms into one bedroom for the girls. Ngcebo’s five-bedroom house was now a four-bedroom house. The girls’ room have everything that belonged to them in that room... Similo and Thando stood up from the floor, they ran to their father, they took his hands and pulled him to the floor.

“WOZA BABA!” (Come, dad!) They commanded him and he made his body light without resisting being pulled by them. He was forced to sit down and they gave him their toys that they were playing with, with their mother.

Ngcebo: "I thought they're here playing alone because MaZungu is in the kitchen." He told Nandipha while looking at her.

Nandipha: "They're with me as you can see."

Ngcebo: "How are you?" he asked combing Ntokomalo's doll after she'd given him the comb of her doll. He was combing the doll but looking at Nandipha.

Nandipha: "I am fine and how are you?"

Ngcebo: "I am fine. Are you back or you're still going to leave?"

Nandipha: "I will leave tomorrow morning."

Ngcebo: "And they will cry again."

Nandipha: "Oh, does that mean I wasn't supposed to come to see them?"

Ngcebo: "I don't know since you chose that you are leaving them. Weren't you supposed to come back when you've had enough of your mother's house? Or maybe you want them to cry so that I can get them to stop crying because that's what you always have to do when I leave?"

Nandipha chuckled and looked at Buhle who wasn't playing now but she was just looking at her parents. Nandipha brushed her head and she pushed her mother's hand off her head. "I don't know why are asking me that kind of question because it seems like you've got it figured out. And if I wasn't allowed to come see my kids you were supposed to tell me the other night when you called me." She replied and looked at him shortly.

Ngcebo: "It's hard for me to work while watching over the kids."

Nandipha got up from the floor. "Let's go and have our bath, now and we will go cook with mommy." She said clapping hands for the girls. They got up quickly neglecting their toys.

Nandipha left the room with the kids, she wasn't here to hear Ngcebo complaining to her. It was still early for her to come back, Ngcebo hadn't seen anything...

"But you can't just have strong characters all grouped together for that kind of theme where's the weak one?" Nandipha asked Duma on the phone looking at the character trade that he'd sent to her and he asked for her input... She was seated on the bed inside their bedroom with Ngcebo's laptop on her lap.

Duma: "I was thinking they will all start by being strong and situations will show the depth of their strength."

Nandipha: "Okay, if you put it that way but someone should be naturally weak but get her strength from this group of friends."

Duma: "You have a point I will go back to the drawing board and now, you are still in your mother's house?"

Nandipha: "I came over tonight I will go tomorrow."

Duma: "But ntwana, I just feel like you are running away from him and you don't have to do that but be grateful that he has voice out what has been bothering him."

Nandipha: "That's not what I am doing Duma and you won't understand because you are thinking about him alone with the children but he's not alone. Sometimes you have to put someone in your situation for them to respect you and take you seriously. It's easier to judge something that you don't do or haven't been through. He has never been alone with the kids

even for a week and he had to judge what I do lightly. No, it shouldn't work like that because I respect what he does. I know that it's important."

Duma: "You don't take shit ntwana yami not even the slightest."

Nandipha: "I wouldn't be Faith's daughter if I do. Work on that and we will talk after you have worked on it."

Duma: "Sho!" they hung up the call and Nandipha placed the laptop away. Nandipha looked at the time as she was preparing to sleep. The girls had long gone to bed. She left the room walking down to get to Ngcebo's studio...

"It's almost midnight Ngcebo you need to rest." She told him as he was still working, writing and scratching. She looked at him with an expectation that his response was going blackmail her.

He sighed and gave her the opposite response. "Yeah, you are right and I don't even hear what I am saying now." He placed the paper down and pulled her to him she stood in between his legs and held on to his waist. He kissed her cheek, she smiled and closed her eyes.

Nandipha: "I went to speak to a trainer today and I will start working out, he suggested that I work out in the morning and do the dance in the afternoon."

Ngcebo held her face and she opened her eyes. "You don't feel pressured into doing it just because I said all the things I said to you? I don't want you to feel pressured but if you don't like your body you can change it. God created us perfectly because if your body expands you can make means to go back in shape. But if you are comfortable with the way you look then don't be ashamed. And exercising will do your health good and you'll be a healthy mama. You don't feel pressured?" He asked kissing her lips and Nandipha, kissed him back without hesitation.

Nandipha: "No, I don't feel pressured, the trainer made me understand that I am more vulnerable to illnesses like diabetes and others if I don't keep my body weight in shape and it's a fitness centre closer to us. But that doesn't mean I am coming back home I am still going back to mom's house." She assured him and Ngcebo didn't comment on that assurance statement, he got them to take their kissing seriously...

"You want some studio sex?" Ngcebo asked untying the knot of her gown.

Nandipha: "Give it to me with a beat of what you've done so far." She replied removing his vest and Ngcebo did as she'd said... He moved with her to the couch located at the corner of the studio...

"You'll work out now and there's no need for you to hide your upper body." He said after laying her down on the couch.

Nandipha: "Ah! Ngcebo, look, I am big for the couch I don't feel comfortable."

Ngcebo chuckled. "Hhayi, don't be like that. What's wrong with the couch? You are giving Zulu a bad vibe now. You are keeping him waiting."

Nandipha: "Ngcebo, look, my hips are dangling like some big foot. Look!" she made him aware by pointing her hip that wasn't on the couch.

"You are so dramatic mfazi wakwa Zulu. Hheyi! I am not even horny anymore. Why are you

like this?" he asked her and stood up, he looked at her as she got up from the couch. Ngcebo shook his head.

Nandipha: "Stop thinking about your dick alone. I won't enjoy even one bit if I am not comfortable. How about you sit on the couch I will sit on you? Getting your guy up again is no problem." She suggested and Ngcebo didn't even hesitate. He sat on the couch, pulled Nandipha to him. They kick-start their journey to absolute pleasure...

Now, she was laying on his bare sweaty chest she was back on her night dress. She was listening to his song attentively. "No, let's work on this song, it's there but there's something lacking." Nandipha said and got up from the couch. She took Ngcebo's pyjama pants and gave it to him. Ngcebo wore it.

Ngcebo: "I didn't know what was lacking."

Nandipha: "We will work on it because a single should be satisfying." She said and they moved to sit on the chairs, they sat down and began working without even looking at the time...

She was driven by her driver to Dalingcebo's house. It was the middle of the second week since Qalokuhle had left the house to be with her father and Thembelihle was driving to his house to check on them... Her phone rang while she was busy reading her husband's heated text. She pressed her teeth together and answered Nontobeko's phone call.

Thembelihle: "MaZondi?"

Nontobeko: "Mama, how are you doing?"

Thembelihle: "I am doing well and how are you?"

Nontobeko: "I am not that well but I should be happy and celebrating since I have just been promoted into Commander for the new group that's coming in to join the army."

Thembelihle: "Hawu! That's wonderful, congratulations. And that should show you that hard work pays off."

Nontobeko: "Yes, and I can't believe that I will be second woman who'll make it this far with this career. I feel good about myself."

Thembelihle: "But what's wrong then as you've said you are not fine?"

Nontobeko: "As my career is blooming I can't say much about my marriage because Dalingcebo has asked me for a divorce."

Thembelihle: "HHAYBO!" She remained inside the car even though the driver had just parked her car inside Dalingcebo's yard. She didn't want to get off the car but she wanted to remain and listen to what she'd just been told her. Dalingcebo never told her this! "Is he serious?" she asked.

Nontobeko: "I am afraid he's serious about it. I don't want to lose him mama because I love him and I love my job too."

Thembelihle sighed. "What do you want me to do?" She asked, she didn't even know what to say in this situation because this was a woman ambitious about her career and had a husband who'd been requesting that she comes back home. She didn't know what advice to give and she was in no position to tell her what to do. Was she to reference herself? No, she had no

choice but to stay home with her husband and even if she had another choice, she didn't want stay away from him. She wanted it all and she got it all not as she wished but she got it. She also didn't want to tell her to choose her career over her family, her marriage because should that career end all together she won't have something to come back to but an empty house somewhere, or her mother's house because her marriage would have ended. And what would she think 'My mother in-law told me to go with my career and now, I am here' Nontobeko needed to do what she wanted to do because she'd spoken to her before about this...

Nontobeko: "I am asking that I get a chance to have my family with me."

"Why are you seated in here, mama?" Dalingcebo asked his mother, he heard the car from inside the house and he couldn't stay inside the house any longer.

Thembelihle: "Kwahle bo! I will come inside you want milk from your mother's breasts?" She asked looking at him.

Dalingcebo laughed. "Yes, I will go then." He said and turned to leave her.

Thembelihle: "You want Dalingcebo and Qalokuhle to move to Cape Town? Is that what you want?" she asked and placed her hand on her forehead.

Nontobeko: "Yes, I don't want to lose them, mama."

Thembelihle: "You are trying to say Dalingcebo should quit being a council man, a position his father gave him and he must move to Cape Town?"

Nontobeko: "I am begging."

Thembelihle: "Who must fill his position then? Note: That person must be amongst his brothers excluding the two older ones." There was silence after Thembelihle had asked that question and she was waiting for an answer. "You won't answer me?" she asked.

Nontobeko: "I don't have an answer to the question."

Thembelihle: "Maybe you didn't think this through but that would mean one of Dalingcebo's brothers should give up their career and come back here just to be council's man? They must make sacrifices for you to be happy?"

Nontobeko: "No, I am not saying that."

Thembelihle: "That's what you are saying."

Nontobeko: "Not just for me but for their brother as well."

Thembelihle: "Let me get off the phone I am in your house to see Qalokuhle and her father." She said getting off her car because she really didn't know what she had to say to Nontobeko. And she knew her husband wouldn't even wait for her to finish what she'd just told her...

Nontobeko: "Thank you and send my love to her."

Thembelihle: "Don't hung up I will give her the phone." she said and opened the door to Dalingcebo's house.

Qalokuhle was on the lounge with her father, she was kneeling before the coffee table with homework book before her. Her father was helping her with her homework.

Thembelihle: "Why is she crying now?" she asked and sat on the couch.

Dalingcebo: "She doesn't listen, mama."

Thembelihle: "Now, you are teaching her with a stick. How will she hear you?" she asked

pulling Qalokuhle by her arm for her to sit next to her. She placed the phone down and held her face up. She used the scarf that was on her shoulders to wipe her face. “Don’t cry, your mother is on the phone and she wants to speak to you. Take the phone and go talk in your room” She said and kissed her lips, Qalokuhle was forced to laugh. She took her grandmother’s phone and she left the lounge.

Thembelihle: “You are keeping Qalokuhle here because you are hitting her.”

Dalingcebo: “I am teaching her mama and she doesn’t listen, that’s how dad taught us as well. She can’t write ‘Bhala’ Her homework is to write IsiZulu spelling mama.”

Thembelihle: “She’s still doing Grade 1 and I am sure they’re still doing easy words like ‘Mama’ ‘Sisi’ it’s still the beginning of the year.”

Dalingcebo: “Ay, she must be here most of the time she will get it straight.”

Thembelihle: “Why would you do that?”

Dalingcebo: “That’s because she has the nerve to tell me that her grandmother doesn’t teach her like this.”

Thembelihle: “That won’t happen Qalokuhle will stay with me, she can come here for a week or two weeks but she won’t stay here full time. And why didn’t you tell me that you are getting divorced?”

Dalingcebo: “I was going to tell you after speaking with my lawyer. I have done that now and Nontobeko should sign the papers.”

Thembelihle: “Hhaybo! You can’t just get divorced like that because we should be informed sit down with you and see where we can help you.”

Dalingcebo: “I don’t need any help.”

Thembelihle: “A new woman can only make you speak like that because the last time I checked you loved Nontobeko and you are the one who told me you are supporting her. Are you cheating on your wife, Dalingcebo?”

Dalingcebo: “Hhayi, I won’t answer that question. I will go prepare food for you. Qalokuhle won’t be leaving this week.”

Thembelihle shook her head and got up from the couch to get to Qalokuhle’s room. She could bath herself now but now and again Thembelihle would bath her because she wanted her clean. And that’s what she wanted to do now... She was hoping the family would find a solution to this marriage that was failing...

S5 >> EPISODE 04

“I will go alone!” Happiness shouted at Lonwabo and Luvuyo, they were seated inside their temporary house in Gaborone, Botswana.

In January, they’ve driven from South Africa to Zimbabwe, they didn’t stay longer in Zimbabwe, they toured the country with their children showing them different places, beautiful places of Africa. The children enjoyed the tours and Happiness was happy to see

her children together. She was sick because of change of the environment but that didn't stop her from having fun with her children. Njabulo was too clingy on Lonwabo and it made sense to Happiness that he'd gotten the father figure that he'd always long for. And Nonjabulo was clingy on her without being jealous that her father would sometimes go out all alone with Njabulo. That would give them time to themselves.

They didn't stay longer in Zimbabwe but they travelled to Botswana in early February after an old friend of Lonwabo had organised a house for them. Lonwabo had stated it obviously that they were not going to stay longer than four months in the house. They settled well in the house and they've been staying there ever since and even though it was a foreign country for them, with different language, environment, especially for the children, but they managed to make the best of it because all Happiness and Lonwabo wanted for their children, was for them to be happy.

They didn't allow their children to form friendships because it wasn't going to be convenient for them and so, they would be in house with their mother most of the time. Happiness had no friends as well but she'd met new people and their neighbour was friendly... On the 14th of February, Lonwabo proposed to Happiness and she said, 'Yes!' She had pink round shaped diamond engagement ring on her finger. They haven't decided on their wedding because Lonwabo wanted them to do things accordingly and that meant they would have to reveal everything about their lives. Happiness wasn't ready for that and she'd told Lonwabo that they were going to stay engaged for a long while because she wasn't ready to face the Zulu family and her father... She'd been happy but she couldn't deny, she never denied that she missed her father. She missed being in the house with him, talking and laughing him. They had a good relationship as father and daughter and she missed him...

Happiness had been free and happy, but now, on the 8th of March which was a Thursday, Happiness had been crying since morning.

Luvuyo: "You can't go alone over there, Happiness, stop being stubborn just let my brother go with you. Why do you want to go alone?"

Happiness: "Lonwabo and my father don't get along and I don't know what seeing Lonwabo could do to his health that's already-" she broke off and cried, she'd read an article in the morning that her father was in the hospital. And it wasn't looking good, the article didn't go into details with the sickness as it was an article based on what a trusted source told them. It then quoted that it was believed that his sickness was caused by his daughter's disappearance. Happiness then read other articles about a royal bride who'd gone missing with the prince. She was hurt for her father but angry about the royal article...

Luvuyo: "Don't cry, Happiness because your father will be alright once he sees you and just because my brother wants to go with you that doesn't mean that he'll go with you to the hospital." She comforted her and pulled her to her chest, she didn't live with them fully because this fast, she'd gotten a man for herself and her brother was angry that she was even planning on staying behind when they decide to go back home for good.

Happiness: "I am pretty sure that my in-laws have been trying to find me and what if they find Lonwabo and I in Johannesburg and they'll fight? Do you remember what Ngcebo saw?"

Lonwabo: "That was just a hint for the Zulu family that I am the one who hit on them. It didn't mean they will fight me and kill me. I have already taken you from them and now, I won't let you go back to South Africa alone."

Luvuyo: "And it's not like Njabulo's family lives in Johannesburg."

Happiness: "What if dad informs them that I am back? I don't want you to come with me Lonwabo. Yes, I will leave the children here I agree on that part but I don't agree that you should come with me."

Lonwabo: "I am not your child and that means you won't tell me what to do and what not to do!"

Happiness: "How can we possibly leave all together and leave the children behind? And what if war brew up over there as you saw the article about 'the Zulu wife missing' what if they kill you like it happened in the dream? Do you want to leave me, Lonwabo?"

Lonwabo: "No! And I won't die."

Happiness: "You are not coming with me because I don't trust anything. I want to see my father I want to be worried about him and I won't be worried about you being there with me."

Luvuyo: "If he dies he will die closer to you, fighting for you."

Happiness: "Can you hear yourself now, Luvuyo? This is not a movie but life, there's no Romeo and Juliet shit in here! He will die fighting for me and leave me in misery that will not happen."

Lonwabo: "What misery are you talking about because you don't belong to that Prince anymore? And I may not be part of my gang anymore but if I ask for protection they will provide that for me."

Luvuyo: "Yes, he'll be protected and that means you won't have to worry about his safety. Just let my brother support you that's his duty to support you, be by your side because he loves you. Even though he doesn't understand that I have found a man I want to stay here for!" she exclaimed lastly and looked at Lonwabo who was looking at her now with an unpleasant face.

Lonwabo: "Don't even mention that! I didn't bring you here to find men but I brought you here to have a holiday and when it's time to go back, we will all go back home."

Luvuyo: "Soze! I am not a child anymore Lonwabo, I can take my own decisions without you influencing them and stopping me from doing what I love."

Happiness laughed and wiped her tears, she'd always laughed when they fight about this matter. She found it funny. "And what if you and this guy break up? What will happen then?" she asked and looked at her.

Luvuyo: "I will just go back home then. Did you hear that brother? I will move on and come back home, and I hope you won't tamper with my relationship!" she said pointing Lonwabo with her finger and she stood on her feet.

Lonwabo: "I am older than you, Luvuyo, don't point me like that!"

"Can you two, please, stop with this unnecessary cat and dog fight? It's really tiring because Luvuyo enjoys some Motswana dick now!" She blurted it out and Luvuyo laughed loudly as

Happiness had said that.

Lonwabo: “HAPPINESS!” he roared. Luvuyo ran away from them and Happiness did the same while laughing, she knew he would be disgusted by that. And she just wanted to see that, just that...

She wiped the tears she had from laughing and she stepped inside her bedroom where she'd left Nonjabulo and Njabulo playing with their toys. They slept with Luvuyo normally and when she wasn't home, they would sleep with their parents because they didn't like sleeping alone. Nonjabulo didn't sleep alone even back home she would sleep with her aunt or her father.

“You are not fighting over toys over here?” She asked and went down on their level, they were seated on the floor playing with their toys.

“NO!” They chanted with smiles directed to their mother.

Njabulo: “Mama, shiyogeza manje?” (We are going to bath now?)

Happiness: “Yes, we will go and bath now, then your father and I, have something that we have to tell you about.”

Nonjabulo: “I hope we are not moving again, I am tired of going up and down!” she raised her tiny voice with her forefinger from her left hand pointing her mother and her right hand on her waist. Happiness laughed and lifted Nonjabulo off the floor.

Happiness: “No, we are not moving. Get up Njiva and let's go bath.” She encouraged him and Njabulo got up from the floor. She marched to the bathroom with them and she was hoping that they wouldn't throw tantrums when she tells them they will be leaving with their father...

Mnotho kept his word, he didn't go with Danielle to their honeymoon and Danielle was angry with him because he'd denied her that honeymoon that she was looking forward to. Danielle told her mother that Mnotho was refusing to go to the honeymoon with her because of his wife's disappearance. Sheila tried to calm Danielle down because she showed her frustrations to her mother. But she didn't calm down, she couldn't believe that she really wasn't going to have her honeymoon because of Happiness. Sheila failed to convince her that she needed to accept the situation even after Danielle told her that Junior supported that she must take a holiday alone... Danielle then decided to take the trip with her daughter because Mnotho didn't want to go with her. When she told Mnotho that she was leaving with her daughter to have the holiday that he'd told her she will have alone, Mnotho didn't protest. He allowed Danielle to have that holiday and she wasn't expecting that he would do that. Danielle decided that she was going to take her trip on the 28th of February, she was going to have the two weeks that Mnotho had promised her and she did just that. She left with Pearl, a trip taking them to Paris and Mnotho was the one who'd covered all the expenses of the trip...

It was the 11th of March and she got back home on the 10th of March. She was inside her house now pasting the pictures of her trip on the album that she'd bought. Pearl was seated next to her delightedly helping her.

Pearl: "Mama, we will show daddy the pictures?"

Danielle: "Yes, my baby we will show him and he's coming over here tonight. I told him that we are home now."

Peal: "Yes! I will give the present that I bought for him." she said and stood up, she ran off to get to her room leaving her mother inside the lounge...

"So many pictures." Mnotho commented looking at the pictures that were scattered on the table waiting for Danielle to paste them as she had done with the other pictures on the photo album.

She smiled and stood up. "My mind is fully occupied I didn't even hear you come in." She told him and hugged her husband whom she hadn't been seeing for two weeks. Yes, she had fun in Paris with her daughter but that didn't change the fact that she missed her husband sometimes.

Mnotho: "You look beautiful and that shows that you had fun. Where is our Pearl?" He asked and kissed his wife passionately and Danielle stopped him as he was now getting carried away with this kiss.

Danielle: "Our daughter in the house. And she left the room saying she was going to get your present because you'll be home."

Mnotho chuckled. "I will go to her." He said and left the lounge to get to his daughter's room... Mnotho found her on her knees before her pink suitcase that had her clothes that they've left the country with. She was taking out all the clothes to get to the gift that she'd chosen for her father.

"What are doing over here, MaZulu?" Mnotho asked and went to his daughter's level to get her full attention.

Pearl laughed and looked at her father. "BABA!" She exclaimed and stood up to get a hug from her father. She threw her tiny body on his chest and Mnotho hugged her, he was laughing as Pearl was jumping out of joy while inside her father's hold. "Mina, nifuna iphleshenti yakho la!" (I am looking for your present, here.) She told her father.

Mnotho: "Yes, and where is your father's kiss?" She giggled and kissed her father's cheek.

Mnotho tickled her tummy and Pearl laughed. "Now, let's look for the present." He said and Mnotho looked for the present. He found a white mug written 'Dad' and it had an Eiffel tower on the other side.

Mnotho: "Ha! Ngiyabonga, MaZulu!" he stood up with Pearl and the mug was on his hand. He moved out of the room with her.

Pearl: "Uzophuza kuyo, baba. Hu! Hu!" she told her father imitating how he was going to drink the tea. Mnotho laughed and supported her that, he was going to drink the tea like she'd imitated.

"Mama said I should tell you to come to her house now. She has something that she wants to discuss with you." Mnotho informed Danielle and sat down with Pearl on the single couch.

Danielle: "Is there something wrong? And is Happiness back home?"

Mnotho: "No, there's nothing wrong but she wants to brief you about the shop. And Njabulo and his mother are not back home and I have read in the newspaper that her father is in the

hospital.” He hadn’t gone to see him in the hospital. He knew it was expected of him to do that but he hadn’t gone to him. Mthimkhulu never told him the main reason to why he didn’t come to his parents’ house as he’d promised. And that made him worried.

Danielle: “Oh, that’s sad.”

Mnotho: “Yes.”

Danielle: “I will go to the palace now and you can look at the pictures with Pearl. I will come back before you know it.”

Mnotho: “You better do that because I missed you.” he said looking at her, she looked happy than the day that she left for the trip. He saw that she was angry but he couldn’t just leave to enjoy himself while Happiness and Njabulo were not found... It was pleasant now that she was smiling...

All his brothers were home because he was going to pay ilobolo for Candice on the 11th of March. He was happy when his parents allowed him to go ahead and pay ilobolo even though Happiness was not back home.

Banele: “You don’t have to be scared because they will just ask to see you once. Your uncle and mother will sit with them for the negotiations.” He was inside his room speaking to Candice on the phone, it was a Thursday night.

Candice: “I am not the only one that’s scared but my mother is scared as well. It’s like I will be getting married, already!”

Banele chuckled. “I don’t know what I need to do now to get you to understand that there’s nothing scary about this.” he said.

Candice: “We know nothing about this culture and it’s natural that we will feel scared about this. And you must understand.”

Banele sighed, he was sleepy and now, he just needed to tell her that she must hung up the call because he wanted to sleep! “I love you and can we sleep now?” He finally requested and ignored the fact she was worried.

Candice: “Alright, goodnight.” They hung up the call... Banele laid on his left side and remembered that they were all here except for Ngcebo. Ndabezinhle couldn’t come back for ilobolo but he did tell him. And his foolish mind forgotten to call Ngcebo!

Yes, after Ngcebo took the decision that his children won’t visit their parents their relationship wasn’t entirely the same. He wasn’t his enemy, they were still brothers and he understood why he did what he did but that didn’t change the fact that it partly made him angry as well. It wouldn’t be an incomplete ceremony without him because when he was scared to ask Candice out, Ngcebo was the one who boosted his confidence and gave him tips on how to ask the ladies in the City out. He was the first person he called when Candice agreed to go out with him. And when he learnt about his infertility, he’s the one he told amongst all his brothers. It would be a disgrace if he didn’t tell him now that he was going to ask for her hand in marriage...

“Banele?” Ngcebo answered his phone call.

Banele: “Unjani, bafo?”

Ngcebo: "I am all good and how are you?"

Banele: "I am fine, where are you?"

Ngcebo: "I am in my house what's wrong?"

Banele: "Nothing is wrong but I called to tell you that I am home because this Saturday, I will be coming to Candice's house to ask for her hand in marriage."

Ngcebo: "Hawu!" he disappointed...

Banele: "I have had a lot on my plate and now, I have remembered that I haven't informed you. And please, come it's still early Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "And what about the plans that I have for the weekend. I am supposed to come to my house down there to do an important task Banele and it's an important thing."

Banele: "But you can come back tomorrow and do that tomorrow."

Ngcebo: "Why didn't tell me in time? I should just change my plans now?"

Banele: "Ngcebo, come on, you can't be absent on this day because you know how I would appreciate you being there because you know my history and Candice. I am sorry for informing you late."

Ngcebo: "I will see what I can do."

Banele: "Thank you."

Ngcebo: "Sho." He said and hung up the call... Banele placed his phone down and he couldn't help but feel as if Ngcebo wasn't even happy for him. He couldn't even congratulate him but maybe he had something bothering him... He told himself that and closed his eyes...

S5 >> EPISODE 05

He was driving pass the club at dawn, he'd been working inside his apartment and when he needed time to rest he decided that he was going to take a drive around the club maybe he was going to see Simthande. They've been speaking on the phone but it'd been a number of days without reaching her. And he was actually worried about her. She told him she had no family and she walked to get to her flat, and now, she went MIA? That didn't sound good to him.

The club was closed but he couldn't see Simthande anywhere around the club but maybe he needed to drive a little bit forward.

Mntwana was driving and looking around for Simthande but he couldn't see her. He needed to see her, he was worried for her safety... He stopped his car opposite the block of flats and he looked around thinking he would see her but he didn't see. He concluded that maybe she wasn't working tonight and maybe she'd lost her phone. He drove away and in his mind he was telling himself that he didn't want to drive down to KZN for Banele's ilobolo negotiations without knowing Simthande's whereabouts.

The streets were cold and quiet with cars passing by, almost nobody walking on the

sidewalks but the street kids, those one or two drunk girls and boys walking on the sidewalks. He was driving slowly because the lane he was driving on wasn't busy. "Fuck!" He swore, he parked his car on the sidewalk and stepped off the car as he saw two guys pulling a girl's belongings, one was pulling the suitcase that she had on her hand and the other guy was pulling her handbag. But this girl was fighting to keep her things with her. She wasn't just crying because she had two men coning her but she was crying while fighting.

Mntwana ran faster crossing the road to get to the crime scene and these two guys looked at his direction as they've heard his quick footsteps above the sounds of the cars that were passing by without stopping to help this lady.

"ZINJA!" He exclaimed and held the guy that was holding the suitcase without setting his eyes on the lady. Mntwana punched the guy before he could even utter a word to him. The guy tried to fight back by punching Mntwana back on the stomach but his weak, hungry punch didn't have an effect on him. He kicked his leg and he fell on the ground but as he wanted to step his foot on him the lady held Mntwana's shoulder and the guy got a chance to run away as Mntwana was looking back on Simthande.

Mntwana: "Simthande!" he exclaimed and looked around for the second guy while his hands were holding her shoulders but he couldn't see the second guy as he'd long ran away the minute Mntwana begun punching his friend.

Simthande hugged Mntwana and she released a long sigh as she couldn't believe what could've happened if he didn't come by. She'd always lived on the mercy of the Lord and had escaped not one but many of scenes like this if she was on the streets at night alone without her 'street friend'

Mntwana: "What happened? Where did you disappear to?" he asked and went down to take her suitcase that was on the ground. "Let's not stand here it's cold and not safe. And why are you on the road in your uniform not even closer to your place?" He asked, holding her hand and they crossed the road after Simthande had taken her bag.

Simthande: "Which question should I answer first?" she asked sitting comfortably on the front seat of the car.

Mntwana: "Just answer the one you remember first."

Simthande: "I lost my phone over to these street boys, that's the answer for the first question. I am on the road now because my roommate decided to kick me out because I have rent outstanding."

Mntwana: "Hawu, and now, where are you going?"

Simthande: "I was going to see where I could sleep for the night."

Mntwana: "You have money for single night sleep but you don't have money for rent. How does that happen?"

Simthande: "I wasn't going to rent of course I mean I have slept around before." She said the truth sarcastically and laughed but Mntwana didn't even laugh but he looked at her shortly. Simthande felt the awkwardness as she was laughing alone.

"I have a guest room in my apartment you can stay with me and you won't have to pay rent."

Mntwana gave Simthande an offer because he didn't want to have to worry about her again for no reason. He didn't know why he had to worry about her, but maybe that was because she was a nice girl and she'd saved his wallet that night in the club.

Simthande: "No, I can't take that--"

Mntwana: "I also can't pay rent for you I am very cautious about money at times but I also can't let you sleep on the street. My mother would be ashamed of me if I can do that."

Simthande: "But I don't want to be a burden to you and what about your girlfriends and those casual fucks? Or you are looking into making me your, in- house casual fuck?"

Mntwana laughed. "You won't be that, we are friends, Simthande, right? And I won't allow you to go Rambo on me, you will just take this offer. You will live with me and won't pay rent." He said and stepped out of the car to get her suitcase that was on the backseat.

Simthande: "You are such a bully!" she exclaimed and got of the car, a part of her was grateful that she didn't have to go back to that life again. She'd given up all her life to fend for siblings but the minute they've reached the green pastures they forgot about her. She had resentment and hatred for them...

"I can't believe you've been here with us for the whole two weeks." Faith told Nandipha who was packing up her bag to go back to Ngcebo's house. She'd been in her mother's house for two weeks and three days.

Nandipha: "I thought I was going to stay for three weeks but I can't I should go home now or else the girls will hate me for real."

Faith: "Does this mean you've resolved your issues with their father?" she asked giving her, her laptop charger. Nandipha had never told her what brought her home alone for such a long time without her children.

Nandipha: "I didn't come here because of issues mama. I just wanted some time to myself and I have gotten that time. And now, look in these two weeks I have typed half of the stories."

Faith: "Okay, I don't want you to be stressed alone Nandipha. I am your mother and you should talk to me. I know that you won't tell me all about your problems with Ngcebo but I won't run to him."

Nandipha: "Hha! No, I won't do that because we both know what--" she couldn't finish off her sentence because her mother had her hand on her mouth. She was laughing at what Nandipha was about to say.

Faith: "You, silly child, don't bring up the past."

Nandipha laughed and said: "Okay, okay, sis Nandipha. Let's go now." she closed her bag and her mother lifted her laptop bag. They walked out of Nandipha's room. "I will see you after a while." She told her mother.

Faith: "I will understand baby don't worry."

"Look, there she is." Randall pointed Nandipha was walking up to the door with their mother. Randall had got up to open the gate and opened the door for Ngcebo who'd come here to fetch Nandipha whom he didn't know was coming back home tonight.

Faith: "Hawu, she asked me to drive her she didn't tell me you'll come Ngcebo." She looked

at Nandipha thinking she'd fooled her.

Ngcebo: "No, she didn't ask me to come as well." He looked at Nandipha shortly, he didn't call her to tell her he was coming to her mother's house. But he had decided that he has had enough of her absence in the house. He was going to bring her back home because she wasn't just making him see what she does but she was being crazy! They were on the third week now and she was still not back home.

Faith: "Oh, there's no need for me to drive you then baby girl." She opened her arms for Nandipha and they hugged each other. "I will miss you so much. It was nice spending time with my baby." she said.

Nandipha giggled. "It was nice spending time with you as well, mama." She admitted and then moved to hug her brother.

Randall: "I will miss your food and it would be nice if you don't get married because you'll come here often."

Ngcebo: "That's a cruel thing to say." He commented and they all laughed. They then walked Nandipha and Ngcebo off the house...

Ngcebo: "I didn't think you would do such a thing Nandipha." He looked at her and drove out of her mother's premises.

Nandipha: "What did I do? I thought you came here to take me back home because you miss me you but you don't miss me not even for the slightest."

Ngcebo: "Didn't I tell you I miss you but you still didn't come back?"

Nandipha: "But now, I am coming back."

Ngcebo: "You were actually punishing me, right? I know that's what you've been doing that's why you chose to stay here for weeks."

Nandipha: "I was working and I wasn't in a stranger's house. I was home. I wasn't punishing you I just wanted you to be me."

Ngcebo stopped the car on the side of the road and he changed the sitting position, he faced Nandipha. He held her hands. "I have been you, alright and it's not jumping on stage, it's no walk in the park I have seen that. I was an ass okay? And so, I will hire someone else for you. I have already spoken to mama about it and she told me when we come back here with the kids we will come back with the second helper. MaZungu will be a housekeeper, she'll help with the children if needed but the second person will help you with the kids fully and travel with you if you are at the mall, shop or whatever. I am sorry that I have been enslaving you with the kids. I didn't mean to do that." He admitted it all to her because being with the kids for these two weeks made him see what she's been doing alone. It was better for him because he wasn't entirely alone. And MaZungu had lectured him well...

Nandipha smiled and flinched her eyes closed along with her shoulders because she was happy about the news she was hearing. "Let me kiss you!" She requested and pulled Ngcebo's face to her. They shared a kiss. "I love you, my jerk ass!" She exclaimed and Ngcebo pulled Nandipha by her locks, he tickled her. Nandipha laughed loudly.

Nandipha: "I am kidding Rasta you are my creamy sauce! You are dripping!" she screamed and Ngcebo let go of her locks. "One could never say you are father! You like playing." She

joked.

Ngcebo: “And you don’t scream like a mother as well. I have something else to say.” He told her seriously.

Nandipha: “What is it?”

Ngcebo: “We have grown now but our personalities are still the same I know that. I have missed that crazy woman I fell in love with years ago. Even if I can be President I wouldn’t want you to change who you are and be that serious uptight wife. Others prefer shy and reserved women but I prefer you.”

Nandipha: “I am happy to hear that and I will be comfortable in my personality. So, can we run up for Presidency?”

Ngcebo laughed and get on the wheel he drove his car back on the road, they were both laughing. “Banele is taking a wife he’ll be paying ilobolo for her this weekend. I was actually going home this weekend as well because I have to consult about Happiness. I told you about her, right?”

Nandipha: “Yes, you told me and are you leaving us behind? Or we will only disturb you with our presence?”

Ngcebo: “You want to go down just for the weekend? If you want to go, there’s no problem because I will do everything when they’re sleeping.”

Nandipha: “We want to go with you I want to follow you around like you followed me around in our kitchen the morning you were trying to ask for forgiveness.” She reminded him and folded her lips.

Ngcebo laughed. “You are evil for reminding me that and I don’t mind if you follow me around.” He said and stepped out of the car that he’d just parked inside the garage. “And the girls are sleeping now.” he took her bags.

Nandipha: “I will see them in the morning. I hope they don’t hate me.” she whispered but Ngcebo heard her as they climbed up to get to their room.

Ngcebo: “They can never hate you. I will shower and join you shortly. I drove to your mother’s house with a stone heart I meant to have you back and nothing less.” He told her and removed his shirt looking at Nandipha as she laughed.

Nandipha: “I would have loved to see that.”

Ngcebo: “Try and leave again, you’ll see.” He walked away to get to his bathroom. He was nervous for some reason and he decided that he won’t ask her he will do... He took all his time inside the bathroom and even decided to shave because he just wanted Nandipha to sleep...

“I knew she would sleep.” He said to himself looking at Nandipha who was sleeping peacefully. He marched to the drawer and took out the squared box. He opened it and took out the main piece of the ring.

He sat on the bed and took Nandipha’s left hand, he slipped the ring onto her finger. “I love you but mostly I respect you my woman.” He confessed and sighed heavily as if he was saying it to her ears. He kissed her lips and joined her in bed hoping that now, things would be alright for them...

The first thing she did when she woke up in the morning was form fists and stretched her arms, but her left thumb laid on something. She quickly brought her hands before her and her eyes laid on the heart shape centre white diamond stone with pear shape sides, a 3 stone engagement ring.

“Hmm!” She hissed and lifted her hand, bringing it closer to her eyes, she touched the ring. It was a ring for real! “Rasta!” She called him out and shook him awake. He was asleep peacefully and she didn’t care but she wanted him awake. He needed to wake up.

Ngcebo: “Ah! Nandipha! I am sleeping.”

Nandipha: “I can see but open your eyes, please.”

He opened his eyes and Nandipha showed her left hand to his face. Ngcebo chuckled. “You woke me up for this?” he asked.

Nandipha: “Yes, silly! And sit the hell straight, sit!”

Ngcebo: “I didn’t know putting a ring on it meant I would be forced to wake up even if I don’t want to wake up.” He complained and sat up, he yawned.

“Sorry! Ha! But babe, how will we get married with everything that’s going on in your kingdom. And I haven’t done inqibamasondo that I should do in your mother’s house and your father doesn’t want me there but it’s a must that I should do it in there. What will happen? Oh-” she was broken off by Ngcebo who held her shoulders and Nandipha sighed.

Ngcebo: “I want us to get married legally and everything else will follow. We won’t have a wedding yet but we will go to court. I will make you my wife I am tired of saying fiancée.”

Nandipha: “Ha! I will make you a smoking hot breakfast.” She tried to get off the bed but Ngcebo held her hand.

Ngcebo: “I want this one first because you’ve disappeared on me for two weeks. And that was so cruel.” He said and kissed Nandipha...

“UBUYILE!” (You are back!) Similo screamed in delight seeing her mother first than the rest of her sisters. They didn’t chant ‘mama’ but they screamed except for Ntokomalo she proceeded with eating her food quietly.

Nandipha: “Yes, I am back.” she kissed them as they were already pouting for her. She stopped at Ntokomalo. “Ntoko, are you not happy to see me?” she asked holding her face for her to look at her.

Ntokomalo: “Mina neke nijabule ngoba wena mama uzohamba futhi.” (I won’t be happy because you’ll leave again) she said sadly.

“No, princess, I won’t go I will stay here with you and I will never leave for a long time ever again, okay?” She said and looked at her waiting for a response.

Similo: “Ehe! Ntoko, umama neke acambe amanga!” (Mom won’t lie.)

Ntokomalo: “Oh, mama.” She smiled and Nandipha showed her smile before kissing her like the others...

He was inside the hut in his house back KwaNongoma. He arrived with his family Friday morning as it was Friday night now.

Now, Ngcebo was kneeling before the incense that he’d just burnt. He was consulting his ancestors for the second time and he was hoping that maybe in this house he would get

something different. He would get a better response.

He began speak to his ancestors. "It's me, Ngcebo Zulu your prince, you have shown me everything that you've shown me, for a reason and I don't object to any of the instructions but I am begging you to spare MaMthimkhulu, let her have peace because should she come back now she won't have peace. Bhuti Mnotho has brought two wives in your yards and you didn't show any rejections. I am not against you but doesn't she deserve a little more time of happiness with her children and will my brother accept her daughter as he'd hate his son this much. How is she supposed to trust him again? Zulu, MaMthimkhulu had been through so much in the hands of our own very-" Ngcebo held his chest as he felt his heart turning into a painful fist. He closed his eyes and fought for a breath. He laid on the floor with his hand holding his chest seeing the same thing he'd seen in Johannesburg.

It didn't take much for him to be back on his knees with his heart beating normally. He didn't speak any further but he ended the smoke of the incense. He got up from the floor and walked out of the hut, he was thinking all the way to the main house. He couldn't possible gamble with his children's lives. Nandipha would never forgive him should their children be sick to death because of his stubbornness but he was angered by the unfairness of his ancestors. What was the rush?

But Mthimkhulu was in the hospital. Would Happiness be that angry not to come and see her father? Even if she does come he has never heard that his family had come to Johannesburg to visit the father of their daughter in-law in the hospital. Or maybe they were going to visit him after Banele's ilobolo negotiations? He debated with himself with his eyes looking at the girls' faces who were sleeping peacefully.

He sighed feeling the weight on his shoulder. He didn't want to be the one to tell them where Happiness was. He wasn't going to tell them! He turned to leave their bedroom, he needed to sleep...

"How did it go?" Nandipha asked Ngcebo who was stepping inside their room. She was seated on the bed waiting for his return.

Ngcebo: "Why are you not sleeping?"

Nandipha: "I have been here waiting for you."

Ngcebo: "You were not supposed to wait mama we big 5. What if I came back tomorrow afternoon?" he joked and stepped inside the bed.

Nandipha laughed. "That's your way of ignoring me njalo!" She guessed.

Ngcebo: "It's difficult but there's hope and now, can we not stress about the whole family but stress about us getting some rest? I don't have an incense smell on me right?" he asked laying down on the pillow.

Nandipha: "It was on your clothes that you've just taken off."

"Can we pray tonight?" He requested suddenly feeling the need for this for his children's sake. He couldn't possibly tell her what he'd seen because she was going to rush to tell everyone what was going on just to save her own.

Nandipha: "Okay, dress up then." She told him and Ngcebo got up to get dressed for their prayer...

S5 >> EPISODE 06

Thembelihle had decided that before they drive to Gauteng at dawn the family should have a meeting about Dalingcebo and Nontobeko's divorce. She'd called Nontobeko and told her to come back home. She called the elders of the family and Dalingcebo's two older brothers, Ngcebo and she excluded Banele and Mntwana on the meeting.

Nontobeko was in her house with her mother, she came back Friday morning and the meeting was on the afternoon. They had a few minutes left before they go to the palace.

Dalingcebo was already there, when she got home Dalingcebo wasn't in the house.

"Hheyi, Nandipha's children are very handful I asked your mother in-law to have me driven to her house. I wanted to see the children." MaNtombela told Nontobeko and took the tea that she'd just served her.

Nontobeko: "Yes, they're a handful they visit me here sometimes."

MaNtombela: "That's a good thing. Nontobeko, are you really going to choose your job over your child?"

Nontobeko: "No, mom and that's why I will ask Dalingcebo to move to Cape Town and I know that it would be difficult."

MaNtombela: "I won't be difficult but it won't happen, your father in-law won't allow that Nontobeko and you know it."

Nontobeko: "Mama, can you just be happy that I got the promotion?"

MaNtombela: "I can't be happy because your marriage is falling apart and you will do nothing to save it. You have worked for years in there Nontobeko and some women don't even get that chance because of the sacrifices they have to make for their families. Why don't you do the same?"

Nontobeko: "I am not other women and my father told me to go for my dreams. I won't let anyone convince me otherwise. The time for us to make sacrifices for men has ended mama."

MaNtombela: "Your father ruined you and now, he's dead but he didn't die alone. He died surrounded by his family. I won't talk much let's go." She placed the cup down and grabbed her handbag that was closer to her. Nontobeko got up from the couch hurt by what her mother had said. 'Her father ruined her?' she wasn't just hurt but she was angered by her words... She helped her mother up and they marched to Nontobeko's car. She was to drive them to Thembelihle's palace...

"I didn't find you in the house." Nontobeko said looking at Dalingcebo, she'd asked to speak to him as he was with his brothers under the tree tying the pieces of the sheep on the wires to have them hung up in the tree.

Dalingcebo: "I have been here since morning."

Nontobeko: "How are you?"

Dalingcebo: "I am good and how are you?"

Nontobeko: "I am fine I told you about my promotion but you didn't even show that you were happy for me."

Dalingcebo: "I said congratulations that's what I was supposed to say, right?"

Nontobeko: "Dalingcebo-"

Dalingcebo: "I will go back to my brothers because we need to get to the meeting and I haven't changed my mind Nontobeko. I told you that last night and I am still telling you now."

Nontobeko nodded and turned back feeling that she was fighting a losing battle. She'd never seen Dalingcebo that way but she still had that hope, their love was strong and it was going to strive...

Aunt elder: "Makoti, we have heard that things are not looking good in your marriage and the word 'divorce' is coming in now." she introduced after they have settled down inside the hut, the women were seated on the straw mats and the men were seated on the couches.

Nontobeko: "Yes."

Uncle elder: "I don't get this and who do you think is warming your house while you out there working? Dalingcebo, we warned you about this, we told you that don't allow your wife to work far from you. We even told you that in the past we would come back home to father children whom our wives that we've left home have gotten from cheating because we are not with them. Women are naturally strong when it comes to resisting temptation but they would cheat back then. How much more for you as a man?"

Dalingcebo: "I wanted her to get that chance of happiness to do what she loved the most but I didn't think she wouldn't agree to come back home."

Aunt elder: "You are happy now that your marriage is failing MaZondi? And can you even see that it's failing?"

Nontobeko: "Yes, I can see aunty."

Aunt elder: "What are you doing to fix that?"

Nontobeko: "The only way I could have fixed it, is by quitting my job and I am not ready for that because my husband knows how much I value my job. He knew that before he got married to me. And I have been recently promoted I ask that I have my family with me."

Mlamuli: "What do you mean have your family with you?"

Nontobeko: "I mean that move to Cape Town."

"HHAYBO/YEHHENI!" The family chanted and they looked at one another.

Dalisu: "Dalingcebo, you knew about this request?"

Dalingcebo: "She didn't tell me about this."

Nontobeko: "I didn't tell you because I didn't want us to fight about it. We've been arguing a lot lately."

Mlamuli: "We won't even discuss my brother moving because that will not happen. How can he leave his duties here and move to Cape Town?"

Nontobeko: "We won't discuss it even if he wants that?"

Dalingcebo: "I am not going anywhere and I don't see the need of the discussion because I just want a divorce nothing more and nothing less."

Uncle elder: "Zulu, things are not done like that we don't just run away from things, that's not what a family man does. You fix things."

Mlamuli: “How is he supposed to fix things because his wife is not willing to meet him halfway? In marriage we fix things when the other partner is willing to do that but in this situation MaZondi just wants to have her way.”

Nontobeko: “I won’t be happy if I sacrifice my job to do something I don’t like. Does it always have to be women who should sacrifice for a man? I don’t want to sacrifice my job for a man.”

“HHAYBO!” The elders chanted loudly and they did the ‘famous’ looking at one another. MaNtombela had her head looking down and she felt that her husband had let her down by feeding Nontobeko this stubbornness that she had. She was afraid that Nontobeko would one day lose this career, anything could happen, she can have another injury and maybe one that could ruin this career and what will happen? She will come back to her house to be alone? Yes, nothing is guaranteed in life you can sleep with a family and wake up with nobody but yourself but family is power above any career. But her daughter didn’t understand anything. She didn’t want to understand.

Dalingcebo: “Whose man am I, Nontobeko? Am I not your man? So, all along you’ve had that in your mind ‘You won’t sacrifice your job for a man’ I am your man and you are talking as if I am a stranger, I am just any man!”

Mlamuli: “And you can’t sacrifice but my brother should sacrifice.”

Nontobeko: “I didn’t mean to put it that way but I wanted to be understood. And times have changed now-”

Daliso: “Times have changed where you work! We are still a traditional family and we won’t hear from a woman. You don’t even know how to speak about your husband.”

Nontobeko: “I am sorry.”

Aunt elder: “MaSthole and MaNtombela, why are you quiet?”

MaNtombela: “I have said everything to my daughter and she doesn’t want to listen to me. I don’t really know what to say now. The bible says a wise woman builds her house and a foolish one destroys it with her hands. That’s all I can say to her and if she wants to choose her job over family she must do that.”

Aunt elder: “Hhayi! MaSthole?”

Thembelihle: “Dalingcebo, my son, do you have another woman in your life? The family told you not to agree to this but you wanted her to do what she wanted to do. I understand you wanted her to be happy but now you are so determined that you want a divorce and you don’t even want to have things fixed. And mostly a woman could push you to want this divorce desperately.”

Uncle elder: “And if you have that woman take her as your second wife just like your brother has done.”

Dalingcebo saw this as an opportunity to push Nontobeko into agreeing to divorce him. As the woman that she was she wouldn’t stay with him if she learns that he was cheating. He needed to admit that she had another woman in his life that he was seeing. He needed to lie because he really had no woman in his life he’d only been sleeping with his brother’s wife. That was not a woman in his life... He raised his head and looked at his father.

Daliso: "Answer your mother."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I have another woman in my life and I want divorce not two wives. That's what I want."

Most people in the room hissed as they felt defeated. The elders felt defeated and from the floor, Nontobeko was hurt. She couldn't believe what she'd just heard and she felt anger brewing up. She had her blood boiling. Dalingcebo had been cheating on her? He wanted a divorce because...

Uncle elder: "Hhayi, if it's like that we should leave it to the two of you. I don't know if the others agree with me or they still see hope?" he looked at the others and they agreed to leave them...

Dalingcebo didn't say anything as they were alone in the hut and Nontobeko was quiet as well. She raised her head and looked at Dalingcebo but he had his head looking down. Nontobeko got up and left the hut... Dalingcebo raised his head, he sighed. He got up from the couch...

"So, now you love with this woman?" Ngcebo asked Mntwana, they were standing by Ngcebo's car. Ngcebo was heading home after the meeting, he didn't want to sit and have supper, he was going to eat Nandipha's food.

Mntwana: "Ay, wena. Not love! I just wanted to help her because she's stranded. She's actually beautiful and a nice girl. And she's older." He replied and shook his head... He'd just told Ngcebo all about Simthande and that she'd taken the offer to stay with him in his apartment...

Ngcebo chuckled. "When will you stop running after older women?" he asked and hit his head playfully. They laughed as Mntwana punched his shoulder.

Mntwana: "They have something that I like and you'll never understand because you around young girls."

Ngcebo: "Voetsek! Which girl am I running after because I am running after Nandipha and that's all. And ntwana I have dated older women before, younger, older, and middle aged. I have been there."

Mntwana: "Yoh! I am scared of you. Don't you have AIDS? Or HIV?"

Ngcebo laughed. "I am not a fool, wena, otherwise if I am. I would have ten children by now with different women. Angisishayi iskuni we nja!"

Mntwana: "Hheyi, you are lying! How did makoti get pregnant?"

Ngcebo: "Hhayi, phela that one, she's a ride or die. And I have put a ring on it."

Mntwana: "Awu! Awu! Mageba, ngena la!" he exclaimed and they shared a fist bump. "When is the wedding and how will it happen with the situation with dad? Or you will just have a white wedding?" he asked.

Ngcebo: "We will go to court for now and we will deal with family later. I want her to be my wife now we've stayed together as fiancé and fiancée for a long time. And I don't know how long it will take for dad – Ey. I don't know. And you, how will you cope living with a woman who isn't yours? Or you'll approach her soon. Will you bring others over there?"

Mntwana: "No, don't worry because soon, she'll be my girlfriend and I told her that I am 27

years -”

Ngcebo: “Shut up, mama is coming and you are a dickhead! How could you possibly lie about your age to someone that you live with?”

Mntwana looked back and their mother was getting closer. “She won’t snoop around my things I think she will know her boundaries.” He said and didn’t speak further as Thembelihle was before them.

Thembelihle: “We are having dinner now, are you coming or you want us to call out special agents to come get you?”

Ngcebo and Mntwana laughed. “That would have been nice and mama you didn’t have to come here, you just had to send a child to call us. There’s Nhlakanipho in the house, Bongani, Prince-” Mntwana was broken off.

Thembelihle: “Hheyi, you two come inside we are eating now.”

Ngcebo: “I will be on the road MaSthole I should get home.”

Thembelihle: “I said we are eating in the house or you didn’t hear that?”

Ngcebo: “I heard that but I can’t stay because Nandipha cooked as well and she’s alone in the house with the kids.”

Thembelihle: “Hawu, Ngcebo, I cooked and what would be wrong if you just sit down and eat my food? I am sure she will understand.”

Ngcebo: “No, she won’t understand mama. I have been eating your food all my life, don’t be upset.” He said and kissed his mother’s cheek as he was looking at him showing that she wasn’t pleased. He had a woman to please as well.

Thembelihle: “I know but you live with Nandipha.”

Ngcebo opened the door of his car. “By the way I proposed to her mama and I will be marrying her soon.” He announced and closed the door.

Thembelihle: “Hhaybo! And you are telling me now, running away?”

Ngcebo: “We will talk! Mntwana take mom!” he started the engine and Mntwana took their mother’s hand as Ngcebo was driving.

Thembelihle: “I am not an old woman, Mntwana and your brother told you what he’d just told me now?”

Mntwana: “Yes, he told me and they will get married in court because of dad.”

Thembelihle: “Waze wayiphilisa kabuhlungu uDalisu ingane yami! Hheyi!” (Your father is making my son’s life difficult) she complained.

Mntwana: “Ngcebo is doing fine mama. Stop stressing.” He told her as they enter the house to join the family for dinner...

Thembelihle: “I should go and visit my girls, tomorrow morning because I won’t be going to Johannesburg. I will have Nandipha driven because I doubt Ngcebo will come back here.”

Mntwana: “I won’t come back as well.”

Thembelihle: “He! I should come in Cape Town and see where you live.”

Mntwana: “No, don’t embarrass me mom because I don’t live alone. You will come when I have a house. What will my flat’s mate say?”

Thembelihle: “Hhayi, didn’t you tell me you live alone in the city?”

Mntwana: "I did but I have moved to a new place."

Thembelihle: "Hhayi, you should live alone I will pay your rent if you are struggling with it."

Mntwana: "Mma, I am working why would you pay for me?"

Thembelihle: "You are my last born, you should get everything you want." She said playing with his cheek and she laughed as Mntwana didn't like that...

"Happiness!" The bodyguard exclaimed and showed Happiness a big smile as he couldn't believe that she was before her father's private hospital room.

Happiness: "How are you?"

Bodyguard: "I am fine and please, go inside, your father will be happy to see you. We have looked everywhere for you, argh! That doesn't matter. Go in." he opened the door and showed her inside.

Happiness walked inside the hospital room slowly, she was wearing black jeans and a red light shirt, carrying a black handbag and she had black long braids on her head. She was slightly nervous about seeing her father because a part of her believed she was going to force her back to Mnotho. And she was going to have to tell him all about her other child if he sends her to him...

"Baba?" Happiness called out her father and placed her hand on his arm as he was lying on the hospital bed with his eyes closed. He wasn't asleep.

Mthimkhulu opened his eyes and he saw his daughter, seeing her face forced a smile on his face that he'd never had in months.

"MaMthimkhulu!" He exclaimed and sat up straight, he opened his arms for Happiness and she hugged her father. "I thought I was going to die alone without even knowing where you are. I have failed you, my child."

Happiness: "Baba, let's not talk too much for now. How are you and why are you in the hospital baba? What's wrong?"

Mthimkhulu: "I was worried about you, Happiness. How could you just leave me? You know I have only you now." he asked and looked at her as she sat on the chair next to his bed...

Mthimkhulu was admitted to the hospital because he had a heart attack after learning that Lonwabo was the father of Happiness's other child. He was shocked and angry, he was convinced that Lonwabo had done this on purpose. He fooled his daughter and got her pregnant knowing that he was his daughter. He believed that he'd done that because he was settling a score with him for killing his fiancée. He'd swore he was going to kill Lonwabo should he find him. He was never going to allow Happiness to be with a crook.

Happiness: "You got me married dad because you didn't want me anymore and so, I escaped from that place you left me in."

Mthimkhulu: "I didn't know I was marrying you to an abuser. All I knew about the Monarch's sons is how well-mannered and cultured they are."

Happiness: "Huh?"

Mthimkhulu: "Yes, you lied to me and didn't tell me the truth and now, I know you didn't

tell me because you thought I was going to kill that boy! How could you lie to your own father, Happiness?" he shouted at her. Happiness looked down and didn't answer him. "I am speaking!" he shouted further and coughed.

Happiness got up quickly to give him water. "Can you please calm down, baba? I didn't want his children to be without their father. They did the same to me when my mom was killed-" She was broken off.

Mthimkhulu: "That's nonsense and now, what should I do to him? You've slept with my enemy? He fooled you and you gave him a child! What's going on inside your head Happiness?"

Happiness: "Where did you learn all that?"

Mthimkhulu: "Answer me!"

Happiness: "I didn't know he was your enemy and he didn't know as well, baba. I am sorry for hiding things from you."

Mthimkhulu: "You are lying again because that man must have dated you because he knew you are my daughter and he wanted to get back at me."

Happiness: "No! It's not like that and baba, you want me to be happy, right?"

Mthimkhulu: "Yes, and that will not be with that man! You and your children will come back. You'll live with me and no man will take you."

Happiness: "You can't do that baba because I love Lonwabo and he proposed to me. I agreed that I will marry her. I have gotten myself divorced from Mnotho and I want to be with him."

Mthimkhulu: "You didn't hear me clearly? My daughter will not marry a crook I will not allow that."

Happiness: "He long quitted that life-"

Mthimkhulu: "I am your father and you will do what I say."

Happiness: "This is why I ran away from you without telling you because you want to control me. I am not a child!" She raised her voice and that made her get a tight slap from her father. She held her cheek and looked down...

Mthimkhulu: "I am your father not a boy. Don't talk to me like that! I can still whip you as old as you are. You will talk to me with respect."

Happiness: "I am sorry, baba."

Mthimkhulu: "That man will not marry you and the prince will not have you back. He's busy looking for you from East to West and I will not let him take you back just to abuse you. That will not happen. You, Njabulo and Nonjabulo, you'll live in our house. I won't be marrying you to anyone and that's my final word."

Happiness: "You are depriving me happiness again, baba. Why don't you let me be happy with whatever I want to happen?"

Mthimkhulu: "Happiness is not always a man and I won't let you marry a crook. That will not happen."

Happiness: "Baba, I don't want us to fight and please, just allow me to do what I want. I want to marry him."

Mthimkhulu: "Where are the children?" he asked and ignored her request completely, he wasn't going to allow that to happen.

Happiness: "I didn't come back with them and I will go I won't come back."

Mthimkhulu: "You will not do that and don't force me to break this relationship you have this man the way you won't like."

Happiness: "You will kill him, right?"

Mthimkhulu: "No, but you don't want to know what I will do."

Happiness: "I can't believe you, baba and I don't know why I came back here."

Mthimkhulu: "I am your father Happiness and I want what's best for you and now, the only best is that you stay with your children in our house under no man's hand."

Happiness: "What will the Zulus do to me, baba?"

Mthimkhulu: "They will do nothing to you. Oh! Mntanami, come to me. I was worried about you and I am sorry ngane yami for hurting you." He opened his arms for her and Happiness stood up with a smile to hug her father. She'd missed him a lot! And apart from all the fighting she was happy to see him again. "My princess. I will get better now." he added.

Happiness: "I don't want you to die."

Mthimkhulu: "I won't die. Sit down." He pointed the chair after they gotten away from each other. "Do you have evidence that Mnotho has been hitting you? I want us to lay a charge against him. I won't have his hands chopped off before killing him but I want him to pay for hurting you. He must go to prison because that's where he belongs. I know, women mostly take pictures and we have a Doctor as well who told me that you were abused."

Happiness: "Baba, can we just let the past be the past?"

Mthimkhulu: "No! I will not let that go. I didn't birth you to be a punching bag of another man. I will not let that happen."

Happiness: "Baba, if you take him to prison I will marry Lonwabo and you will give me your blessings." She blackmailed her father as she saw an opportunity to do that. She didn't know what to say to get her father to agree that she marries Lonwabo. And her father only understood blackmail, she wanted to do that as well. But she couldn't see that she was indirectly saving Mnotho.

Mthimkhulu: "That will not happen! You will not marry that man."

Happiness: "Baba-"

Mthimkhulu: "Go and buy our favourite ice cream and come back here."

Happiness: "But-"

Mthimkhulu: "Take the money in your bag and do that." He pressed giving Happiness her bag that she'd placed on the bed. He didn't want any more arguments. Happiness took the bag. "No, don't leave with the bag."

Happiness: "I won't run away, baba. Hawu!"

Mthimkhulu: "I have lost my trust in you. You've kept important things away from me and you ran away. Call my bodyguard." He pointed the door and took her bag. Happiness sighed and got up from the chair. She knew that he was going to send him to go with her just to buy Magnum!

Bodyguard: “Mhlonishwa?”

Mthimkhulu: “Go with my daughter.” He instructed the bodyguard who was inside the room with Happiness... The bodyguard bowed his head to him. Happiness took her bag from her father and she left with the bodyguard...

S5 >> EPISODE 07

She was on her bed crying, she couldn't believe that Dalingcebo had been cheating on her all along and he had the nerve to say it out to his family. And what did his family do? They didn't shout and reprimand him for his cheating but they kept quiet because it wasn't her who cheated. It was him who cheated on her and that was accepted? She was angry with Dalingcebo and he was angry with his family, his mother only asked the question but she didn't say anything further! Her son was proud that he'd cheated on her and Thembelihle kept quiet! Even her own mother kept quiet, she cried louder as she felt alone maybe if her father was still alive she was going to stand up for her. But her father was dead and she had no one standing with her.

She raised her head as the door was being opened, Dalingcebo walked inside the bedroom and he marched straight to the wardrobe. She was angered all together that he didn't even show remorse for cheating on her. When they were alone he didn't say anything to her. He was quiet.

Nontobeko: “How could you cheat on me, Dalingcebo? Why did you cheat on me, Dalingcebo?” she asked and sat on her butts, she looked at his back as Dalingcebo was taking off his clothes.

He turned back to look at her. “I don't have a reason.” He replied and vowed he wasn't going to blame her for his cheating. He wasn't a lame man to blame her for his cheating but he knew one thing, if she was with him, committed in their marriage he wasn't going to cheat on her. He knew that...

Nontobeko: “You don't have a reason, huh? That's ridiculous because you've been fooling me with this divorce making it look as if you are divorcing me because of my job. But no, you are divorcing me because you've found a new vagina. How could you?” she shouted and threw the body lotion container that was next to her on the beside drawer. She threw it at his direction and Dalingcebo caught the container.

Dalingcebo: “Don't get physical with me, Nontobeko. Don't even try!”

She got off the bed. “How could you even say that and look at you, you are not even sorry for cheating on me. I have loved you, Dalingcebo and I gave you a child, this is how you thank me?” she shouted.

Dalingcebo: “No, I have thanked you by loving you and supporting, helping you with getting over your past pain and now, it's time we go our separate ways.”

Nontobeko: “No!”

Dalingcebo: "WHAT!" He took a step towards her as he couldn't believe what Nontobeko had just said. She said 'No!' and all he thought was that she was going to easily agree if he could reveal that he had someone in his life.

Nontobeko: "I will not divorce you." she said boldly pointing Dalingcebo with her forefinger. She had decided that she wasn't going to divorce him and not because she wasn't hurt about this. She was hurt beyond measure and Dalingcebo had broken her heart.

Dalingcebo: "You must be joking, Nontobeko, right?"

Nontobeko: "I am not joking I mean business I will not divorce you and I remember how your mother told me she refused to divorce your father--"

Dalingcebo: "Don't talk nonsense about my mother and don't compare her to you because my mother is nothing like you, she'd never refused any divorce and if you are refusing this divorce you'll be refusing it for your own selfish reasons not because you care about me and Qalokuhle. You don't give an ounce--"

Nontobeko: "Don't you dare tell me I don't care about my daughter! And she'll grow up knowing that her mother was a strong woman who refused to bow down to a man's ego. I am pretty sure now you think you'll marry that skank you are seeing. You won't marry her because I won't divorce you. That's what you'll get for hurting me."

He looked at her and didn't say anything to her. He walked away from her to get to the bathroom. He couldn't even believe Nontobeko!

She sat down and wiped her tears, she wasn't going to divorce him. Her divorce was going to be known and that was going to have a negative effect on to the society, the society that was moving away from succumbing to men and their ego. It was going to be obvious to them that he was divorcing because of her career and what was that going to do to her girls? What was it going to do to the girls that were inspired by the fact that she was a married woman but leading a career that society thought married women couldn't lead. She stamped that she wasn't going to give Dalingcebo what he wanted and now, not after he'd hurt her. He wasn't going to be happy with this woman and she was going to be the reason he won't be happy. Dalingcebo had not only hurt her but he had disrespected her by showing how proud he was that he has been cheating on her. She couldn't believe she, SHE, had been cheated on...

"I can't believe you are here feeling scared like a woman getting married." Mntwana mocked Banele and they laughed with Ngcebo... Banele didn't laugh but he only clicked his tongue. The three of them were not part of the negotiations but their other two brothers except Mlamuli, they were part of them along with their uncle and a family friend.

Banele: "I am not feeling scared fool!" he kicked his foot and Mntwana pushed him to Ngcebo's side, they were inside the mall to buy some cold drinks and snacks because they were hungry. They have waited for long hours inside the car outside Candice's premises. They were hoping the negotiations would go smoothly and they will get the chance to eat then but they were still waiting without any signs of their brothers coming out of the premises.

Ngcebo: "Stop acting like boys."

Mntwana: "Oh! He's a father now and he doesn't play."

Ngcebo: "Yes, I am a father and I will be called husband pretty soon. I don't play with boys I play with my girls."

Mntwana and Banele laughed at his comment. "Mntwana, you are the only one who'll be left in the single people's department." Banele said.

Mntwana: "I am not single at all."

Banele: "Until you get married you'll be considered as someone who isn't single but for now, in home affairs files you are single. It's better for us we are working on that road of not being counted a single people."

Mntwana: "Hhayi, I won't get married. What should we eat?"

Ngcebo: "We should eat for real because I don't trust white people with dishing up enough food. Those people starve themselves." He commented and looked at Mntwana and they laughed at Banele as he swore at Ngcebo...

Now, they have bought chicken and bread, they wanted to buy a 2litre drink, as they were approaching the fridges Ngcebo saw this man. He wasn't mistaken about anything! He'd seen this man in his dreams and he wasn't a look alike but it was him! He was on casual clothes but Ngcebo was certain that it was him and his guts were telling him it was him!

"Guys go on I want to speak to someone." He informed his brothers and moved away from them without listening to what they were saying. He ran faster as Lonwabo was moving to the direction that showed he was leaving the retail shop. He couldn't believe that he was seeing him in Johannesburg. Did that mean Happiness was in Johannesburg? He told himself not to guess too much because he was going to ask him.

Ngcebo held Lonwabo's shoulder and he got the goose bumps as his blood turned cold as if something bad was going to happen. But maybe that was because his ancestors didn't want this man as he's always being fought off in his visions. He didn't understand and so, he removed his hand from him because he'd gotten his attention. "Sawubona." Ngcebo greeted Lonwabo.

Lonwabo: "Molo. How are you?" he asked and handed out his hand for a handshake. He was surprised that he had Ngcebo stopping him. What did he want from him because all he knew was, Ngcebo didn't know him?

Ngcebo: "I am fine and how are you?"

Lonwabo: "I am fine."

Ngcebo: "I know that you don't know me and I don't as well."

Lonwabo: "That's a mistake because I know you. I listen to your music but I don't think that's written on my forehead."

Ngcebo chuckled. "No, it's not written anywhere and thank you for listening. But now, I stopped you because I wasn't expecting to see you here. Where's Happiness? Did she come back as well or you are here on business?"

Lonwabo: "I am not following up."

Ngcebo: "You have a child with Happiness and you've been appearing in my visions for some reason. Why are you here?"

Lonwabo: "I shouldn't be here?"

Ngcebo: "I am not saying you shouldn't be but I haven't told my family where you are with Happiness because I don't support what has been happening to her. Can you please go and maybe change the location? I will then tell my family you are in Botswana as you are there then they won't find you if you have moved. Maybe that way I will save my children from their anger if I can just do that trick. I can't tell you the whole thing because you are not one of our own but I understand why you are in her life as well. And I think that she deserves Happiness."

Lonwabo felt the confusion fell over him and he'd never been so confused in his life. What did he just tell him? And by looking at him he saw that Ngcebo was the only one who understood what he was telling him while him, as a receiver of the message he didn't understand everything he was saying because it wasn't making clear sense. He was still trying to process the fact that Ngcebo knew he was seeing Happiness and he knew where they were. That made him wonder, what else did he know?

Lonwabo: "Even though I don't understand everything I will talk to her. We came over here because her father is sick."

Ngcebo: "Okay, I will go now."

Lonwabo: "Thank you, for telling me this and for protecting her." he said and Ngcebo nodded once before leaving... As he was walking away he said 'I am sorry' silently. He had a lot of things going on and he knew that he could make everything easy by doing what he'd been told to do...

"Ngcebo, can we talk?" Mnotho called Ngcebo out, they were going their separate ways now after the negotiations. The time was after 5pm and they have managed to wrap the negotiations in one day without having to come back to finish the negotiations... Banele had thanked them for coming since Mntwana was driving to Cape Town and Ngcebo was driving back to his house. Banele was driving back home with his brothers... Ngcebo was marching to his car when Mnotho called his name out. He placed his phone back on his pocket and turned back to speak to him.

Ngcebo: "What's wrong?"

Mnotho: "We haven't spoken in a while and the last time we spoke I didn't say good things to you." he introduced and looked at him without speaking any further. He'd wanted to apologise but calling Ngcebo and apologising on the phone wasn't what he wanted. Yes, his ego had got in the way but his true self knew that he didn't accuse him over the phone and he needed to speak to him face to face not over the phone.

Ngcebo: "Oh!"

Mnotho: "I was wrong to accuse you of killing us and I know that I was wrong to say everything I said without proof. I didn't act like a big brother and for that I am sorry."

Ngcebo: "You need to call Nandipha and apologise to her not me."

Mnotho: "But Ngcebo you are the one I was talking to."

Ngcebo: "She's the one you said I was helping and you stressed her big time with your accusation. If you really want to apologise it's her, you should call and if she forgives you I

forgive you as well. If she doesn't I don't because you were clearly pointing that I would support Nandipha even if she's doing wrong things. You will call her and apologise to her, mama has her number. Drive safe back home, Mageba." He said and tapped on his shoulder once, he walked away and told himself he was forgiving him. But, he wanted him to call Nandipha because he was tired of his family, his father and brothers bullshitting Nandipha as if they were saints...

Mnotho turned back to get to his car that they were driving on with his uncle Thokozani and he wasn't sure about calling Nandipha as Ngcebo had said to him. Why did he want him to call her? Why did Ngcebo want them to bow to Nandipha? He didn't voice out the accusations to her and now, he was supposed to call her? He wasn't sure about that...

"You did a good thing by going over there to support your brother." Dalisu sent his gratitude to Mnotho as they sat down inside his office after they've briefed their father on how the negotiations went... It was a Sunday morning.

Mnotho: "He's our brother."

Dalisu: "Yeah, I have just learnt that Mthimkhulu is in the hospital. Did you know about that?" he asked and looked at him.

Mnotho: "Yes, I knew about it and I haven't gone to the hospital to see him."

Dalisu: "We are actually supposed to go and see him but I don't think that's a good idea. Mthimkhulu's silence is not good at all Mnotho."

Mnotho: "Yes, baba. It's not good and I think that it would be better if we go over there and see him because that will make things easy on us. We will know how he is. I mean search his spirit."

Dalisu: "I hear you but I think this is our opportunity to eliminate our problems and Mthimkhulu is a ruthless man, Mnotho. It's better we have him dead than alive because it seems as if he's building a conspiracy against us."

Mnotho: "No, baba!"

Dalisu: "Yes, I don't want this as well because I am not killer but what should we do now? It's either us or him?"

Mnotho: "Happiness loves her father and I won't hurt her further by killing her father. If Mthimkhulu dies he must die because his time has come not because I want to save myself and the kingdom."

Dalisu: "Mnotho, do you know what's at stake if Mthimkhulu can destroy our kingdom? Our ancestors and forefathers had built this kingdom and it always been the work of the living to protect it."

Mnotho: "I will not protect it at the cost of her father's life. I will not do that and I ask that you don't do such a thing to her, baba."

Dalisu: "Do you think Happiness wants her father alive now? He's the one who forced her into this marriage that she didn't want-"

Mnotho: "Baba, if you insist on this I will tell mom about it and I know it will get ugly between the two of you. Our aunt Thokozile was a thorn in mom's life but you didn't have

her killed, today, she's in prison alive and why on earth should I kill my wife's father? We may not have a genuine relationship but Mthimkhulu is Njabulo's grandfather and I won't kill him."

Daliso: "You wouldn't tell your mother this."

Mnotho: "I would if you keep insisting on it and should Mthimkhulu die out any foul play I will tell mom, dad." He didn't want to blackmail his own father but he had no choice but to blackmail him because he was against what he was telling him now. He knew that even in the past, their history, there would be wars and blood would be shed for the kingdom for its people. Their forefathers would do nothing and anything to protect their own and their throne but he wasn't going to kill Happiness's father. He'd taken a lot from Happiness, he'd taken her true self, her happiness and freedom. He'd hurt her and he wasn't going to put the last nail on the coffin. He wasn't going to kill her by taking her father because he knew that she still loved her father still. If she didn't, she wasn't going to proceed visiting him and he would have never heard Mthimkhulu's name in Njabulo's mouth if Happiness didn't love her father.

Daliso: "We are running--"

Mnotho: "Baba, I know our history and I know we would do anything for our throne but it won't be this one. I know you are concern and worried but Happiness's father shouldn't be killed. I will tell mom for real." He threatened lastly and stood on his feet.

Daliso sighed. "Okay, even though he wouldn't think for you like that but we won't do anything to him." He relieved him as he saw that he didn't want this.

Mnotho: "Thank you and I think you should go to church with your wife today and pray to God." He joked opening the door and Daliso laughed...

S5 >> EPISODE 08

"What's wrong?" Ngcebo asked Nandipha was who was inside the children's bathroom with Buhle and her sisters were standing behind their mother with sad faces because their sister was sick. Nandipha got in Johannesburg with the children on a Saturday night but they were driven to her mother's house because the children wanted their grandmother. She didn't leave with Ngcebo when they were leaving for Johannesburg with his brothers because Thembelihle had asked that he stays behind. On their drive home she felt that Buhle was coming down with a high fever...

She left her mother's house with Randal, they were going to the Doctor that opened on Sunday because Buhle wasn't getting better and she seemed weak... Now, it was in the afternoon and Buhle wasn't taking food down her stomach she was vomiting as they were with her inside the bathroom. Nandipha was holding her kneeling on the floor as she was vomiting on their children's pee toilet container. She was crying and Nandipha was barely holding on. She was trying to be strong for her sake and for Buhle's sisters who were looking

sad behind her.

Similo: “Uyagula ushishi baba.” (Buhle is sick)

Ngcebo: “Nandipha what’s wrong with her?”

Nandipha: “It started by fever yesterday on our way back home. Nongcebo bring her water bottle to me.” she requested pointing it with her hand and the other hand wiped Buhle’s face she was seated on Nandipha’s lap now crying.

Ngcebo: “Did you take her to the Doctor?” he asked going down to their level after he’d taken the water bottle from Nongcebo’s hands. The other four sisters imitated their father, they went down. Ngcebo placed the bottle on Buhle’s mouth. “Ungawagwinyi amanzi Buhlezi xukuza bese uyaphimisa.” He gave her instructions and Buhle did what her father said, rinsing off her mouth with the water and she spat it off on the container.

Nandipha: “We went to the Doctor with my brother.” She told him and got up with her, when she got home with the children, Ngcebo wasn’t in the house. He’d just gotten back. And his daughter was sick. “Go to sis Thula I will bath your sister now, okay?” she told her girls to go to their nanny whom Nandipha got from Thembelihle like Ngcebo had promised her.

Ntokomalo: “Cha shohlala no shishi thina.” (No, we will stay here with Buhle)

Others: “EHE!”

Nandipha: “You haven’t eaten your food and now, go eat your food you will come back to your sister when you are done.” She pointed the door and they didn’t leave but they were just standing before her looking at her as if they didn’t hear her speak.

Ngcebo: “Your mother is speaking, listen!” he shouted at them and they turned, leaving their parents in the bathroom. “What did the Doctor say?” he asked and moved to the bathroom tub to mix the water for Nandipha as she was undressing Buhle who was still crying.

Nandipha: “He said nothing is wrong with Buhle, her temperature is stable and he didn’t even inject her nor give her medication. I left the room with a confused head and she was confused as well because she could feel that Buhle was hot. And look now, my daughter is even sweating. What’s going on, Ngcebo?” she asked and looked at him, she’d been waiting for his return impatiently as when she called him his phone rang inside their bedroom. She’d called Thembelihle to inform her about this after she’d gone to the Doctor and Thembelihle told her to wait she was going to visit Gobela. Nandipha had to wait for almost two hours and Thembelihle called back, she told her that Gobela said she must speak to Ngcebo he was going to know what was wrong with Buhle because she didn’t need medical attention.

Ngcebo: “What do you mean what’s going on?” he asked and in his mind he was already concluding that he needed to burn some incense with Buhle there and speak to his ancestors maybe that was going to help.

Nandipha: “Your mother told me that Gobela said I must ask you why my child is sick. Did you fail to do something you were supposed to do?” she asked and placed Buhle inside the tub after she’d given Ngcebo her eye.

Ngcebo: “No-”

Nandipha: “No? Don’t even think of lying to me! This is my child that’s sick here she’s your

child as well and you are telling me no.”

Ngcebo: “I will go speak to the ancestors with her.”

Nandipha: “No! You will do no such thing just tell me what is that you are supposed to do and you don’t want to do. Tell me!”

Ngcebo: “Nandipha calm down. Can’t you see there’s a child here and she’s crying? Why are you shouting?”

Nandipha: “Oh, you care about Buhle now?”

Ngcebo: “What kind of question is that?”

Nandipha: “It’s a simple question since you are not doing what you are supposed to but you want to feed my child with an incense’s smoke while she’s sick because of you.”

Ngcebo: “Don’t speak like that because you don’t know what’s going on.”

Nandipha: “Yes, I know what’s going on Ngcebo and I am pretty sure that whatever you are hiding got to do with Happiness, right?” Ngcebo kept quiet and turned to leave the bathroom but Nandipha stood up leaving Buhle in the tub she went to Ngcebo. She held his arm.

“Where are you going without answering me, Ngcebo? It’s about her right?” she asked.

Ngcebo: “The poor woman has been through so much all these years that she’s been married to my brother. And if my family finds her she will go back to that life of being unhappy. Don’t you think that’s unfair?”

Nandipha chuckled in disbelief and shook her head. “I can’t believe you. You know I didn’t want to believe that maybe you might be the cause for this sickness Buhle has. I had a little hope you’ll tell me something different and I can’t believe you’ll sacrifice my child’s life for Happiness’ freedom and happiness. I can’t!” she turned back but Ngcebo held her arm.

Ngcebo: “Nandipha it’s not like that.”

Nandipha: “Where is she Ngcebo? You know that and you are supposed to tell your family, right? But you are quiet. Am I right?” she looked at him and he didn’t answer him. Nandipha yanked her arm out of his hold. She went to the tub to take out her child from the tub.

Ngcebo: “I am working on it Nandipha I won’t let Buhle’s life be in danger and you just need to trust me on that.” He followed Nandipha as she left the room with Buhle wrapped up in a towel. “Nandipha, I know that you are angry and scared now but please, trust me. I won’t let anything happen to our daughter.”

Nandipha: “No! Don’t tell me that because now she’s sick and she’s feeling pain. It hurts to see my child like this but I can’t say much for her father who would rather have her suffer because someone else should be saved.”

Ngcebo: “It’s not like that and stop making it sound like I don’t care about Buhle because I do. She’s my daughter but if you have seen everything that I saw happening to Happiness you would have wanted the same thing for her to be happy where she is. But you are speaking like this now because you don’t understand what she’s been through. And I am telling you that I am working on it I won’t let Buhle suffer any longer-” he shouted at her feeling angered by the fact that Nandipha was being insensitive and thinking for herself. She was being selfish now and that was wrong.

Nandipha: “Any longer? Can you actually hear yourself? You are speaking about suffering

any longer? Happiness is an adult and Buhle is a child maybe you don't see that you think she's a grown woman. She's a child!"

Ngcebo: "And Njabulo is a child as well he's a child that's Buhle's age. He deserves to be happy."

Nandipha: "Yes! He deserves it but not at the cost of my daughter's life that you want to sacrifice for their happiness."

Ngcebo: "Don't speak like that!"

Nandipha: "How should I speak? How?" she turned to look at him after she'd put Buhle on her diaper. They were arguing on top of their crying child.

Ngcebo: "I have spoken to her boyfriend yesterday and he promised me that he'll do what I told him to do. And when he has done that I will tell the family where Happiness is and they will go there to look for her."

Nandipha kept quiet for a while after hearing that from Ngcebo. She was thinking and making up facts, putting together puzzles inside her head as she was dressing Buhle. When she was done she looked at Ngcebo. "You spoke to him? Where? Is he here? You can be a seer but that doesn't mean you'll see people's phone numbers, foreign numbers since it's clear that they're not in South Africa. And yesterday you were here in Johannesburg."

Ngcebo: "Bring Buhle to me."

Nandipha: "No! Answer me, Ngcebo!" Ngcebo didn't answer her but he took a step towards Buhle. Nandipha lifted her first and she figured his silence meant Happiness's boyfriend was in South Africa... She left the room fast and Ngcebo ran after her. She was going to their room.

Ngcebo ran faster to get to their bedroom door first and he achieved it. He looked around for Nandipha's phone. It wasn't in the charger he saw her marching to her handbag and he outran her. "I won't let you do this because you will ruin my plans. Who do you want to call, now?" he asked opening her handbag to look for her phone and he found it.

Nandipha placed her crying baby on the floor and she went to Ngcebo to get to her phone. "Bring back my phone Ngcebo!" She tried to take the phone from him but placed it on his pocket and held her hands both into his one hand.

Ngcebo: "Don't make me regret telling things to you because now you'll betray my loyalty if you call my family and tell them that Happiness is here."

Nandipha: "You want my child to die? We should also suffer because Happiness has suffered that's what you want?"

Ngcebo: "No, and I am telling you stop saying this I will fix this."

Nandipha: "LET GO OF MY HANDS!" She shouted and tried to get them off his hold but Ngcebo held on to her.

Ngcebo: "Promise me you won't tell anyone."

Nandipha: "I won't promise you anything because all you want to do is give Happiness, happiness and it doesn't matter who dies in the process. Even if all your children could die!" she pulled her hands off and when she forced that, her hands slipped away from him forcefully leaving the engagement ring with him as it slipped off when Nandipha was

fighting.

Ngcebo: "NANDIPHA!" He shouted at her as she left the room with Buhle.

Nandipha didn't know what to do because she didn't know Mnotho's number by heart. But she had it on her phone. The only thing she could do to save her child was if she tells Mnotho that Happiness was here and she didn't feel any guilty about that. She was walking up and down with Buhle inside the nursery. She was trying her best to calm her down but she was sweating again, a little bit harder now as her temperature had risen. Nandipha placed her daughter on the cot and she undressed her. She stood by the opened window with her and she saw MaZungu down on the washing line hanging her clothes. Her! She marched to the door and she unlocked it. She climbed down the stairs and the lounge was empty but the children's noise was coming from the kitchen along with their father's voice. She marched to the route of the bedroom that was downstairs. At the end of the hallway there was a door there leading out of the house. She lifted the flower vase that was on the table that decorated the corner space of that door. There was a key under the vase. She unlocked the door and walked out of the house...

Nandipha: "Mama' MaZungu can you please borrow me your phone I want to make an important phone call."

MaZungu: "Hawu, nkosazana I don't have airtime in my phone. She's not feeling better even now?" she asked and placed her hand on her forehead.

Nandipha: "No, but you asked me to buy you airtime this morning and I bought morning than you asked for."

MaZungu: "Yes, my brother's daughter needed to speak to me, it took time and I exhausted the airtime."

Nandipha nodded and turned back, she didn't know if Ngcebo told her not to give her that phone or she was just refusing.

She was clueless now because if she went back to the house to get the car keys Ngcebo was going to see her since the keys were hanged inside the kitchen on the wall key holder. He wasn't going to let her go, he was going to fight her.

She marched to the front of the house to get to the gate and she opened the small doored gate. It was impossible for her to walk from this house to get to her mother's house but she knew a neighbour who could drop anything to help her and the girls... She buzzed Mr Tomson's house, a house of a white man that was three houses away from Nandipha's house. She waited...

Mr Tomson: "Tomson residence, hello?"

Nandipha: "Mr Tomson, it's Nandipha I need your help." She said with a shaky voice. She'd been walking from her house to this house crying along with Buhle because she couldn't believe this situation she was in...

Mr Tomson: "Alright! Alright! Come in!" he opened the main gate for her and Nandipha went through after she wiped her tears...

"What's wrong?" The man asked and looked at Buhle who was still crying and now, her voice had turned husky because of crying.

Nandipha: “Can you drive me to mama’s house? I am desperate, my daughter is sick. You won’t wait for me but you’ll just drop me there. The boys are not sleeping, right?”

Mr Tomson: “No! No! They’re playing upstairs. I will go take them and I will drive you.” he said without asking why she needed to be driven, he saw she wasn’t alright and her child was crying painfully. Nandipha thanked him.

Nandipha: “Don’t cry Buhlezi.”

Buhle: “Mama?” she cried still.

Nandipha: “Yini? Ulambile futhi?” (You are hungry, again?) she asked and Buhle nodded. She didn’t know what to do because if she was to give her food she was going to vomit.

“Uzohlanza nje Buhle.” (You’ll vomit) she didn’t even know what to say to her because the last time she’d given her food thinking she wouldn’t vomit again but she did. Buhle laid her head on her shoulder.

Tomson came back with his two sons, they met in parenting classes with Nandipha, the one she attended when her girls were still inside the hospital. Tomson was attending them because he’d just got custody of his two sons (3 and 6 years) from his ex-wife. They weren’t close with Nandipha but they helped each other when one asks but it would be only about the kids... Nandipha greeted the boys and they greeted her back.

“Why is she crying?” The younger boy asked as they marched to the door.

Nandipha: “She’s sick, she’s hungry but she vomits when she eats.”

Tomson: “She’s turning 3 years, right?”

Nandipha: “Yes.”

Tomson: “I have something that might stay in her tummy.” He said and gave his older son the car keys. He ran to blend children’s smoothie supplement...

He gave Nandipha the smoothie on the children’s cup when he got back to them with it. She thanked him and Tomson got on to the steering to drive. Nandipha gave her daughter the smoothie...

“Thank you, Mr Tomson.” She thanked him as she’d gotten off his car in her mother’s driveway. Buhle was no longer crying but she wasn’t asleep. She had her head on her mother’s shoulder still with a temperature. She’d left the cup inside his car, Buhle had drank it all.

Tomson: “It’s my pleasure.”

Nandipha said goodbye to the boys and she marched up to the gate...

“What’s her father saying?” Faith asked her daughter and wiped her granddaughter’s face. She was seated on the couch with her. “Don’t you think I should dress her up?” she asked a second question to Nandipha who had her mother’s phone looking for Thembelihle’s number.

Nandipha: “He’s saying nothing and don’t dress her, mom. RANDALL!” She shouted his name lastly and placed her phone on her ear. She looked at Buhle and began stamping her right foot on the floor. Buhle placed her head on her grandmother’s chest and began crying all over again... Nandipha got up...

“Yebo, mama, it’s Nandipha. Can I have bhuti Mnotho’s number?” She requested and placed

her forehead on the kitchen counter.

Thembelihle: "What's wrong?"

Nandipha: "I need to speak to him it's urgent."

Thembelihle: "Buhle is still sick?"

Nandipha: "Yes, please mama."

Thembelihle: "Okay, I will give you the number but did you speak to Ngcebo?"

Nandipha: "Yes, I did and he didn't help me." she sighed and Thembelihle promised to send the number she dropped the call. Nandipha turned back to Randall who was inside the kitchen with her.

Randall: "I got my phone here what should I say?"

Nandipha: "You'll greet him and ask if you're speaking to Prince Mnotho then if he says 'yes' you will tell him that his wife that he's looking for, she is Johannesburg." She instructed looking at her mother's phone after it had beeped and that was Mnotho's number. She gave the phone to her brother.

Randall transferred the phone number to his phone. He gave the phone back to Nandipha and dialled the number.

Randall: "He's not answering." He removed the phone from his ear.

Nandipha: "Please, try again."

Randall nodded and dialled his number once again as his sister requested.

"Mnotho, speaking hello." He accepted the phone call.

Randall: "I called to tell you that your wife that you've been looking for is here in Johannesburg." He said straight forwardly.

Mnotho: "Wait, who's this?"

Randall: "That's all I wanted to tell you, prince." He said and dropped the call before Mnotho could finish his "Thank you" He looked at his sister. "I told him and he asked who am I. I hung up when he was saying Thank you."

Nandipha sighed. "Okay, thank you. Just reject his number so that he won't call you at all." She requested.

Randall nodded and did that, he followed Nandipha back to the lounge... Nandipha gave out her hands to her crying child who was rubbing her eyes. "She's sleepy now and I hope she will sleep." She said placing her head on her shoulder after she'd wiped her face.

Faith: "What did her father say?" she got up to walk her out, she didn't tell them what happened but she told them she needed to make a call and be driven back home when she was done.

Nandipha: "He didn't help me, mama."

Randall: "Did he take your phone?" he asked opening the door for Nandipha.

Nandipha: "I don't want to talk about it, Randall. Mama, I will see you."

Faith: "Okay, baby, don't keep quiet if you are having problems. There's nobody who should stress you while I am here."

Nandipha: "Don't worry."

Faith: "Don't tell me that because I worry just like I saw the worry in your face when you

came in here with Buhle.”

Nandipha: “Mama, please.”

Faith: “Drive safe with your sister.”

Randall: “Yes, mom.”

Their mother stepped back and she looked at the car as it drove away...

Ngcebo was the one who opened the gate for Nandipha. Randall had driven off. Nandipha marched inside the premises, Ngcebo was standing by the door waiting for her. Buhle was sleeping in Nandipha’s arms...

Ngcebo: “Let me take her.”

Nandipha: “I am fine.” She said and walked inside the house. Buhle still had a high temperature but she was asleep Nandipha was relieved by that. All her girls were clean and sleeping on their cots...

She was tired and hungry, she walked back downstairs to get to the kitchen. She found Ngcebo seated on the high chair. Her ring was on top of the kitchen island where Ngcebo was seated. She opened the fridge and a jug of juice.

Ngcebo: “So, you went on and did what I asked you not to do?”

Nandipha: “I think we have fought enough Ngcebo and I did everything I did for my daughter. And I am sorry I am not selfless enough as you are.”

Ngcebo: “How can I trust you now, Nandipha with the things I tell you? Mama told me that you called asking for Mnotho’s number and you told him what I told you, right?”

Nandipha: “Yes, I told him that Happiness is here and you won’t wake up in the morning and run to tell Happiness to run away from him because if you do. I will run as far from you as I could and if our children die because of your stubbornness I will bury them in a foreign country where you won’t even know where their bones are.” She threatened him feeling helpless because she didn’t trust that Ngcebo wasn’t going to tell Happiness to leave.

Ngcebo: “How can you say something like that?”

Nandipha: “How can you let our daughter feel pain while you know what to do to help her? And I am not sorry for what I did because I would do it again given a chance. I am a mother and my children’s wellbeing come first. And it’s fine if you don’t want to tell me about your visions but when that bloodshed you saw happen I will do the same thing that would be making sure you are not anywhere near it because my children won’t grow up without their father.”

Ngcebo didn’t say anything to her but he got off the chair. He pushed her engagement ring to her as she was standing on the end of the island opposite him. Nandipha looked at the ring and back at him, he was looking at her. She took the ring and placed it back on her finger.

Ngcebo left...

Nandipha closed her eyes and placed her hands on her face. “If I did something wrong God, please forgive me.” She said shortly...

“I just received a call that Happiness is in Johannesburg.” Mnotho told Elena who was moisturising her body inside their bedroom. She was five months pregnant. Mnotho was in

her house with Gift when he received the call.

Elena: "Really? Who told you that?"

Mnotho: "I got an anonymous call."

Elena: "No, do you trust that?"

Mnotho: "Yes, remember it was on the newspapers that my wife is missing after her father's sickness. I think she came back to see her father."

Elena: "Please, don't even hesitate just go now."

Mnotho: "You are right I will take Danielle with me and I will contact you on the phone when I get there."

Elena: "Okay, and tell your parents as well." He nodded and went to gather his things. Elena got up from the chair. "I will do this for you just go and tell your son that you are leaving." She said taking a bag for him. Mnotho dropped what he was doing and he went back to Gift. He was feeling rather hot than happy he didn't know why he was feeling this way. He recognised he was nervous...

"Who called you?" Thembelihle asked Mnotho was seated on the couch with Danielle and Pearl was in Danielle's arm. Danielle didn't protest when Mnotho asked her to go with him but she only asked that they drop Pearl in Durban if they were going to leave with his parents. He agreed.

Daliso: "That doesn't matter MaSthole but we need to go. Mnotho call the guard he will drive Qalokuhle to Nkosazana's house and call Dalingcebo after that. Aunty please go with us." Daliso asked the aunty elder that was still in his house. Mnotho left the house to go get the guard that he was told to get...

Aunty: "There's no problem Mageba I will go with you. I will go get my bag." She stood up and Daliso looked at Thembelihle with his eyes telling her about their bags as well.

Thembelihle read through them. She got up from her chair and she figured that Nandipha might have been the one who called Mnotho. Happiness had called her to tell her that she was in South Africa to visit her father because she was sick but Thembelihle didn't tell her family. Now, Nandipha had told Mnotho...

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She tied her dreadlocks on her way out of their bedroom on the following morning which was a Monday morning. She heard a cry from the baby monitor, she'd just finished dressing up after taking a shower. Ngcebo was still sleeping... She opened the nursery and Buhle was seated on her butts crying her other sisters were sleeping.

"Mama!" Buhle called out her mother and lifted her arms up. She wasn't dressed up as Nandipha had put her to sleep wearing her diaper only.

"Sawubona, I will look for your dress." She marched to Buhle's chest of drawers and she opened the dresses shelf. She took a blue plain dress and she marched to her to dress her up.

She smiled and felt a sense of relief as Buhle was no longer with a high temperature. “You are hungry?” she asked.

Buhle: “Ehe!”

Nandipha: “I will feed you now.” she lifted her off the cot after she’d dressed her up. She closed the door behind her, Buhle had stopped crying. She walked down with Buhle looking at her as she was pulling her locks... She placed her on top of the kitchen island and held her face. Buhle smiled, Nandipha kissed her face and her daughter giggled loudly holding her tummy. “I was so worried about you Buhlezi wami. And now, I am happy that you are hungry.” she said kissing her last and she moved away to make food for her... She fed Buhle while making breakfast for the rest of the girls and their father...

The four sisters ran inside the kitchen with their father running after them, they were laughing as their father was making scary sounds running after them. They rushed to hide behind the kitchen island but they were giggling.

Ngcebo kissed Nandipha’s cheek as she was standing on the kitchen island chopping fruits. “Good morning.” He greeted her and he took Buhle who was still seated on the kitchen island eating the apple pieces her mother gave her.

Nandipha: “Good morning.”

“BABA WOZA PHELA SHICASHILE!” Similo screamed behind the island and the three sisters giggled along with her.

Ngcebo: “Sawubona, Buhlezi.”

Buhle: “Shawubona baba, nibeka phansi nami nizocasha.” (Please, put me down I want to go and hide.) she requested and Ngcebo put her down, she was well now, Ngcebo could see that. He was really going to keep quiet while his daughter was sick but he had a plan he wasn’t just quiet. He convinced himself of that as he felt guilt now that he was running around the five of them and they were all healthy, kicking and alive...

“They will start with bathing or they will start with eating?” Thula, their nanny asked Nandipha who was putting the girls’ food on their tables.

Nandipha: “They will eat first I will call you. You can go do your things.” She looked back at her shortly. Thula nodded and left Nandipha...

“Where’s my phone? I want to make a phone call.” She asked Ngcebo after she’d finished having her breakfast.

Ngcebo: “It’s in your laptop bag.” He replied without looking at her.

Nandipha: “Did they call you then since it’s Monday today and Buhle’s sickness began on a Saturday evening, the very same day you told Happiness’s boyfriend to do something. Did they call you?”

Ngcebo: “Why are you asking me that now as if you care about them?”

Nandipha: “I didn’t know I wasn’t supposed to ask.”

Ngcebo: “Yes, you were not supposed to ask because it’s none of your business.” He told her coldly looking at her. Nandipha nodded, she left him and the girls to call Palesa... She rushed up the stairs looking at clock on the wall before her. It was still early she could still help with bathing the girls. She left every morning before 9am and come back after 11am from the gym

and in the afternoon it would be 5h30pm to 7h30pm. She always left dinner cooked and ready... She got to the room and her phone was ringing.

Nandipha: "Mama?" she answered the call.

Faith: "Ha! I can hear from the sound of your voice that Buhlezi is fine now."

Nandipha: "Yes, mama, she's fine. She was the first to wake up and tell me that she was hungry. I fed her and now, she's well and running around like the others. I am relieved."

Faith: "I am happy to hear that and as your mother now. I want to know what's going on because it's clear that you are in whatever that's going on there alone. I bought a phone for you when Thando threw your phone on the water and you had to be driven by a neighbour to get here because you needed to make a call while you have a phone? What's going on? Tell me because if you don't I will come over-"

Nandipha: "Okay, mama, she was sick because her father didn't want to tell his family where his brother's wife is."

Faith: "Hawu!" that's all she managed to say as she didn't expect this.

Nandipha: "Yazi, mama, I was so hurt and last night I felt the burden on my shoulders. I know he will hide things from me now since I did what he didn't want me to do but I am scared that he will do this again and I will have to be worried again. He knows that Buhle is the weaker one and she mustn't have other illnesses adding up on her lungs-"

Faith: "Don't speak like that Nandipha. Yes, my child, I understand your fears but be positive because this will only make you to accuse him first all the time when the children become sick."

Nandipha: "I trusted him, mama that he would do anything for our kids that's putting them as a first priority but I was wrong. How can I even look at him with the same eye-?"

Faith: "You can't change the blood ties my child and by that I mean you can choose not to be with him but that won't change the fact that the children are his and they have his blood running through their veins. You just have to make peace with him because he thought he was doing what he was doing for greater good but it was wrong because Buhle is not Happiness's child and that means she must never be burdened with burdens that are not of her parents even though in this case she was sick because her father who didn't want to talk. But who was going to benefit from her father being quiet?"

Nandipha: "Happiness."

Faith: "Yes, don't let anyone, make you feel guilty for what you did. You need to have a clear conscious about this."

Nandipha: "Thank you, mama."

Faith: "Your brother will be relieved he didn't even want to go to campus but when I told him to come over to your house he refused."

Nandipha laughed. "He was angry last night. He was arguing all the way from the house to Ngcebo's house. And he was arguing alone, mama." She told her.

Faith: "Why did you let my son argue alone?"

Nandipha: "Hha! Nandipha, leave Nandipha alone!"

Faith: "Silly child! I love you, okay?"

Nandipha: "I love you too, mama." She said and they hung up the call. Nandipha sighed and made a phone call.

"Girl how are you?" She asked Palesa on the phone.

Palesa: "I am fine and how are you, girlfriend?"

Nandipha: "I am good, you are still taking a half day at work, right? I won't go to the dance class in the afternoon."

Palesa: "Yes, we will come at 3pm."

Nandipha: "Okay, I will see you then. Don't forget Phemelo's special blanket because I don't want him crying like the last time."

Palesa laughed. "I won't forget and next time, you'll come to my house with the girls because you should actually be coming to us." she reminded her.

Nandipha: "Yes! Yes! Forgive me."

Palesa: "O yang Buhle, letlhatso le emisitse mogo ene?" (How's Buhle now, the vomiting has stopped?) she asked in her mother tongue. They've taught each other both their languages and Palesa was the one who suggested it. It wasn't very hard for Palesa as it was harder for Nandipha but in two years she could understand almost everything except their deep 'sayings' Palesa son could speak IsiZulu as well but Nandipha's girls had grasp only a few words.

Nandipha: "Ee, o siame." (Yes, she's fine)

Palesa: "Okay, that's better then."

Nandipha: "Yeah. Have a good day my friend."

Palesa: "Thank you and you too have a good day."

Nandipha then hung up the call and she walked out of the room...

"If that move that Ngcebo spoke about happens you won't be there with the children?"

Happiness asked Lonwabo, they were inside a hotel room that Lonwabo was on for the time being. They've been in South Africa for about four to five days and they were not living together. Happiness was in her father's house, her father wanted her to have a bodyguard but she refused. Mthimkhulu was forced to trust that she wasn't going to run away again...

Lonwabo: "I don't have to be there because Luvuyo is there with them. And a good thing about this is that your in-laws haven't come to visit your father."

Happiness: "And they won't come because he's not important to them but please, go back to the children, babe. I will come back to you when dad is out of the hospital."

Lonwabo: "I am not going to leave you here and I don't want to have to repeat myself now and again, Happiness."

Happiness stared at him without saying a word, her eyes drew Lonwabo to her. She didn't move but she stood still by the coffee table of the hotel room. He held her waist. "I should be going now." Happiness made him aware.

Lonwabo: "I know but I don't like this fighting we are doing it's not healthy."

Happiness: "That's because you don't want to listen to me and if you can just listen to me we won't be fighting."

Lonwabo: "I will call my friend again and tell him that I need his help with moving the children and my sister. I think by Wednesday he would be able to move them and we can tell Ngcebo to tell his family. Don't worry." He ignored her statement completely and he kissed her lips softly, just a peck.

Happiness: "I love you."

Lonwabo: "I love you, too."

Happiness then wore her glasses and the scarf that she wrapped around her neck up to her head because she didn't want to be spotted by the journalists or anyone who could tell them about her return. She took her bag and left the hotel room going straight to her father's car...

"They're discharging me MaMthimkhulu I will eat at home." Mthimkhulu said closing the food that Happiness had placed before him.

Happiness: "Baba, you are not even sure about that please eat or else I will sure feed you and you won't like that." She threatened and opened the lunch box. She lifted the spoon and gave it to her father.

Mthimkhulu: "Your mother never forced food down on me."

Happiness laughed and stood up to open the juice that she'd bought. "Mama was your wife dad and she treated you like her child." She commented and they laughed with her father...

The bodyguard let the Zulu family through Mthimkhulu's private room but only allow Mnotho and his parents because it was too many of them. They had to do a lot of convincing at the front desk as it was too many of them and they were not sure if they were all family... The others sat down on the waiting area.

They entered the hospital room while Happiness and her father were still talking and laughing. The smile on Happiness's face was wiped away by seeing Mnotho inside the room. She didn't move her eyes away from him and Mnotho was also keeping his eyes on her.

Thembehle: "MaMthimkhulu?" she moved to her side of the room as Dalisu was greeting Mthimkhulu and that got Happiness's attention back to the room.

Happiness: "Mama." She smiled and they hugged each other.

Thembehle: "You just disappeared on me, how are you?" she asked holding her shoulders and she looked at Happiness from her head down to her toes. She looked beautiful wearing blue jeans with a white formal shirt and black Adidas sneakers with her braids let loose. She looked back at her face.

Happiness: "I am fine and you are still looking classy and beautiful. I don't even have to ask if you are fine." She asked, and laughed as if the men were not with them in the room. They were happy to see each other.

Thembehle: "Hhayi, udlala ngami wena." (You are kidding me) she hit her shoulder playfully and they hugged at each other again. They then turned to send their attention to the men in the room.

Thembehle: "Sawubona, baba Mthimkhulu?"

Mthimkhulu: "Mama ndlunkulu, how are you?"

Thembehle: "We are fine and how are you in here? We are old now, we would think that

we are fine and the next thing we'll be in these beds.”

Mthimkhulu: “You are right about that mama ndlunkulu. And children keep bothering us even when they're old.” he said and took a short look at his daughter who wasn't looking at him but... Mnotho. Mthimkhulu didn't know if this reaction meant Happiness was feeling threatened by his presence. Or-

Thembelihle: “You can say that again and that never ends.”

Daliso: “And we were worried about you, MaMthimkhulu. You disappeared without telling anyone about your whereabouts.” He looked at Happiness and she sent her head down without supplying a comment.

Mthimkhulu: “I think that can be a topic for another day.”

Daliso: “Yes, but since we are here it wouldn't be a bad idea to talk about it. And we waited for you, Mthimkhulu hoping you'll come back.”

Mthimkhulu sighed. “Yes, I had my head all over the place and focused on finding Happiness. I have found some lead and my focus was on following it.”

Daliso: “I understand.”

Mthimkhulu: “I agree with you that we need to sit down and discuss this because we should face it heads on. We shouldn't postpone it any further.”

Daliso: “I agree with you and we can still buy some time in my son's house until you leave the hospital.”

Mthimkhulu: “I am leaving the hospital today and we don't have to delay things. I will call two of my sisters to come in my house and we can meet in my house by 1pm.”

Thembelihle: “That would be great because we haven't had breakfast baba.” She looked at Dalisu, they drove from KZN to get to Gauteng, they slept at the lodge before Johannesburg. They woke up to get to the hospital.

Daliso: “Hhayi, we will meet at 1pm in your house then.”

Mthimkhulu: “Mageba.” He gave his hand to Dalisu and they shared a handshake. They then shared their goodbyes after they have asked about Njabulo but Happiness disappointed them by telling them he wasn't with her. They left the hospital room. Mthimkhulu looked at Happiness and held her hand. “Don't worry mntanami I won't send you back to Mnotho.” He assured his daughter.

Happiness: “I am scared baba they will insult me.”

Mthimkhulu: “Don't be scared and go get this Doctor to come back with my discharge papers. I don't know what's keeping him. I will speak with your aunts to come to the house.” He said taking his phone and Happiness left the room to do what her father had told her to do...

She walking through the hallway to get to the Doctor's office where the nurse had told her the Doctor was. She saw Mnotho coming opposite her direction and she swallowed hard because she couldn't use any other direction. She felt her blood boiling and she wondered who might have told the royal family that she was back because Thembelihle had promised her that she wasn't going to tell them. And Ngcebo wanted to help her. Who told them? She wondered...

He was coming from the bathroom, his family had left the building and he asked that they wait for him. He stopped walking as Happiness was getting closer to him but he could see that she wasn't going to stop and the only way to get to her was if he blocks her way.

"I need to get to the Doctor's office." She told him as he was standing before her. She looked at him in the eye and kept a strong face.

Mnotho: "Why did you leave like that?"

Happiness: "Wasn't it what you always wanted? You were doing everything that you did because you wanted me to leave, right? I left then. Were you not happy that I left?"

Mnotho: "No, I wasn't happy. I am sorry for everything that I did to you."

Happiness: "Our families will speak and we will go our separately ways and I am no longer your wife, Mnotho."

Mnotho: "No, what do you mean-" he was broken off by his ringing phone and Happiness got the chance to walk away from him. Mnotho hissed and took out his phone from his pocket. The PI was calling, he clicked his tongue as he guessed that he must be calling to tell him what he already knew.

Mnotho: "You are late I have already found her."

Private investigator: "Yes, I heard she's back but I am calling with something even bigger. Where are you?"

Mnotho: "I am in Johannesburg and I can only meet you tonight if you are around Johannesburg."

Private investigator: "Okay, let's make it tonight, Prince."

Mnotho: "Thank you." he dropped the call and looked around... He left the hospital building with a heavy head...

S5 >> EPISODE 10

"I didn't know staying with you meant you'll be my chauffeur as well." Simthande said looking at Mntwana who was leaning by his car waiting for her. He'd set an alarm to wake him up because he didn't want her to walk and even though she'd told him that she won't walk. He didn't trust her.

Mntwana yawned. "I set an alarm to wake me because I didn't trust that you won't walk." He told her and opened the door to his side.

Simthande smiled and walked to the passenger side she couldn't believe how generous Mntwana was towards her and that made her believe that maybe he would want something in return. He knew that most men in this city didn't give out favours for free and she couldn't deny the fact that she'd been in that situation before, a situation where he had to date a man only because of the benefits she got from them. She never took it as prostitution but they were looking after her because she was dating them...

Simthande: "There's nothing not to trust in me."

Mntwana: "I won't talk much there because I don't know you that much and I think you know me by now."

Simthande: "No, I don't know you."

Mntwana: "Well, since you are not working today why don't we dedicate this dawn to get to know each other and maybe tomorrow I will take you to my workplace and you'll see what I do."

Simthande: "Why are you friendly towards me?"

Mntwana: "Friendly?"

Simthande: "Yes, I mean you have offered me a place to stay now you are fetching me from work. Do you perhaps want something?"

Mntwana chuckled. "Did your street friend who walked you from the club to your place asked for something in return for that?" he asked.

Simthande: "Not really but I used to give him food."

Mntwana: "He didn't bargain for that food right?"

Simthande: "Yes, he didn't."

Mntwana: "I want nothing from you but I want to be your friend. It's not right for a human being to be alone in the world without family or friends."

Simthande: "Okay, and we can use this time to get to know each other." She said before they got off the car as they have reached their destination. Mntwana was pleased to hear that. They got off the car...

"So, where do I start?" Simthande asked Mntwana and she placed the cushion before her thighs. She was wearing pyjamas and they were seated on the couch, her, with food and Mntwana with a pocket of chips.

Mntwana: "Start from the beginning."

Simthande: "I don't really know how my mother cheated because that got out before she died. I grew knowing that her husband was my father but before she died she told me that he wasn't my father. She'd already told him that I wasn't his daughter. The three of us had wondered where he was for three days and mom told us that he was away because of business but he only left because he was angry that his wife fooled him."

Mntwana: "Did he know that the first child wasn't his?"

Simthande: "Yes, he knew because mama got married to him when Musawenkosi was 4 years. She'd been with his father and they broke up then after a year she met her husband. They got married and had me a year after their wedding, they had my sister three years after me."

Mntwana: "Your stepfather was a rich man?"

Simthande: "He was an engineer and mom ran different business projects. We lived a comfortable life but that changed after my mother's death. Dad came back and he didn't show any resentment towards me. Life proceeded after mom's death and dad never abused me or isolate me in anyway even though my sister treated me differently when she learnt I wasn't her father's daughter. I didn't mind though."

Mntwana: "Your mother didn't tell you who your father was?"

Simthande: “No, she didn’t tell me she only told me that he was friends with her husband. When mom’s will, was read out to us, mom didn’t include me in her wealth. She left everything for my brother, and sister then her husband took her assets. They gave me nothing I was hurt, Mntwana.”

Mntwana: “I am sorry. But don’t you think she was forced?”

Simthande: “I don’t know but the following year when I was studying construction because I always loved it, my stepfather died and the three of us were left alone.”

Mntwana: “Where was extended family and your brother’s family?”

Simthande: “Both our parents were orphans and mom’s parents died because of her evil deeds that she never wanted us to know. My brother hated his father and he had no relationship with his siblings. He was studying medicine focusing on the heart because he wanted to be a heart Doctor and our younger sister was still in high school. My stepfather left nothing for me as well and he was the one paying for my studies.”

Mntwana: “It must be him who told your mother not to leave even a single cent for you. She was your mother.”

Simthande: “Yes, she was my mother and I even resembled her but she left me nothing in all her wealth. My siblings didn’t use their money wisely after my stepfather’s death. I would like to believe they were stressed. I have always been the responsible one amongst them. I told them to save but they didn’t listen to me. Musa was already stressed with school the death of our stepfather killed him. They gave me none of their money and it didn’t even take two years for the money run out. I had to step up now and tell them we should stick together I told Musa to continue studying and I would work to sustain us. We have lost the house, we moved in to a small flat. He had a sponsor. I had two years of construction but when I got a job there I worked with men in building, not in a management position because I had no qualification. But I made good money I was a bread winner, paying for food and rent, everything they needed they told me. Our brother finished and told us he needed to go abroad. We were happy for him thinking he would send money for us now and I was going to go back and finish my studies.”

Mntwana: “He forgot about you?”

Simthande: “Yes, he did, my sister wanted to do beauty, make up things and I calculated it wouldn’t be that difficult to take her to college. She studied until she was done and she had to move to Johannesburg to run up for a Scholarship competition that was going to take her to New York to study and be trained because she wanted to have her own make up line. I did everything to ensure she gets enough money for Johannesburg and sometimes I would date rich man just for them.” she wiped her tears and looked down.

Mntwana: “I am sorry, Simthande.”

Simthande: “And today, I am here working hard again to proceed with my studies. I quit working in construction because the Doctor told me to. I was told I could work in management positions but not building. My siblings are well known, especially my sister because she has her own make-up line. It’s like we didn’t even share one mother and I like to believe that I took from my father because my stepfather liked saying mom was selfish when

they fight. Maybe my father was a different man who wasn't selfish but kind. I don't know but I conquered storms that I didn't think I would."

Mntwana: "You did your part as a sister and that should make you sleep better at night. You don't owe them because you have lifted a burden off your shoulders their blood won't be asked in your hands. You are a strong woman and that's all that matters. And just like you have helped your siblings maybe God brought me to help you. What we need to do is look for funding for you and maybe next semester you'll go back and finish your studies. The only powerful weapon a woman can own is her education, Simthande."

Simthande: "But-"

Mntwana: "I am not saying I will pay for you but I will use my contacts and you'll go back to Varsity. I am only helping with shelter and food those things are not expensive. Don't refuse help."

Simthande: "Thank you." she smiled and sent her head down because maybe her prayers had been answered.

Mntwana: "I will go back to sleep because I am working tomorrow."

Simthande: "Thank you for listening. I have never liked talking about this but it helped me to talk about it today."

Mntwana: "It's okay. I will see you tomorrow."

Simthande nodded and Mntwana left the living room without asking who her mother was. Maybe if he asked he would know she was a daughter of a woman who'd tried to come between his parents...

"The family was worried about you MaMthimkhulu. Why did you leave your house without telling the family?" Zulu's elder aunt asked Happiness. They were seated inside Mthimkhulu's dining room, they have had snacks and tea along with small talks. Now, they were down to talk about what brought them together. On Happiness's side, it was her two aunts and her father and on Mnotho's side it was his parents, aunt elder, Dalingcebo and Danielle.

Happiness was worried about this family and even after her father had told her not to worry she was still worried.

Happiness: "I wasn't happy that's the reason I left."

Dalisu: "Don't summarise things MaMthimkhulu but make things easier for us by telling us exactly what was bothering you."

Happiness looked at Mnotho and he wasn't looking at her but he was looking down. He didn't know what was going to happen from today because he doubted Happiness was going to hide the truth.

Thembelihle: "Do you want Njabulo's father to leave the room?"

Mnotho raised his head and looked at Happiness then his mother. "I should leave?" He asked what he'd heard.

Happiness's aunt: "He can't leave mama ndlunkulu because this meeting is about both of them. I don't know if I am wrong."

Dalisu: "You are not wrong."

Thembelihle: "It's just that it doesn't look like she's free."

Aunt elder: "Who would be free after leaving her husband's house without telling anyone from the family."

Happiness: "No, he doesn't have to leave but--"

Mthimkhulu: "Ndabezitha, your son has been abusing my daughter."

Dalisu: "WHAT? MNOTHO!" He looked at him and Mnotho didn't raise his head to look at his father because he was ashamed of this. Dalisu stamped his fist on the dining table as he couldn't believe what he was hearing.

Mthimkhulu: "Yes, the marriage between them was arranged by me." the whole house was surprised and they reacted to it by making noise to show they were shocked. Mthimkhulu told them to keep quiet. "I believe the Prince never accepted the marriage. Happiness speak!" he shouted.

Happiness: "We would argue with him about this marriage and he would slap me telling me I am disrespecting him. He knew I couldn't break away from the marriage just like him but he treated me like garbage the minute Siphosami's mother came back for their son. I told his mother and she spoke to him after that he changed and treated me with silence. I didn't mind that it was better but as time went on, he abused me emotionally, physically and even sexually once. I wanted to break away from the marriage but my father wouldn't let me because I never told him the truth. I was scared he would kill him and his children wouldn't have a father. Even though he never loved my son, he never cared for him and not even once did he hold him. He only held him when he had to hit him. Njabulo was scared of him and I had to escape." There was total silence in the house after Happiness had told them all that. She didn't cry, today, she felt the anger but tears didn't come out of her eyes.

Aunt elder: "MaSthole, what happened? What went wrong when you raised Mnotho? What happened?"

Thembelihle: "Hhaybo!"

Dalingcebo: "Mom shouldn't be held responsible for our ill behaviour aunt because she has never told us to do things that MaMthimkhulu had just told us. I ask that she mustn't be questioned and blamed for anything." He said clearly as he could see that their father was beyond shocked and he wasn't going to speak with the white face that he had. He looked as if he'd seen a ghost and even widened his eyes looking at the table with his mouth sadly pouted not the normal pout. Dalingcebo saw the need to speak for his mother because he knew his great aunt with speaking anyhow.

Mthimkhulu: "I was wrong for arranging marriage for my daughter."

Happiness's aunt: "It's better because you can see that bhuti and Happiness's mother would have never allowed you to arrange marriage for Happiness." she shouted feeling angered by what she'd heard.

Happiness's aunt2: "He wanted what's best for her and what Happiness was supposed to do was to tell us about the abuse."

Mthimkhulu: "She told you why she didn't want to do that! And Ndabezitha." He looked at

Daliso and Dalisu turned his head to look at him. He didn't say anything to him. "My daughter has done her wrong as well which your son led her to do. She found a man and started seeing him."

"WHAT!" Mnotho was the first to react to the revelation followed by women (aunts) who made their sounds after Mnotho. Mnotho held the table tightly and taunted his jaw his eyes looking at Happiness and even the fact that she was looking at him still made him angrier than the fact that he had a wife who she was cheating on him all along?

Aunt elder: "How can you do such a disgraceful thing?"

Happiness: "I wanted to be loved as well just like my husband was loving his other two wives and he would remind me that every chance he got."

Aunt elder: "That's not an excuse!"

Thembelihle: "You are out of order now aunty. She was supposed to do what? Live in that house be miserable with my son abusing her."

Aunt elder: "MaSthole, don't even defend nonsense."

Happiness felt the anger that this woman was angry because she cheated but she wasn't this angry because of the abuse Mnotho did on her. "I have a child with this man and my child is Njabulo's twin sister." She felt the need to tell them this pretty fast and accept all the insults. "HHEYENI!" Every woman in the house chanted except MaSthole, she was looking at her husband who could hear everything that was being said but his mind and heart was still in the abuse. He was seated with them but he was thinking, he was thinking about ways to discipline him...

Danielle: "How can that be possible?" she asked the first question in the room. She'd been shocked of everything that was revealed here especially about the marriage being fake.

Happiness cheating just made her believe that she was not coming back into their family because men never forgive cheating...

Happiness looked at her once and didn't even give her an answer. "You have disgraced us Happiness. You were married out to a respectful family but you did this? You've disgraced our name and I am ashamed of you." The second aunt from Happiness's side casted the words out to Happiness.

Thembelihle: "You clearly didn't hear what Happiness told you!" she slapped the table making a sound that startled them. She was angry.

Aunt elder: "We heard but it doesn't excuse cheating and the whole family should be cleansed and that means she will have to pay for this. She has a child with another man and have been lying!"

Mthimkhulu: "Prince Mnotho, you are quiet today. What is it that you have to say because you've been talking to my daughter all your marriage life."

Mnotho "I don't deny everything I did to her and I don't have excuses for it. But I am shocked of what she'd just told us. I don't wish to say anything for now because I am still trying to process this." he said politely and his father stood up to leave them. Thembelihle looked at him as he left and she saw that her husband was disappointed beyond measure. She knew that Dalisu loved all their sons but he loved Mnotho the most amongst the others and

he'd never taken disappointment from Mnotho lightly. It always hit home to him, deep in his heart. Mntwana would be second from Mnotho, in Mlamuli, he saw himself, Banele and Ngcebo were more like their mother. And Ndabezihle and Dalingcebo took from his father, whom was their grandfather. He loved them all but it was different with Mnotho.

Thembelihle was the only one who noticed that, the only one who knew that along with MaCebekhulu...

Aunt elder: "There's nothing we should discuss further Mnotho but you must divorce MaMthimkhulu because we can never keep such a disgrace in-"

Happiness: "Mnotho and I, are already divorced I will do whatever is expected of me and I will leave."

Mnotho: "What do you mean we are divorced?" he raised his voice and he stood on his feet now because the anger was too much for him to suppress.

Dalingcebo: "Mnotho, don't act like this."

Mthimkhulu: "Let him be, Prince." He said and he did that because he wanted to see if Mnotho would dare to raise his hand at his daughter in his house.

Happiness: "You always wanted me to leave you and I knew you wouldn't sign the divorce papers without proof that my father allowed the divorce. I got you to sign the papers without realising it was divorce papers. We are divorced."

Mnotho looked at her with his chest rising and falling as his blood was boiling and he could feel the sweats forming in his forehead. He couldn't believe what Happiness had done to him. Why did she do this? Why!

Happiness was just looking at him without breaking the eye contact... Mnotho looked at his mother shortly and all Thembelihle saw hurt that she couldn't understand why it was in his eyes because he was supposed to be relieved. He pushed the chair back and he left the house...

Aunt elder: "We should just leave because there's nothing left to be said. We have enough and we will come back for what belongs to us. Our child will not be raised by another man and you should know that. Let's go!" she said looking at the others and they got up from the chairs.

"Happiness." Thembelihle called her out and placed her hand on her arm. Happiness had her head looking down. She looked up and stood on her feet to take a hug from Thembelihle.

"Don't worry, everything will be alright."

Happiness: "I don't want my child to be taken away from me. Who will raise him for me? I don't want that."

Thembelihle: "Don't cry, I will talk to Mnotho."

Mthimkhulu: "He will not take your child, my child and the law always puts the interest of the child first above any traditions."

Thembelihle: "I will go now."

Happiness: "You are driving to KZN?"

Thembelihle: "No, we will not go yet because we will have to meet again. I don't know what my husband will decide but we are going to Ngcebo's house now. I will call you."

Happiness: "Okay, thank you."

Mthimkhulu: "I am grateful for the love you've shown my daughter. She told me about the support you've given her."

Thembelihle smiled and nodded once, she then said her goodbyes and marched to her husband's car which was still in the yard along with the others except Mnotho's car.

Thembelihle stepped in at the back with Dalisu.

Thembelihle: "Drive us to Ngcebo's house." She instructed holding her husband's hand and she looked at him. He had his eyes closed. "Baba." She called him.

Dalisu: "Not now, MaSthole." He said quietly and Thembelihle kept still...

S5 >> EPISODE 11

He had his phone switched off because he was tired of ignoring calls from his mother and Danielle who were constantly calling him. He was inside a bar having whiskey while listening to his thoughts and all he was think about was the disappointment and hurt from Happiness. He was angry the most and he could recognise that he was hurt as well. He had hope that he was going to do anything and everything to get Happiness back. But now, that she'd went on and got them divorced without his knowledge that shuttered him. He wanted to give himself hope that he was going to be able to fight for her but the abuse he'd done on her and them being divorced made him lose all hope...

He was seated in this bar waiting for the PI to join him. And he turned to check if he was around, he turned to him.

Private Investigator: "I think you'll need another glass." He commented and sat on the chair next to Mnotho by the bar.

Mnotho: "This is my third glass."

Private Investigator: "Don't buy another one then. And why are you drinking this much because I haven't told you anything."

Mnotho: "Let's just say my first wife got us divorced without my permission and she has a child with another man-"

Private Investigator: "You don't have to stress about the father of her child because I have found him and he's the one who ordered the shoot on your wedding. I found out about him in Eastern Cape and his trusted friend was the one who told me all this about him because he's still angry that Lonwabo, that's the name of her boyfriend whom his friend is angry at because he neglected everything their gang had worked for just for Happiness."

"Huh!" He exclaimed looking at the pictures of Lonwabo with Happiness, and their daughter, in some pictures they were with Njabulo. He had one picture of Lonwabo with his gang.

"Happiness cheated on me with a gangster!" He stamped his fist on the counter.

Private investigator: "Yes, but not just a typical one, he was a high tech gangster. Most activities were done by computer, they hardly used guns and his friend told me he loved

your wife dearly he's the one who helped her divorce you. And he loved your son as well. They've once came to KZN to have you beaten because you did something to hurt Happiness. He was angry that Lonwabo betrayed them for a woman and that's the only reason he told me all this. Lonwabo is here in Johannesburg and I have the name of the hotel he resides in it is written down for you in the envelope."

Mnotho: "Please, send me your invoice. You have helped beyond with this information and what happens to this-"

Private Investigator: "That's not for me to know because I have done my part, prince. I am glad that I have done everything and finished it."

Mnotho gave him his hand and they shared a hand shake. Mnotho then paid for their drinks and they left the bar. Mnotho had the pictures in his hand, his wallet and his car keys...

When he got inside the car he took his phone and switched on the phone. He knew the person who was going to help him defeat this man. There was no one beside him...

"Nkosana Mnotho." Thabani, Danielle's uncle accepted Mnotho's call.

Mnotho: "Baba, unjani?"

Thabani: "I am fine and how are you?"

Mnotho: "I am fine. Do you remember when you told me you'll do your part and search for the people who shoot at my wedding?"

Thabani: "Yes, I remember that and the police did that for us."

Mnotho: "They didn't get the right culprits."

Thabani: "What do you mean?"

Mnotho: "Do you know a man who's called Lonwabo? I am told that he's a high tech gangster that resides in the Eastern Cape." He asked because Thabani had told him that he wanted the culprits found and killed before the police finds them. But Mnotho told him that they were not going to do that if the police got to them first. They agreed on that.

Thabani: "Lonwabo?" there was a few silence from his side as he was still thinking if the name rang a bell. It was easier to know a gang member or leader if they were called by their gangster name. "If you have his picture can you please describe him for me." he requested.

Mnotho lifted the picture that he'd placed on the car seat and he described Lonwabo's physical appearances to Thabani.

Thabani: "Oh! I know that man. Where's he? Is he the one – but why am I asking I am sure he used gangsters' ways of covering up their crimes. They would ask poor men to take falls for them in return that they will look after their families. And most men agree to that." He told Mnotho as if he was speaking about something he'd heard of, something he never did.

Mnotho: "Tsk! What will we do? He's in Johannesburg."

Thabani: "I will come that side and that mean you shouldn't leave. I will send my men forward to find him and we have a talk with him."

Mnotho: "Thank you."

Thabani: "Ntandokazi is my younger brother's daughter and any man who dares to hurt her. They will answer to me first!"

Mnotho: "It's good to hear that. We will talk."

Thabani: "Thank you for trusting me with this." he said and they shared goodbyes. Mnotho placed his phone down and he drove to Ngcebo's house...

"I said we are all cleaning this mess you've created. Where are you going now?" Nandipha shouted at her daughters and Palesa's son who were with her inside the kitchen. They have messed the floor with the food that they were eating. Every time when Palesa's son was in the house they would sit on the floor when eating because the girls only had five dining table. Nandipha would want them to feel the same and she would lay the blanket down and they would eat on the floor.

"SHORRY!" They all chanted and looked at Nandipha who wasn't giving them instructions on what to do... They've eaten their food and left the mess on the floor on the food they were eating. When Palesa came inside the kitchen walking on the side they were in she wasn't aware of the dirty floor. She slipped and fell. Now, she was upstairs taking a shower. Nandipha had given their nanny some time to herself because they were in the house with Palesa.

Nandipha: "You've hurt your aunt and I know that it's the five of you who convinced Phemelo to be naughty." She pointed the girls.

Nongcebo: "No!"

Nandipha: "No, what!" she looked at her and stood as she'd finished cleaning the floor. She didn't want them to run off because they were going to mess up somewhere else in the house.

Nongcebo: "We didn't!"

Phemelo: "You did!"

Sisters: "NO!"

Nandipha: "Shut up, all of you!" she shouted and clapped her hands as they were debating now against Phemelo alone. "Run along go up to your room. I am behind you." she showed them the way out and they ran off. Nandipha went out to call Thula to come and help her with bathing them...

MaZungu was the one who opened the gate and door for the Zulu family, the time was just after 6pm and Nandipha was upstairs bathing the children. She greeted them and lead them to the lounge.

Thembelihle: "Where's Nandipha and Ngcebo?"

Dalingcebo: "Can't you hear the noise upstairs, mama?" he asked and looked up the stairs as he could hear the children's noise.

Thembelihle: "I can hear it that's why I am asking about their parents."

MaZungu: "The prince is not home and I think Nandipha would know where he is. She's bathing the children. I will go to the kitchen to prepare tea."

Thembelihle: "No, don't worry, we are full. I don't know if you want something aunty." She looked at her because she knew that she hardly said 'No' to food.

Aunt: "You can give me some cakes if you have them and tea." She said and MaZungu left to do what she'd been asked.

Dalingcebo: "We will wait on Nandipha to divide the rooms? I want to take a shower and get some rest." He looked at his mother.

Thembelihle: "We didn't think this through he has two guestrooms now?"

Aunt: "MaSthole, Dalingcebo and his brother will sleep here and I will sleep in the other room with MaNkosi and you will take the other room with your husband."

Dalingcebo: "Hawu kodwa! The couch."

Thembelihle laughed. "The guestroom upstairs has two beds and you will take the mattress to Ngcebo's snooker room. You'll be comfortable there."

Dalingcebo: "That's better I will tell you when I say you should come up to your bedroom MaZulu and MaNkosi."

Ladies: "Okay." They said and he left them with his bag.

Thembelihle looked at her husband who was quiet on the couch. "Baba, you will sit here or you will go and rest?" She asked.

Dalису: "I will see the children first. You can take our bags." He replied and Thembelihle got up with their bags leaving aunt trying to speak to Dalису about not stressing himself too much about Mnotho...

Dalingcebo found a bag of a woman in one of the beds in the guestroom. He left the bedroom to get to the bathroom to pee without touching the bag that was on the bed... As he was approaching the bathroom upstairs he saw Palesa walking out of the bathroom wearing a gown with a doek on her head. He looked back and he didn't see anyone around.

Dalingcebo: "Hawu, sawubona, nkosazana."

Palesa: "Sawubona, eh," she wasn't expecting that Ngcebo's brother would be in the house because Nandipha had told her that they were going to be alone for the night because Ngcebo was only coming back in the morning. He'd gone to Durban because of work.

Dalingcebo: "I am here with my family. We were here to see my brother's wife's father who's been admitted to the hospital."

Palesa: "Oh! I doubt that Nandipha knew about this because she wasn't going to ask me to come over if she knew."

Dalingcebo: "I don't think so. My brother is not in the house?" he asked looking at her face and he recognised that even though her face had a few dark marks of the pimples. She looked extremely beautiful and she had dimples that appeared when she spoke certain words and Dalingcebo wondered how they would appear when she was laughing. She was still dark but no longer slim like before, she had a good body shape.

Palesa: "No, he's not in the house."

Dalingcebo chuckled and moved closer to her, Palesa looked down at herself wondering what he was chuckling about. He only sent his hand to her earlobe to remove the white foam she'd felt by mistake. "You don't bath thoroughly, hey?" He asked and Palesa laughed holding her mouth. Dalingcebo looked at her and he confirmed that her dimples made her more beautiful when she was laughing. He smiled... They didn't see that someone who was coming up the stairs was looking at them as Palesa was laughing after Dalingcebo had touch her ear to remove the foam.

Palesa: "Thanks. I will go to the bedroom."

Dalingcebo: "I left my bag there because I came up here with means to shower. I didn't know you were here."

Palesa: "I will take the bag and go to Nandipha's room."

Dalingcebo: "Okay, but would it be a problem if I ask for your number?"

Palesa: "Ha! No, I can't do that. Please, go to the bathroom." She said and walked away from him... Dalingcebo turned to look at her with a smile on his face and that only disappeared when he saw his mother looking at him. He proceeded with his journey to get to the bathroom...

"Sorry, we ntombazane." Thembelihle called out Palesa who was at the bedroom door now opening it. She stopped from getting inside the bedroom. She waiting for Thembelihle who was coming up to her. "Sawubona."

Palesa: "Yebo, unjani?"

Thembelihle: "I am fine and how are you? Who are you?"

Palesa: "I am fine. I am Palesa, Nandipha's friend."

Thembelihle: "What are you doing here?"

Palesa: "I came to visit Nandipha because we wanted to plan our children's birthday party. They share the same month."

Thembelihle: "Oh, you know my son and do you know he's married to your friend's cousin to be exact?"

Palesa: "Yes, I know. Did I do something wrong, maybe?"

Thembelihle shook her head and didn't speak further. She walked to the bathroom where the children's noise was. Palesa proceeded to the room to take her bag and she went to Nandipha's bedroom...

"Eish! Girl, I didn't know his family was coming over here." Nandipha told Palesa who was moisturising her body in her bedroom.

Palesa: "It's okay, we will go and you'll come to my house."

Nandipha: "Hhaybo! No! You won't go because we have plans. You'll sleep here with me I will take Ngcebo's side and you will take mine."

Palesa laughed. "And what's wrong if I take his side of the bed?" she asked.

Nandipha: "Ha! Akayona indoda yethu phela." (She's not our man.) she replied and removed the bedcovers laughing along with Palesa. "We will discuss the party in here and you can stay here if you are not comfortable with going down to them. But Phemelo is with the girls he won't separate from them."

Palesa: "I will stay here and search for what we've spoken about."

Nandipha: "Okay." She moved out of the room to get clean bedcovers in her closet. She was taken by surprise without even being informed they were coming over and now, she had to run up and down for them...

The children ran down the stairs to get to their grandfather. Thembelihle was walking behind them after she'd helped Thula dress them up when Nandipha left to speak to Palesa. "MKHULU!" They were screaming and laughing at the same time. Phemelo was walking

behind them feeling out place now because he wasn't used to these faces. He didn't know them. Ntokomalo was the one who looked back at him she ran back to him and held his hand.

Ntokomalo: "Ashambe umkhulu wakho nawe!" (Let's go, he's your grandfather too.) She said delightedly to him as if she could feel what he was feeling.

Dalisu's face lit up when he saw the children and his heart that was still tight loosened up instantly. "Naba oMaZulu!" (Here are my granddaughters) he chanted and lifted Nongcebo off the floor because he knew they would always have encouraged that he takes the younger one. Dalisu would normally see the children at Nkosazana's palace. Or if Thembelihle asked they go together to see them in Ngcebo's house.

Buhle: "Unjani mkhulu, buka umngani wethu lo uMelo!" (How are you? This is our friend, Phemelo) she told her grandfather and placed her hand on Phemelo's shoulder who was standing next to her and Ntokomalo.

Others: "EHE! MELO!" they supported calling Phemelo's name in a short cut, a shortcut that they pronounced as a Zulu name.

Dalisu: "Hawu, sawubona, Melo!" he greeted him and gave him his hand for a handshake. Phemelo smiled and looked at Ntokomalo, she nodded her head. Phemelo gave Dalisu his hand and they handshake. The girls clapped hands... Thembelihle and aunt who were in the lounge, smiled as the children were adorable together...

"Can I speak to you before you go to bed?" Thembelihle requested to Nandipha who was inside the kitchen cleaning up after dinner. They've all gone to bed and Mnotho was back home. Palesa had been down with her to help her as she'd sent her a text that she was alone in the kitchen. She left the room when Danielle joined Nandipha to help her.

"Can we speak about this later because I don't even understand it?" Nandipha told Ngcebo that she was speaking to on the phone with earphones plugged inside her ears.

Ngcebo: "What's so difficult about what I am saying, babe?"

Nandipha: "I will call you when I am done here."

Ngcebo: "Okay." He said and hung up the call.

Nandipha removed the earphones from her ear and she followed Thembelihle who was walking away from her... She sat down on the single couch and Thembelihle told her to sit next to her.

They sat on the couch and faced each other. "I want us to speak about what happened, last night." Thembelihle introduced.

Nandipha: "Last night?"

Thembelihle: "Yes, when you called me and asked for Mnotho's number, then the same night he comes to us to tell us he's been told Happiness is here. Did you call him and tell him that?"

Nandipha: "Yes, I got my brother to tell him."

Thembelihle: "Why did you do that? Who gave you the right to do that because Ngcebo told me that he told you not to tell anyone?"

Nandipha: "Nobody gave me the right to tell him."

Thembelihle: “Why did you tell him then, answer that!”

Nandipha: “I told him because my daughter was sick because Ngcebo was keeping quiet with this. She had high fever and she couldn’t take the food down she was crying none stop.”

Thembelihle: “Didn’t Ngcebo tell you that he was working on something and you shouldn’t tell anyone about this? Didn’t he tell you that?”

Nandipha: “He did.”

Thembelihle: “And you still went against his word because you couldn’t trust him when he told you Buhle was going to be alright.”

Nandipha: “I am sorry.” she said without speaking any further because she didn’t want to argue with her. She didn’t want to say everything that she was feeling and that was ringing inside her mind now as she was speaking to her about this. She actually couldn’t believe that she was speaking to her saying everything she was saying. Asking all the questions she was asking.

Thembelihle: “Don’t rush to say sorry because I am disgusted by the fact that you can only think for yourself and not for others’ wellbeing. You didn’t care about what will happen to Happiness but you cared about yourself and your child. That meant to hell with the others.”

Nandipha kept quiet and looked at her fingers that were rubbing one another but she could feel her heart tearing apart. “I am speaking to you! Why are you quiet now because I am sure you were not quiet when Ngcebo was speaking to you?” she shouted.

Nandipha: “I didn’t know that I was supposed to make my child a sacrifice for Happiness. Ngcebo didn’t tell me that. I am not sure if you’ve had your child’s body hot in a way she would be sweating and on top of that she would vomit everything that you give her. She would also cry because she’s hungry-”

Thembelihle: “Don’t tell me all about that because it wasn’t something that was going to last by today Buhle would have been fine without you having to sell Happiness out because you want to save what’s yours. It’s better for you, you have a mother who can speak for you even when you are wrong but she has a father who put her in an abusive marriage and you knew that. But still, you went on and made means to push her back to that hell.”

Nandipha: “I said I am sorry for doing that and I don’t have any other words to say because it’s easy for all of you to speak just like Ngcebo was speaking yesterday. Buhle and her sisters are my children and I don’t care if I am considered selfish for protecting them. Fine, I am selfish then and I would choose them above any other person in this world. If that’s a sin, it’s okay let it be my sin. You were not here when I was holding my child vomiting food and asking for more food you didn’t feel my pain but now, you are saying everything you are saying to me because I had to sacrifice my child for Happiness. And if Buhle died I am pretty sure that you would have come here crying louder as if you cared-” she got a hot slap from Thembelihle as she went on to speak everything that she was suppressing in her heart.

Thembelihle: “Don’t speak to me like that!” she shouted at her and pointed her with her forefinger. Nandipha sent her head down without holding her hot cheek. She cried fresh tears. “It’s okay for you because you are here in this house you have my son loving you and going all out to give everything to you. He even goes against his own family just for you! He

fights his brothers and father just for you and you, you are the one who put him in this position of always having to fight for you. You did that when you aborted his child and from there he always had to fight for you. You have everything here, a man who worships you and the children to warm your house. And yet, you wanted another woman back in hell that Ngcebo told you about. Everything should go well for you and your children it doesn't matter what happens to others. What you did last night disgusted me. Uyanginyanyisa nje, uyangicasula. Ududwa ukuthi uyathandwa wena ngakho ke abanye abantu akumele bethandwe bejabule. Huh?" (You disgust me and make me angry. What's pleasing to you is that you are loved and so other people shouldn't be loved and be happy?) she shouted at her and lifted her chin up as she was only looking to her head without hearing a response from her. Nandipha was crying without making any sounds and as she had her head looking down she didn't want to give her power by showing her that she was hurting her. Thembelihle clicked her tongue and let go of her chin. She got up from the couch. "Happiness would have never done what you did to her if she was in your position. She was able to save Mnotho only for his children's sake. But for you, it's a different story. You should learn from her, she's a strong woman. Uzikhiphile wena kimi. Tsk!" she said looking down at her. Nandipha didn't say anything at all. Thembelihle left her. Nandipha got up as well and rushed up the stairs to get to her bedroom.

"What's wrong?" Palesa asked and jumped out of the bed as she saw Nandipha stepping inside the bedroom crying. Nandipha didn't answer her but she threw her body on her and Palesa hugged her. Nandipha cried letting it all out as Palesa held her tighter. "Hey, don't cry like this." She held her tighter without letting her go and she pressed her teeth not to cry with her.

Nandipha moved away from her when she was calm. Palesa placed her hand on wet face.

"Go and wash your face." She said.

Nandipha nodded and she went to the bathroom. She first took painkillers as she had a headache from crying. She went to the tap and drank the pill. She then washed her face, she dried it and didn't moisten it. She went to her closet to change into her night dress. She took her phone that had Ngcebo's five missed calls. She took a pyjama top for Palesa...

"Wear my top, ha! You want to sleep in my bed with your breasts." She gave Palesa the top as she'd taken off the one that was wet because of her tears. She tried to joke with her just loosen up but Palesa knew her friend and so, she didn't laugh but she took the top. Nandipha moved to Ngcebo's side of the bed and she looked at her phone as it rang.

Palesa: "You won't answer it?"

Nandipha: "No, anyone who knows my voice could hear that I have been crying. Let's work on planning the party."

Palesa: "Why were you crying that much?"

Nandipha: "Nothing, I was shouted at for calling Ngcebo's brother and told him about this wife just to save my child. It's nothing, really, let's work."

Palesa: "Tsk! Yeah." She said and took her laptop and her bag. She took out two bags of chips and sweets she'd saved up for them.

Nandipha: “Ha! Palesa, I am dieting!”

Palesa: “Don’t be too forward you’ll eat here with me.” she said opening her packet of chips. She took about three and she held Nandipha’s mouth. Nandipha tried to suppress her mouth for her not to feed her but she laughed. Palesa got a chance to send chips over to her mouth. They both laughed.

Nandipha: “Bitch!”

Palesa: “You too!” she pushed her by her shoulder and Nandipha did the same. They kept pushing each other until Palesa almost fell. They laughed. “And what should our children do if we play like them?” she asked.

Nandipha giggled. “Let’s work tu! You know we will wake up if they cry.”

Palesa: “Yeah.”

Nandipha: “Thank you for being here, hey. I would have cried myself to sleep if you weren’t here.” She said to her.

Palesa: “We’ve got each other!” she gave her a fist and they did a fish bump. They then got to work on their children’s party...

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She smiled seeing him inside the kitchen he was standing before the kettle side stirring what she couldn’t see. Her smile vanished as she thought of his mother’s words that ‘she was pleased by the fact that she was loved and she only wanted that.’ She wanted to walk up to him, slowly without him hearing her footsteps and startle him before laughing but her brain was telling her otherwise. It was telling her she would never have a healthy relationship with him because of everything that was going on around them. It was telling her she deserved a healthy marriage and with Ngcebo she wasn’t going to achieve that. With him, she couldn’t even do things and make certain decisions for her children because she was going to be considered selfish by his parents, if not, one of his brothers and even him as he’d stated that the night before the previous one but he never apologised. But maybe he didn’t have to apologise. Her brain was telling her all these things as she was standing by the island looking at his back.

She chose to listen to her heart, the heart that loved him and still wanted to hold on to him. She smiled as she saw Ngcebo moving his head without any music’s presence with him.

“Enhlizweni yami,

K’kholesakh’ isginci” Nandipha sang shortly and Ngcebo turned to look at her. He knew that, that was her. She stuck out her tongue for him and he laughed.

“Wang’buka wahleka (Ngcebo laughed louder)

Yini awung’ bhilivi? (She moved her toes towards him rhythmically as if there were instruments)

Nguwe wena wedwa

I-ex yakho inebhadi

Slima ngempela (They both sang that part and laughed)

How could she let you go wayephuzeni ngampela?” She made sounds with clicking her fingers and she moved, dancing closer to him singing the chorus of the song and Ngcebo was just smiling looking at her.

Nandipha: “Sawubona!” she giggled and greeted him with her face looking up at him and Ngcebo looking down at her with a smile. Her whole body was leaning on him and Ngcebo’s back was on the kitchen cupboard.

Ngcebo: “Sawubona” he greeted her and gave her a soft kiss on her lips.

“Ngathi ngak’bhek’ emehlweni

Ngavel’ ngabon’ uthando

Inhliziyo yami ikhetha wena

Amehlo ami ajonge wena

Gcwala, ngiyagcwala

Baby you’re the one for me” Ngcebo sang looking down at Nandipha and he rubbed his nose on her nose forcing her to laugh as he repeated ‘Ngiyak’gcwala ngiyagcwala’ part. Ngcebo hugged her and they laughed.

Ngcebo: “How are you, my putsununu!”

Nandipha giggled. “I am fine and how are you, my Rasta man?” She asked.

Ngcebo: “I am fine. I was trying to make some instant porridge here. You are the first to wake up in here?”

Nandipha: “Yes, I had to wake up when Palesa was leaving.”

Ngcebo: “She slept here?”

Nandipha: “Yes, she slept with me in our bed but she slept in my side of the bed and I slept in your side of the bed.”

Ngcebo laughed. “And why is that important?” he asked.

Nandipha: “Ha! What if she masturbates-”

Thembelihle cleared her throat before Nandipha could finish up the sentence to Ngcebo who was already laughing. She’d been standing by the entrance of the kitchen looking at them, she walked in on them when Ngcebo was singing to Nandipha. A part of her smiled but she stopped smiling when she heard Nandipha’s laughter because it reminded her of what she did to Happiness. And she had been stressed the previous night because she didn’t know what was going to happen to Happiness and her children. She had to worry and have a sleepless night because of Nandipha who was selfish.

Nandipha moved away from Ngcebo, she stood beside him. Ngcebo stopped laughing as he recognised his mother’s presence.

Thembelihle: “Sanibona.” She greeted with a smile looking at Ngcebo who’d moved from where he was standing to get to his mother. He greeted Thembelihle back along with Nandipha... Nandipha turned on to the sink and she began washing the girls’ bottles that she’d left on the sink.

Ngcebo: “How are you, mama?”

Thembelihle hugged him. “I am fine and how are you?” She asked holding his shoulders softly and she did what she liked doing best, looking at him from head to the toe. She looked back up at him.

Ngcebo: “I am fine mama and how are you?”

Thembelihle: “I am fine and it’s good to see you. How did you work last night?”

Ngcebo: “I worked pretty well and now, I am back home.”

Thembelihle: “That’s good. Come, let’s go to the lounge.” she requested holding his hand.

Ngcebo stopped her and she looked at him.

Ngcebo: “I will take my porridge and come to you.” he said and Thembelihle nodded walking away. Ngcebo moved back to get his porridge. “I will see you, babe. I haven’t forgotten that we didn’t finish our conversation last night. And you didn’t even call me back nor answer my calls.” He reminded her.

Nandipha: “Ngcebo, go, please.”

Ngcebo: “Hawu, are you trying to get rid of me now?”

Nandipha: “No, but don’t keep your mother waiting.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, but I am still on to the decision I made last night. We will get married this weekend and I will tell mom about it, now.”

Nandipha: “No! Don’t tell her-”

“NGCEBO!” Thembelihle called out his name from the lounge. Nandipha pushed Ngcebo away to get him to leave the kitchen before she was blamed for that. Ngcebo ran off to get to his mother... Nandipha looked at the watch in Ngcebo’s phone and she wasn’t sure if she was going to be able to go to the gym. She didn’t know what they were going to say if she’s not home when they have breakfast and the children would be with Thula. She had to stay for today but she needed to inform her trainer because time was passing by pretty fast. She finished washing the girls’ bottles and decided they will eat porridge this morning for their breakfast...

“Do you think it’s a good thing that her daughter’s father is here? She told me not to worry about the children because they’re safe with his sister.” Thembelihle asked Ngcebo whom she was sitting with in the lounge talking about the situation that Happiness was facing.

Ngcebo: “I don’t think it’s a good idea especially now that everyone knows about his existence they might find him.”

Thembelihle: “Ey! Why did you even tell Nandipha about this?”

Ngcebo: “Hawu, what kind of a question is that, mama? Nandipha is my partner and there’s nothing wrong if I tell her things.”

Thembelihle: “No, you were not supposed to tell her that Happiness is here.”

Ngcebo: “I didn’t tell her directly but that rose up from the argument.”

Thembelihle: “I am just sad about the children the most, they will have to be separated now? And Nonjabulo who grew up with her father. How will she cope if her mother comes back to stay with her father?”

Ngcebo: “I don’t know I tried my best to help.”

Thembelihle: “And your fiancée ruined that!”

Ngcebo: “Mama, please! What’s done is done and Happiness was eventually going to have to face this situation.”

Thembelihle: “Oh, it’s like that now. You speak like that.”

Ngcebo: “No, but you won’t blame Nandipha for something that was beyond her control. And I wasn’t sure how long it was going to take for them to move.”

Thembelihle: “I am sure by today they would have done that but they didn’t get that chance since Nandipha went on and sold Happiness out.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, that’s my cue.” He said and got up to leave her because he didn’t want to argue with her about this. He’d said enough to Nandipha on Sunday and he didn’t want to sit down with his mother and speak about this further because he’d realised that he was insensitive and Nandipha was right what he was doing was sacrificing his children...

Thembelihle: “You know that I am right and you don’t want to admit that. And I beg you not to turn out to be like Nandipha and think for yourself only.” She said looking at him as he walked away.

Ngcebo stopped walking and he walked back to his mother. “She wasn’t selfish. She was right to do everything she did to save our child and I don’t know what she can do or say if she can learn that I have seen it twice, Buhle being sick until she dies and Similo follows after her until no one is left then a face of an old man would appear to tell me I can stop this by telling the family where their daughter in-law is with her children. She wouldn’t look at me the same. I don’t want to lose her she means a lot to me-” He said to his mother who was looking at him. He was feeling slightly angry that she was putting the blame on Nandipha because Nandipha had balls to do what he couldn’t. Ngcebo turned back quickly as he heard the sound of something breaking. It was Nandipha breaking two of her children’s bottle when she was trying to walk faster to get to the stairs.

Ngcebo: “What’s wrong?” he rushed to her as she was down picking the broken pieces together.

Nandipha: “They slip off.” she replied with her left hand pressing the other three bottles tight on her belly. Ngcebo rushed off to get the mop to clean the floor... “I will clean it up.” She said taking the mop from him and she moped the milk while Ngcebo gathered the bottles’ pieces on to the dustpan.

Ngcebo: “It wasn’t a good idea to buy these type of bottles.”

Nandipha: “They’re not glass bottles.”

Ngcebo: “I can see but pure plastic wouldn’t have broken.” He commented and looked up at her. Nandipha didn’t say anything but she went down to take the three bottles. She marched back to the kitchen to make milk for the two bottles that she’d broken.

“Do you have other bottles you’ll use?” He asked standing behind her.

Nandipha: “Yes, did you see Thula going up?”

Ngcebo: “No, but I don’t think they are up there’s no cry coming from their room.” he replied looking at her and she nodded. He didn’t know whether to ask if she heard what he was talking about with his mother or she didn’t. “Babe, did you drop the bottles because you heard what I was talking about with mom in the lounge?” he saw it best he asks.

Nandipha: "I was rushing to get to the stairs and they slip off."

Ngcebo kept quiet not so convinced. "Please, don't even think of doing what you said to me on Sunday if you heard what I said. I wouldn't want to live here without my family, and you and the girls would be in some place I don't know. I would turn the world upside to find you."

Nandipha: "What are you talking about?"

Ngcebo: "I am just saying I am sorry about what happened Saturday." He changed the content of his statement and he left the paranoia. He was worried about something he didn't know if Nandipha heard him or not. But she wouldn't leave to go across the galaxies of the world alone how was she going to sustain herself and the girls. Now, he was underestimating her after everything she'd done to fend for herself. Argh! There was nothing to worry about. He told himself as Nandipha left the kitchen with five bottles...

"Sawubona, baba unjani?" Mnotho greeted his father who was seated alone in the lounge having tea. The women were inside the kitchen preparing breakfast while the lady of the house was upstairs bathing the children. Dalingcebo was still upstairs sleeping, he was the only one sleeping.

Daliso didn't greet Mnotho back but he just looked at him shortly and focused on the tea that he was drinking.

Mnotho: "Baba, I am sorry for everything that I did and I know-"

Daliso: "Go get me my phone it's in the bedroom." He instructed him and pointed the bedroom's direction. Mnotho got up and he marched to get the phone that Daliso had requested...

"Go, I want to make a phone call." Daliso told him after taking the phone from his hand.

Mnotho then left the house to have a peace of mind outside.

Royal servant: "Ndabezitha." He answered Daliso's phone call respectfully.

Daliso: "How are you, nsizwa?"

Servant: "I am fine, Mageba and how are you?"

Daliso: "We are trying. I need you to fix that room for me."

Servant: "The room?"

Daliso: "Yes, fix my old disciplinary room and fix its light, you'll get everything inside, the bench and everything else. It should be clean."

Servant: "The purpose of the room, Ndabezitha?"

Daliso: "For my son."

Servant: "Ndabezitha!"

Daliso: "Thank you." he said and hung up, he'd concluded that this was the only way to discipline Mnotho for abusing his wife. And that way he will never do it again to any of his wives...

"Today, we all going back home as we have come here." Daliso announced and looked at his family members. They were having breakfast on the dining table, all of them were present on the table and the girls were seated on their table eating the breakfast that everyone was eating. Their grandmother decided they were not going to eat the porridge but breakfast

everyone was eating...

Thembelihle: "I thought we still have to go back to Mthimkhulu's house."

Aunt elder: "Yes, Dalisu, it's important that we go back."

Dalisu: "No, we will do that some other time. The only thing that MaMthimkhulu needs to do MaSthole is bring back the children wherever she left them. And she must not think of leaving again."

Thembelihle looked at Nandipha's direction, she was seated far down on the table facing her children and her eyes were on them, guarding them as they eat. Thembelihle looked back at her husband. "Does that mean you'll take Njabulo from her?" She asked.

Dalisu: "We are not making any decisions now."

Mnotho: "Baba, I ask that I stay behind because I have a lot of things that I need to fix here." He told his father.

Dalisu: "I want you back home, Mnotho not here. We have things that we need to fix as well and that means you'll go home with us."

Mnotho: "I won't stay longer baba. I am begging you."

Thembelihle: "What is it that needs you here desperately?"

Mnotho: "I can't say mama but I really need to be here, baba." He looked at him and gave him a desperate eye even though he could see that his father meant business when he said he needed him home.

Dalisu: "Okay, but when you finish whatever you'll be doing here you'll not delay anything but you'll come home."

Mnotho: "Thank you."

Dalisu: "Ngcebo, you'll stay with grace with the children we will be heading back home after breakfast even though we didn't find you here yesterday."

Ngcebo: "Thank you, I was working."

Aunt elder: "Uyasebenza lo mfazi wakho. Incane ingane kodwa nje ikhaya enihlala kulo lihle, lifudumele nezingane ziyaphila. Awu, siyabonga, MaZondi." (Nandipha works, she's young but the house you live in is beautiful and warm and the children are healthy. Thank you, MaZondi.) she looked at Nandipha who was sitting next to her and she placed her hand on her shoulder. She didn't know that this complement she was giving to her was getting through the wrong way to Thembelihle.

Nandipha smiled and looked down. "Thank you." She said back and looked at Ngcebo last he was looking at her.

Ngcebo: "Thank you, MaZulu for recognising her efforts." He said to her with a smile and his great aunt nodded once with a smile.

Mnotho: "Uhm, as we are all here and even though you were not there Nandipha, I know that Ngcebo told you that I had accused you wrongfully." He looked at Nandipha seeing the need that he apologise like Ngcebo had requested and like he'd accused them before the family it was best that he apologise before them. He couldn't sleep last night as he felt that his sins were a heavy load on his shoulders and it was a right thing that he starts making amends with people he wronged. He needed redemption and he figured he could begin by

apologising to Nandipha because he'd done that to Ngcebo.

Nandipha: "Yes, he told me."

Mnotho: "I know that hurt you. I am sure."

Nandipha: "Yes, I was hurt and stressed."

Mnotho: "I am sorry for that and I don't want to make any excuse for it. It was wrong of me to accuse you without any proof. I had my head mixed up and I was confused and I guess one always feels better when he finds someone to blame or accuse of things happening to him. The truth is that I didn't act like an adult and the shoot no way similar to what I was basing the accusation on. And for that, I am sorry."

Nandipha: "I accept your apology. Thank you." she said and Mnotho nodded his head once, he felt his heart feeling a little lighter...

Dalisu: "Your brother is right Ngcebo it wasn't right of us as adults to accuse you like that. Your brother was in the hospital along with our daughter in-law and my brother had died. Our hearts were hurting and angry. Sorry son."

Ngcebo: "Let's put it behind us."

Aunt elder: "Siyabonga ke. Sesiyohamba kahle nathi." She shared the gratitude and others made supporting sounds...

Dalingcebo: "On that note then I should say sorry as well bhuti for insulting you and speaking the way I did that day I was angry and I spoke out of anger."

Mnotho: "It's okay and like Ngcebo said, let's put it behind us."

Others: "Yeah!" they then got up to leave...

Ngcebo: "Why are you leaving so soon like adults?" he asked Dalingcebo who was left in the dining table with him. Nandipha was standing by the girls.

Dalingcebo: "I am an adult or ngiyini kanti? Ubona ngiyintwana."

They laughed with Ngcebo. "You look like that or maybe you see a different person when you stand before the mirror." He commented.

Dalingcebo looked back at Nandipha and she was getting the girls off their seats. "I saw Palesa on Monday." He told him lowering his voice.

Ngcebo: "Hhayi, Dalingcebo!" he pointed him with his fork.

Dalingcebo: "Okay, fine, I will keep it on the low but I want her."

Ngcebo: "No, why don't you want someone else?"

"You can speak louder now I am leaving and stop whispering, men don't gossip." Nandipha told the brothers leaving the dining table and they laughed.

Dalingcebo: "She's gone. I like her and I want her."

Ngcebo: "Udakiwe you should give me signals whenever you are coming over here so that I will tell him to run up the hills because you are married. We don't want your wife telling her she won't be a wife." He reminded him what he'd told him Nontobeko said to her.

Dalingcebo: "That won't happen. Ngcebo, I won't break her heart."

Ngcebo: "Hha! Voetsek, Dalingcebo, ushela mina phela manje." (You are approaching me now) he swore, Dalingcebo looked at him and they laughed.

"Hhaybo! You two can laugh together again?" Thembelihle asked with her hands on her

waist she was looking at them with a smile on her face. She heard laughter from the kitchen and she came this side to check. She was happy to see what she was seeing because it'd been too long...

Dalingcebo and Ngcebo looked at each other after they've taken a glance at their mother, they stood up together and left their mother smitten alone. They didn't want to share that moment with her it wasn't for them... Thembelihle clapped hands once and she felt grateful...

"What's the need for you to stay behind?" Danielle asked Mnotho, they were inside the guestroom, Danielle had given aunt's bag to her and she was here to take her bag. Mnotho was inside the bedroom, they've just put the mattress back on the bed with Dalingcebo.

Mnotho: "What do you mean?"

Danielle: "I am asking a question I am not elaborating anything."

Mnotho: "I have things to do here and that's the reason I am staying."

Danielle: "That's an excuse and I know you are staying here because of Happiness. Why don't you let her go because you don't love her and it's the absence of love that led you to abuse her."

Mnotho: "What did you just say? What led me to abuse her?"

Danielle: "You love me and you've never abused me. I don't think that you've abused Elena as well and why didn't you tell me about this marriage?"

Mnotho: "I think you need to go and don't keep the family waiting."

Danielle: "I am still speaking to you and I want you to listen to me. You need to let Happiness go because there's no love between you two. I don't get why you were angry when she told you that you were divorced. You were supposed to be happy and tell her then that you are setting her free."

Mnotho: "That will not happen. Happiness will be my wife again and there's nobody who will stop me from doing that. I will work on getting her back."

Danielle: "Oh, that's why you are staying here because you must win her back? How can you take back a woman who has cheated on you and even had a child with another man? What makes you think she won't cheat on you again?"

Mnotho chuckled. "You are forgetting that you cheated on me first but I forgave you. And now, don't preach about forgiving cheating." He reminded.

Danielle: "Please, Mnotho! That's different because it was a woman and that didn't give me a child and disgrace your family like this woman has done."

Mnotho: "Ntandokazi, leave now!" he shouted at her feeling further angered that he was standing before her speaking nonsense.

Danielle: "Well, since Happiness is no longer your wife and to marry her you'll need my permission. I am telling you now that you won't marry her back because I won't have a cheater back in our home."

Mnotho: "You are not my first wife maybe you've forgotten that. Now, Elena is my first wife and if she doesn't have a problem with this marriage I will get married to Happiness without your consent. And Happiness is still my wife traditionally because I paid ilobolo for her. I

gave her father cows which are still with him and that means until another man comes by to give me those cows Happiness is my wife.”

Danielle: “I won’t stay with you when Happiness comes because I don’t even know what diseases she’ll be coming back with in our lives. I am pretty sure that I got that STI from her-”

Mnotho: “SHUT UP!” He shouted and got up from the bed. He clicked his tongue and marched to the door. He opened the door. “Go, Dalingcebo will drive with you and you’ll pass by Durban to take Pearl.” He said pointing the way out the door... Danielle’s face had turned pink now because of anger. She was angry that Mnotho was defending Happiness and he wanted her back! That made her angry beyond. She took her bag and she walked out...

S5 >> EPISODE 13

“You are really objecting to us getting married this weekend?” Ngcebo asked Nandipha, they were inside the closet dressing up. Nandipha had just gotten back from the gym and had taken a shower. Ngcebo was dressing up for going out while Nandipha was staying behind with the children.

Nandipha: “Do you think I am losing weight?” she asked turning to look at him she wasn’t dressed up yet but she had her bra on and the underneath slim tights. She was looking at her body and thinking if she’d lost weight or not.

Ngcebo: “Be naked before me I will tell you.” he said looking back at her.

Nandipha: “Hhayi, don’t be tricky Ngcebo. You are boring!” she exclaimed and took her pink and white wraparound dress. She put it on her body.

“I will bore you until you answer my question that you’ve been ignoring since Monday. Can we get married this weekend?” he asked.

Nandipha: “No, because the court will be closed on the weekend. Some people don’t work every day as you do, Rasta.”

Ngcebo: “Really? Okay, on Monday. Can we get married on Monday?”

Nandipha: “Where are you going because you told me that you won’t be working today?” She asked him as he was tying his sneakers laces. It was a Friday, midday and Mnotho was still in their house.

Ngcebo: “I am going out and you know what I won’t speak to you until you give me an answer because now, you keep ignoring me.” he walked out of the closet and Nandipha followed him as they were done dressing up.

Nandipha: “We don’t live alone anymore we have kids, Rasta. I won’t be quiet while you are not talking to me.” She said and lifted her feet to get to him so that she would hold him as he was really ignoring her. She walked beside him and sent her hand from his back she held him on his waist but Ngcebo didn’t react to that. “Kanti, what’s the hurry for us to get married?” she asked and removed her hand from him as they were climbing down the stairs.

Ngcebo: "What's the reason for us to wait because we have waited for years?"

Nandipha: "It's not the right time Ngcebo with everything that's going on in your family. What will they say if they learn that we got married while things are so messed up in the family?" she asked but she knew that she wasn't referring to them all. She knew that his mother was going to call her and say all sorts of things to her about being selfish, wanting to be happy alone. She was going to say things that were going to hurt her like she'd done before. She didn't want to tell him that and she wasn't going to tell him that. She didn't know what she did to deserve this. Almost everyone in his family had said everything bad about her.

Ngcebo: "We are not getting married for them but for us."

Nandipha: "Where are you going? What kind of wife will I be if I don't know where are you going?" she asked leaving the house to get to the garage.

Ngcebo: "I am going to Happiness's house." He replied and stepped inside the car. He then closed the door of the car.

Nandipha: "Okay."

Ngcebo: "I won't stay for long." He drove the car out of the garage. He was sure now that Nandipha did hear what he said. She was happy that they were going to get married and all of the sudden she didn't want to talk about them getting married. He wanted her to be his wife and Nandipha knew that, he was also under the impression that she wanted the same thing but her lack of interest to talk about their marriage date showed that to him. But a part of him was convincing him that something else had happened. She heard what he said and that was the only explanation to this...

"Ngcebo, how are you?" Happiness asked Ngcebo who was at the door of her father's house. The maid had been the one to open the gate for him.

Ngcebo: "I am good and how are you?"

Happiness: "I am fine, please, come in." she stood aside and Ngcebo nodded once, he walked forward. Happiness followed him behind. "I wasn't expecting to see you here and I thought you were going to be here on the meeting."

Ngcebo: "I wasn't in Johannesburg when the family got here and now, I am here to see your father. We need to talk." He told her and sat down on the couch as they've reached the lounge where Happiness was seated alone.

Happiness: "Is it something I should worry about?"

Ngcebo chuckled. "I would have told you if it's something that needed you to worry. I need to speak to your father not you." He said briefly without any smile on his face but his eyes kept still on her.

Happiness saw he was serious she nodded. "I will inform him." She said and dissolved away from him.

Ngcebo looked around the lounge, he stood on his feet and he marched to the photo of a woman, a woman who forced him out of his house. He realised when he had to come to his house that he hadn't accepted this gift and he knew he couldn't transfer it to someone else. It

took him by surprise and he had wished that maybe it was going to be temporary as Gobela was waiting for his son. But he thought wrong...

"That's my mother." Happiness told Ngcebo who had her mother's picture in his hands. Happiness was standing beside him and he was concentrated on his thoughts about the woman on the picture he was staring at.

Ngcebo: "I know, where's your father?" he looked back at her after he'd placed the picture down.

Happiness: "I will take you to him. Are you fine? You don't look your usual self." She asked showing him the way with her hand. She walked forward and Ngcebo followed her behind. She could see that something was off with him not that she knew him pretty well but she could see he wasn't himself. That made her worry that maybe it was about this visit with her father.

Ngcebo: "Don't worry about me. How are the children?"

Happiness: "They're fine. I spoke to them this morning. My father will see you in his study because he's busy there working."

Ngcebo: "Okay."

Happiness opened the door to her father's office and Ngcebo went through. Mthimkhulu was seated behind the desk of his enormous study. Ngcebo looked around and he felt frustrated by this man's work by looking at the large files' cabinet inside the office.

Ngcebo: "It must be hard doing your job, baba." He commented and sat down after they've greeted each other with Mthimkhulu and he offered him a seat on the couch side of his office.

Mthimkhulu chuckled. "I also think doing yours is hard because you are always needed to bring out fresh ideas on songs." He commented.

Ngcebo laughed. "If you put it that way. I am here bearing a message from your wife." He introduced and glanced at him.

Mthimkhulu stared at Ngcebo blankly, he couldn't understand what he'd just said. "I don't understand what do you mean by my wife?" He asked him seeing that Ngcebo wasn't speaking further.

Ngcebo: "I see some things before they happen I get messages and instructions from my ancestors. I can speak with them as well and they can speak to me. I think I saw your wife because Happiness is our wife even if she's divorced but traditionally she's still our wife."

Mthimkhulu: "Okay, I understand. I hope it's not something bad." he hoped looking within himself and he concluded it wouldn't be something good because he hadn't been a good man.

Ngcebo: "Our ancestors and your ancestors along with your wife had been fighting over Happiness. Mthimkhulu ancestors recognise that Happiness is my brother's wife and accept that but they are angry that he'd been mistreating her."

Mthimkhulu: "Your ancestors are not angry?"

Ngcebo: "They're angry with him and he hadn't had absolute peace as he'd also lost his unborn baby because of his actions towards his wife but he doesn't recognise that it's all

because of what he'd been doing to Happiness. But that's not why I am here I am here because your wife pleaded that I make you recognise that you've wronged Happiness's baby daddy. You've taken from him what he treasured most and you did that in a cruel manner. If he has wronged you as well, forgive him and ask for forgiveness for the sake of your granddaughter. Where there's hate children get affected one way or the other. Your wife is not happy that you've turned into this man that you are now. You are not the man she loved-

Mthimkhulu received the message badly, that his wife was angry with him. Within a few seconds of receiving the message he was shocked by the news, he was angry with himself that he had let his only love down. He was ashamed of himself and it only took now, Ngcebo's words for him to realise that he'd been a ruthless man. The shock sent him back to the heart attack that he'd had before when he learnt that Lonwabo was the father of Happiness's child.

"HAPPINESS!" Ngcebo screamed her name and jumped from his couch to Mthimkhulu's side and he held him as he'd dropped on the floor with his hand holding his chest and his eyes widened. Ngcebo screamed Happiness's name repeatedly until he heard footsteps running towards the office.

"What's wrong-" She couldn't even finish her question as her eyes laid on her father. She rushed to put the food she was coming with to the office to serve them, she placed it on the coffee table without any panic she went down to her father. "What happened? Daddy?" she asked holding her father's face.

Ngcebo: "He was shocked by what I was telling him. We need to drive him to the hospital now!" he said giving Happiness his hand and when Happiness held his hand, his skin gave him goose bumps and his upper body cringed as he had flashes of an unpleasant event. This was his first time seeing a vision in this manner, seeing a vision while he wasn't asleep but awake.

Happiness: "Ngcebo!" she panicked now as she couldn't understand what was happening. She had two people reacting this way and that scared her.

Ngcebo pulled his hand away from Happiness's hand and he looked at her with his jaws taunted. "Let's go!" He exclaimed as if nothing happened to him.

Happiness: "Okay." She nodded and Ngcebo got up from the floor he was on his knees holding Mthimkhulu. He didn't let go of him as he stood on his feet. Happiness then helped him and they held her father, putting each of his arms on their shoulders. They marched to the front door with him...

"We can take my car I will drive you back." Ngcebo said to her and they put his father on the back seat of his car. Happiness then rushed back to the house to get her handbag... Ngcebo hopped into the driver seat and started the engine.

"Why did you bring your baby daddy here?" He asked Happiness who was seated at the backseat with her father. He looked at her shortly through the view mirror of his car.

Happiness: "He was stubborn about it. Is his life in danger?"

Ngcebo: "You shouldn't have come with him." he said that only and Happiness felt the

pressure from her seat. She needed to do something, she knew she needed to do something. She was going to call him when she got to the hospital. Ngcebo's silence signalled that he wasn't going to tell her anything...

He could hear his phone vibrating from his pocket but he couldn't take it because his hands were full. He'd driven from the hotel to the mall to buy something to eat and a few things he needed.

"Don't even open the door but come with me. Leave your plastic bags down and do what I am telling you to do." Thabani's man said to Lonwabo quietly, with his gun pointed at Lonwabo's lower part of his spine.

Lonwabo: "Who are you and what do you want?" he looked around and the parking lot was quiet and cold.

Guy: "Don't ask question Masteradana, let's go." He kicked him in between his legs and pulled him back to point him to the car that was next to his.

Lonwabo: "Listen kwedini I am no longer part of those things. That--"

"I don't care about that!" He shot a quiet exclamation and shoved him at the backseat of the car where one of his team members was already seated at the back. He then rushed to his side of the seat... He drove the car out of the parking lot while the man at the backseat injected Lonwabo whom they've put a balaclava on his head and within a few minutes of the drive. Lonwabo was offline...

"Do you think he'll ever wake up?" Mnotho asked Thabani and lightly kicked Lonwabo's feet. He moved away from him and sent his hands on his pocket.

Thabani: "It will only be a matter of time." He replied and marched out of the warehouse leaving Mnotho with three men inside.

"Hhh!" Lonwabo hissed and moved his heavy up. He could feel his arm were heavy as well and he realised that he was tied up in chains, the rubber was tight on his wrist and the chains were hooked on the rubber on his wrists. He looked up and they were hanged up to the roof of the warehouse. He pulled the chains and he groaned loudly.

Mnotho turned and he gave Lonwabo a malicious smile as he moved closer to Lonwabo who was looking at him with defeat written on his face but he was covering it with anger. "I can't really say we meet again but since you once sent your men to have me beaten up. I can say we meet again, coward of a man!" he shot the words at Lonwabo and he punched him twice on the stomach and Lonwabo groaned.

Lonwabo: "You don't know the coward between you and I, you've been hitting Happiness every chance you got and you call me a coward? A coward is you, women beater!"

Mnotho clicked his tongue and he punched Lonwabo repeatedly on the stomach and on the face. "And you've entered the wrong kraal, mgodoyi. Happiness was my wife then and she's still my wife even now. And you think a criminal that you are will marry her, I will just give her over to you? Over my dead body!" He vomited his anger on him and punched him senselessly. He stopped when Thabani budged inside the warehouse running. Mnotho moved away from Lonwabo, he was panting from all the energy he'd expended.

Mnotho: "What's wrong?"

Thabani: "You can't panel beat him alone. This dog almost killed my brother's daughter and for that I will kill him tonight." He replied moving past Mnotho and he chuckled looking at Lonwabo. He clapped his hands once and twice.

Lonwabo: "Tycoon!"

Thabani: "Yes, it's me and you messed with the wrong fucker you bitch-ass nigga. I will send you to your early grave." He told him and began beating him senselessly and when he was tired, Mnotho would take a turn to panel beat him for everything that he'd done... They were taking turns even though they could see that Lonwabo was extremely weak from all the beatings. They stopped when they heard gunshots going off. Thabani and Mnotho looked at one another and Thabani looked back at his two men... One of them rushed to get to the entrance of the warehouse to get what was going on.

Mnotho: "What's happening?"

Thabani: "Maybe his gang members have come by."

"MNOTHO!" Happiness bugged inside the warehouse screaming Mnotho's Mnotho. She'd been tracing Lonwabo's phone with the gang members who agreed to come to Johannesburg for his protection. Lonwabo only called them because Happiness wanted them to come but he didn't see the need for them which was why he never walked around Johannesburg with any of them. She forced tagging along with them because she didn't want to sit inside her father's house and wait for them to tell her what was happening. She had her instincts telling her Mnotho was the one who took Lonwabo and she confirmed that when she saw his car outside the warehouse that seemed abandoned but Thabani and his crew used to use it in his time as a gangster. He left it to a friend who was still using it for his dealings.

Mnotho: "Happiness?" he moved closer to her picking up his feet to hold her from getting any closer. He wiped his bloody knuckles on his black hoody that he was wearing. He was taken by surprise by her presence. "What are you doing here? You are a gangster too, now?" he asked and held tight by her waist. Happiness was jumping and kicking trying to breakthrough.

Happiness: "LEAVE ME ALONE! LONWABO!" She screamed in agony as she saw him not clear but she could see that he was weak... Lonwabo tried to raise his head as he heard Happiness's voice but he was too weak to even utter a word. Deep down the minute there were gunshots he felt hope creeping back into his lifeless body. Now, he was shuttered down by Happiness's cry and all his mind could think about now was his little daughter. His Yoliswa, his world's most precious treasure. He couldn't even imagine...

Mnotho: "You are not going to him and he deserves everything that's happening now because he killed my uncle, shot my brother and wife. Did you know about that Happiness?"

Happiness: "LET ME GO, MNOTHO! HE'S THE FATHER OF MY DAUGHTER AND I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU IF HE DIES."

Mnotho: "You want a criminal for your daughter and that child traditionally belongs to me. That man is an animal!"

Happiness: "YOU ARE NO BETTER TO HIM! MNOTHO!"

“I am killing this dog.” Thabani said pointing his gun at Lonwabo’s head and Happiness screamed even louder threatening Mnotho that she will never forgive him should Lonwabo die.

Mnotho believed every threat that Happiness was uttering from her mouth to his ears and he turned with Happiness still on his hold, kicking and fighting. “Don’t kill him!” He instructed Thabani and moved closer to him holding Happiness still as if she was just a child. She was a light weight woman and as a man that Mnotho was it was no problem holding her still.

Thabani: “I should change my plans now because you want to please that woman? Is that what you are trying to tell me?”

Mnotho: “He’s the father to a little girl and I think he deserves a second chance. I deserve a second and you, deserve a second chance. We all do in life. Please, let’s just let him go. He will recover and we will strike a deal that he leaves for good. Please.” He begged him now seeing that Happiness wasn’t going to forgive him for this and he had a whole lot of things he wanted her to forgive him for. He didn’t want to continue adding on it... Happiness was just crying now thinking about her life without Lonwabo and what she was going to say to her children and Luvuyo...

Thabani: “I don’t care about you pleasing that woman who probably knew about the shootout at the wedding.”

Mnotho: “She wouldn’t have ordered people to be killed man. Happiness is not like that. Let’s just let this man go without killing him. We’ve hit him.”

Thabani: “I am not a better man that you are.” He told him and without thinking he shot Lonwabo twice in the head and three times on his chest... Happiness screamed above her voice. Mnotho held her tighter and he went down to the ground with her as she was letting her body down... Mnotho closed his eyes as she cried a cry that gave him creeps...

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“Happiness?” Mnotho called her name out and he moved his head aside, he looked at her as she wasn’t crying anymore. It was just after midnight, 3rd of April which was a Saturday. The gunshots had stopped and Thabani was outside with the remaining men from his team. They were gathering together bodies from their team and they were leaving the bodies of the other team. Mnotho was alone with Happiness inside the warehouse and Lonwabo’s dead body that was still hung up in chains.

Mnotho got up from the floor as Happiness was awake but she was quiet. She was still in shock and her mind was blank with her eyes blankly staring at the worn out concrete floor... He carried her in his arms and walked out of the warehouse with her. He was clueless of what was going to happen next as Happiness had seen what happened and maybe she was never going to forgive him now that Lonwabo has been killed. He was hoping that things wouldn’t turn out bad for him and Happiness would be able to move on from this...

He opened the passenger seat of his car and placed Happiness on the car seat. He then opened the back door. He took a blanket that was inside the car. He covered Happiness and closed the car. His phone rang from his pocket. He took it out to check who was calling, Danielle was calling him. He didn't answer the phone he rammed it back inside his pocket. He marched to get to Thabani and have a word with him about a way forward.

"I should drive Happiness back home now." Mnotho told Thabani, he'd asked him amongst his crew as they were still looking for the dead bodies of their crew. The numbers were not adding up and they didn't want to leave anyone of their own behind.

Thabani: "I am still working over here and I hope that you will speak to your wife about shutting up about this. We don't want the police on our backs."

Mnotho: "I will speak to her but I have a request."

Thabani: "What is it?"

Mnotho: "I ask that you don't tell anyone that Happiness's baby daddy is the one who shot at my wedding. I don't want it to be known."

Thabani: "You must be kidding me I should tell Ntandokazi's mother about this so that she will know what really happen."

Mnotho: "But the case is long over and those guys were executed. What's the need for you to tell her mother?"

Thabani: "Why does it seems like you don't care about what happened to your wife which is my brother's daughter? I can see that the only wife you care about is that one who has been cheating on you."

Mnotho: "No, it's not like that, baba. I want to keep the peace because we have been through a lot the last couple of months and I don't want the family to fight and be divided again. I love Ntandokazi and she knows that but my love for her shouldn't make me forget that as their husband I should keep the peace. I don't want any fights."

Thabani: "I don't care about all that but my family should know what kind of an evil woman your first wife is. I am pretty sure that she was involved in this and I should have put a bullet in her head as well."

Mnotho: "Udakiwe ke manje! You are older than me and I don't want to disrespect you. And don't forget that you failed to find out the truth but I am the one who did. I could have just had this man killed by hiring hitmen and without any delays but I thought it would be an honourable thing to call you. Now, you want to mess things up for my family and cause feuds that you won't even be involved in? Yes, Happiness is my wife and I care about her as much as I do for Danielle."

Thabani: "I won't tell anyone about this."

Mnotho: "Thank you."

Thabani: "I will call you when we are done here and we will discuss what we will do about all this. I don't want to discuss it now. I have to go back to the guys. We are covering up here."

Mnotho: "Okay, thank you." he gave out his hand and they shared a manly handshake accompanied by a shoulder hug.

Thabani: "You have done me a great honour by calling me." he said to him and Mnotho nodded his head once before leaving. He jogged to his car... He stepped inside the car and drove off. Happiness was still seated inside quietly...

"I didn't mean for what happened a few hours ago to happen. I didn't mean to hurt you again but I was angry when I learnt that he was the one behind the shootout at my wedding. My uncle died and a number of lives were in danger some were injured and what happened in my wedding will ruin weddings to come. I am sorry." he looked at Happiness, they have been driving for hours in silence and Mnotho saw it was appropriate that he speaks to her now before they reach her father's house... Happiness didn't say anything... Mnotho's phone rang and he grabbed his phone. He sighed.

Mnotho: "Yebo."

Danielle: "Why are you ignoring my phone calls?"

Mnotho: "I wasn't ignoring them but I was busy."

Danielle: "You were busy doing what Mnotho because I have been calling and calling, you didn't even answer not even once."

Mnotho: "I was busy."

Danielle: "BUSY DOING WHAT!"

Mnotho: "Hheyi! Don't shout at me because I am telling you that I am busy and you are concentrated on asking what I was doing. How will knowing that help you? I should answer to you, now?"

Danielle: "So, I shouldn't know what you are doing?"

Mnotho: "If I want you to know you will now."

Danielle: "You are not talking to me as if I am your wife and are you on the road at this hour?"

"Where are you taking me?" Happiness asked Mnotho on a husky voice she got from all the crying and screaming. She was seeing that he wasn't driving on the direction taking her to her father's house.

Danielle: "Who's that, Mnotho?"

Mnotho dropped Danielle's phone call and he looked at Happiness. "I don't want you to be alone and so, I think taking you to Nandipha's house will be appropriate." Mnotho informed her.

Happiness: "That's ridiculous I want to go home and sleep in my bed. Mnotho." She looked at him and held her neck as if it was going to sooth the soar on her throat. She'd exhausted her energy.

Mnotho: "I will stop by the garage and buy you some Strepsils for your throat."

Happiness didn't say anything she saw this difficult man wasn't going to do what she wanted. She closed her eyes and allowed her mind to rethink what just happened. Lonwabo died! She let tears roll down her eyes thinking about their wedding that was going to come up. They knew that they were going to have to fight tooth and nail for them to be allowed to get married. They were ready to fight Mnotho for custody of Njabulo. But that man was taken away from her, the man she loved was taken away from her...

“Please, take the tablets.” Mnotho placed the throat tablets on Happiness’s lap. He could see that she was crying but he didn’t want to keep apologising to her because that was only going to make him look like a fool. He needed to give her time to herself.

Happiness took the box and opened the tablets, she placed two inside her mouth and smoothed them down her throat. If only Lonwabo had listened to her when she told him not to come to South Africa. None of this would have happened because he was going to be in the house by now with the children but he was dead. And how was she even going to begin to explain herself to her daughter that she was never going to see her father...

Ngcebo was the one who opened the gate for his brother. Mnotho stepped out of the car and Happiness stepped out after him. They walked together up to the house with Mnotho walking behind Happiness.

“Do you want something to eat? I will prepare something for you.” Mnotho asked Happiness who was seated on the couch looking at toys that were on the coffee table. She wasn’t thinking but...

Happiness: “No, would you have eaten after seeing Danielle being killed in cold blood? Would you have eaten? Or I forgot you don’t have a heart!”

Mnotho: “Please, don’t speak like that because you know what that man has done, Happiness and now you are pretending as if you didn’t know that he wasn’t an honourable man.”

Happiness: “You are not an honourable man as well Mnotho but should you be killed for that? Should you be killed? I am asking you!”

Mnotho: “Please, lower your voice because Ngcebo and his family are sleeping. And I don’t want to fight with you.”

Happiness: “No! You shouldn’t have brought me here because I told you that I want to go to my father’s house but now, you are acting as a husband who cares about me but we both know that you don’t!”

Mnotho: “If I didn’t care about you I wasn’t even going to start searching for you Happiness. I was going to be happy that you left.”

Happiness: “Why didn’t you rejoice because that’s what you wanted?”

Mnotho: “I saw that I was wrong.” He replied, he’d vowed that he wasn’t going to state that Happiness was a wife chosen for him by his ancestors. He wasn’t going to tell that to her. He wanted to win her back purely because he wanted her back into his life. He knew Happiness was a good woman and he’d once had a heart for her which changed within a blink of an eye... He wanted to rectify his wrongs and make her happy. He wasn’t going to give up. He was going to welcome his son back home and Happiness’s daughter. He wanted to love her daughter like Happiness had done to his son. He was never a cruel man and all he had was an hour of darkness in his heart. He convinced himself standing before Happiness.

Happiness: “No! You saw nothing Mnotho. I loved you and you saw that I love you but you used that to hurt me repeatedly. You used that to put me down for who?” she laughed sarcastically suddenly remembering that he’d thrown her love back to her face because of a bitch who was screwing his brother.

Mnotho: “I don’t have excuses for that but let’s not forget that you cheated on me as well

Happiness. You slept with another man while married to me. How do you think that makes feel? You gave birth to a child for another man!"

Happiness: "WELL, AT LEAST I DIDN'T SLEEP WITH YOUR BROTHER AND BE PREGNANT FOR HIM LIKE YOUR PRECIOUS WIFE!" She blurted it out louder without planning to do it. She only held her mouth when she saw Mnotho's face turning grey because of the blood drain from shock. She realised that it was too late for her to take back her words.

Mnotho: "What did you just say?" he went down to her level and placed his hand on her thighs. He looked at her with his heart cold as ice because the words that she'd blurted out pierced through his heart draining the black blood that was poisoning him. They left raw pain that he didn't want to recognise.

Happiness: "I said nothing I will go sleep. I will sleep in the bedroom down here." She replied giving him an answer that he wasn't looking for.

Mnotho: "No! You are going nowhere because you'll tell me about what you've just said. Which precious wife is sleeping with my brother and pregnant with his child?" he knew Elena was the one who was pregnant but Danielle had been pregnant before. He couldn't make any... Happiness was supposed to tell him because her cloud of words stated that his precious wife was sleeping with his brother.

Happiness: "I didn't mean it that way."

Mnotho: "YOU ARE LYING TO ME!"

"Please, it's 2am and my children are sleeping. Please, go to bed." Ngcebo told Mnotho and Happiness, standing behind the couch that Happiness was seated on. Nandipha was the one who told him to come down and tell them to sleep because she was afraid their fight was going to turn physical.

Mnotho: "We are still talking bafo."

Ngcebo: "No, you are shouting at each other and it's not a good thing. MaMthimkhulu go and sleep." Happiness stood up quickly and she walked away from the two brothers. Ngcebo looked at Mnotho. "You are a killer now?" he asked looking at him straight in the eye.

Mnotho: "You won't understand Ngcebo. Did you know that he's the one who shot at us and covered it up?"

Ngcebo: "No, I didn't know and even if he did. That didn't give you any right to kill him. He may have been wrong by doing that but don't you think he rectified that wrong by loving your son when you couldn't?"

He looked aside and didn't answer him, he sent his eyes back to him. "Did you hear what she said about my wife sleeping with my brother?" he asked.

Ngcebo: "The house is quiet now and so, I heard it."

Mnotho: "Do you perhaps know who's that?"

Ngcebo: "No, I don't but maybe you need to go back home."

Mnotho: "You can go and sleep. I am sorry to wake you." he said and sat down feeling like his life was turning into a catastrophe...

"What's wrong, Happiness?" Luvuyo asked Happiness on the phone. She went to the

warehouse with nothing but her phone on her jeans... Happiness didn't answer Luvuyo but she cried as she felt pain overwhelming her.

Happiness: "Why didn't you two listen to me?" she managed to ask.

Luvuyo: "NO!"

Happiness: "Luvuyo!" She called her name repeatedly and Luvuyo dropped the call...

Happiness pulled the pillow and she buried her face on the pillow...

S5 >> EPISODE 15

"Hello?" Mnotho answered Thabani's phone call. He was still seated on the couch alone in the dark lounge. He had his head stamped on the upper shoulder of the couch. He was thinking about the night trying hard not to think about what Happiness had told him.

Thabani: "We have just finished clearing up our bodies and now, I don't know what should I do with these bodies. Do I burn them down along with the warehouse or I leave them?"

Mnotho: "No, don't burn them."

Thabani: "I think that's best idea."

Mnotho: "No, it would be obvious that someone covered up the murder. The police with discovered the ashes or bones or whatever remaining and they might open a case that will keep us on our toes."

Thabani: "You are right."

Mnotho: "I think since he was a gang leader the only thing that would be appropriate to do is, taking some of his dead people and make them as if they were an opposing gang who'd held Lonwabo hostage. Then Lonwabo's guys came up to kill them to free their gang Lord."

Thabani: "That's a brilliant idea."

Mnotho: "Yeah, he might have been a killer but he cared for my son and that means he deserves a decent burial like we all do."

Thabani sighed. "I am sorry for killing him even though you told me not to because of his daughter but all I was thinking about was Ntandokazi's daughter whom he wanted to rob a mother. I don't have a heart when it comes to my family because men like Lonwabo do everything and anything for their families. I am only sorry for not listening but I don't feel sorry that I killed him."

Mnotho: "What's done is done."

Thabani: "That's right, I will get to work now. How is your wife?"

Mnotho: "She's shattered. We will talk when the sun rises." He said. He didn't want to have to keep answering his questions because he refused to listen to him when he begged him to spare Lonwabo for his daughter's sake. He knew having him alive was going to be difficult because Happiness loved him but he was going to be alive with his child. Happiness had saved him from being killed by her father but he didn't even think to return that favour. He didn't even think of that because if Happiness didn't come in the warehouse he was going to

let Thabani kill Lonwabo without thinking. He was ashamed that he been reduced to this kind of a man who would rather kill people than to solve his problems. He couldn't recognise himself...

Thabani: "Time will heal all the wounds."

Mnotho: "We hope." They then hung up the call. Mnotho sighed and got up from the couch. "I don't even know when did I get here and how did I get here." He spoke to himself climbing up the stairs to get to the bedroom to sleep. He needed a good rest because it was the only best thing for him at the moment. He took off his clothes and laid his head down. He closed his heavy eyes to get the rest that he deserved...

In the morning Mnotho was woken up by his father's phone call. He sat up straight to answer his phone call.

Mnotho: "Mageba?"

Dalisu: "Mageba? Ini? Ungichwensa! Uyangichwensa Mnotho!" (Dad, what? While you are disrespecting me?) he shouted at him.

Mnotho: "What did I do, baba?"

Dalisu: "What did you do? Didn't I tell you not to stay over there forever? You told me that you won't be long but even now, you are not home. And it'd been days, a week since we left you in Johannesburg Mnotho."

Mnotho: "I am coming home today, baba. But I have other things-"

Dalisu: "I don't want to even hear any excuses that you are about to give me now. I want you home and that's that!"

Mnotho: "Yes, I will come back home." he promised and his father hung up the call first. He didn't even know what his father was going to do to him because he couldn't even speak to him. He couldn't even look at him in the eye. Maybe he was going to call the elders and tell them what he did...

Mnotho marched to the bathroom with a towel wrapped around his waist. Now, he was thinking about his two wives. He thought of Danielle first, she'd cheated on him before when she had her head mixed up. And what if she didn't have her head mixed up but that's just who she is? What if she couldn't be with one man? But no, she'd waited for him and he believed that when she told him that. He believed her. She wasn't pregnant but she'd been pregnant after their second child and she lost the baby. What if she was carrying his brother's child and she aborted the baby to cover up that she was cheating? But that would have been known if she aborted. No, again, it wasn't going to be known because they did everything the right way for the child.

Mnotho shook his head as the cold water hit his head down to his body. He rubbed all that he'd thought about Danielle. That pain they felt when they lost their child was real. It was real and Danielle had grown now, yes, there were still things that Mnotho didn't like about her still. But she was matured then the first time they met. She wouldn't have cheated on him AGAIN!

Elena? She was already, pregnant. She – Whoa! He'd been a fool all along. Elena wasn't pregnant with his child and that's the reason he was sick. He got that from sleeping with his

wife who was caring his brother's child!

But Gobela? He knew? Yes! Why did he tell him not to sleep with Elena until she'd given birth? He knew but he didn't tell him?

Mnotho clicked his tongue and banged the bathroom tiled wall. He moved out of the bathroom and wrapped the towel around his waist. He didn't even want to think and guess about which brother was she sleeping with. Elena was going to tell him because he wasn't going to play the guessing game. He couldn't believe Elena had been cheating on him!

"Bafo, I will have to go now. Happiness is still sleeping?" Mnotho asked Ngcebo who was having his breakfast in the morning. He was seated alone in the kitchen island having the breakfast he'd made for himself.

Ngcebo: "No, I haven't seen her leaving and that means she's still here."

Mnotho: "Ey, I still can't believe what she told me."

"I have been thinking about it all morning." He told him, he couldn't sleep thinking about this and he'd concluded that this was the betrayal that he'd seen in the vision that he saw with Gobela.

Mnotho: "I will check on Happiness and drive home." he told him and Ngcebo nodded...

Mnotho marched up to the bedroom where Happiness was. He opened the door and it wasn't locked... He stood by her side of the bed and he went down to the level of the bed to look at Happiness sleeping. She was sleeping peacefully as if she'd never cried the way she did the previous night.

Mnotho didn't say a word but he placed his hand on her face and he sighed. He then got up and left the bedroom... He said his goodbye to Ngcebo and left the house to get to KZN. He wanted to get to Elena's house first...

"MaZondi, I am leaving now and I will see you tonight." Ngcebo said to Nandipha who was still inside her bedcovers. He'd woken her up because he didn't want to leave the house without her seeing him...

Nandipha: "Hmm!" she stretched her arms and yawned, a long yawn that made Ngcebo laughed at her. She smiled and pouted at him. Ngcebo shook his head. "Ha! What's wrong? You don't want to baby kiss me? I am your bae."

Ngcebo: "Go and brush your teeth."

Nandipha: "Ha! Fuck you!" she shouted and pulled him by his jacket as he was laughing instead of kissing her. "I have been kissing you without you brushing your teeth and now--"

Ngcebo: "Okay, yes, we fuck each other and let's kiss each other." He said and they shared a morning kiss that delayed Ngcebo from leaving at the time he'd set out for himself. He removed the night dress that Nandipha was wearing and she didn't stop him but she kicked the blankets off. She pulled him to the bed but Ngcebo didn't give in easily...

"I am still trying to take off my shoes!" Ngcebo said in between the kisses as Nandipha was insisting on pulling him to the bed.

Nandipha: "Hurry!" She exclaimed and looked at him, he'd moved away from her and was removing his shoes properly. Nandipha was waiting for him, completely naked without the vest that she always had on her. Yes, she hadn't lost weight visible to the eye but she was

comfortable with being naked around him now. Ngcebo got in between her legs and he lifted them.

Nandipha laughed. "I am your full chicken." She commented and they laughed, she only kept quiet when Ngcebo entered her. She smiled lovingly... He was on her forgetting that he wasn't supposed to be home now...

"You shouldn't have kissed me. Look, now you are chasing me away." Ngcebo said to Nandipha who was pushing him out of the house.

Nandipha: "I didn't say have sex with me but you chose to do that because you don't defy your dick." She told him and took his hand to put the jacket on him.

Ngcebo: "The way you're dressing your future husband right now. You were supposed to let me go even after I have given you that morning glory."

Nandipha giggled: "I couldn't do that while you are going to thousands of people. And don't worry my love I will dress you better after Monday because by then you'll be my husband." She said letting him put the other arm on his own because he was done with his pants.

Ngcebo: "Okay, let's wait for Monday and do you have a dress now?"

Nandipha: "Just go!" she didn't reply but she opened the door of his car for him. Ngcebo stepped inside the car and Nandipha placed his bag that was on her shoulder, she placed it on his lap.

Ngcebo: "Come kiss me. I love you."

Nandipha laughed and shook her head. "I love you too and go make money for us." She encouraged him and waved for him...

Ngcebo: "Tell my girls I love them and I will bring them sweets." He said driving his car out of the garage. Nandipha walked forward following the car.

Nandipha: "I will tell them!"

Ngcebo hooted once and drove out of the premises. Nandipha moved back inside the house making plans for the day...

"But you promised me that the suit will be ready by Friday and yesterday was Friday. It didn't reach me as you promised." Nandipha argued the designer that she was speaking to on the phone.

Designer: "I know Nandi but the person I asked to deliver it had an emergency to attend to yesterday. I don't know what was going on but it was a personal thing. I didn't do it on purpose."

Nandipha: "Okay, can you deliver it today, then? Look, I know it's Saturday and you might be busy or relaxing but I am desperate because he must wear it on Tuesday like I told you that this event is on Tuesday. And you can't have it delivered tomorrow because I won't be home. I don't want him to be the one to take this suit because I haven't told him about this. Monday is not a good day as well. I will pay you if I have to pay you I really need it today."

Designer: "Eish, I will try my best to have it delivered today and I will deliver it personally. You don't have to pay."

Nandipha: "Thank you and I hope it's exactly what I wanted it look like."

Designer: "Have I ever disappoint you?"

Nandipha: “No, but nje... I want him to look perfect.”

Designer: “He will look perfect and I hope I will get the pictures of him on the suit as I have asked.”

Nandipha: “I will send them to you and please, don’t bring it at night because he’ll be home by then.”

Designer: “I won’t.”

Nandipha: “Thank you, Greg.” She said and they hung up after sharing goodbyes. She felt a little lighter now...

“Good morning.” Happiness greeted Nandipha who was standing behind the sink humming a him. Happiness had taken a shower and wore the clothes she was wearing the previous night. She was ready to leave but she didn’t have money to take an Uber/taxi.

Nandipha: “Good morning, how are you?”

Happiness: “I am fine and how are you?”

Nandipha: “I am fine. I haven’t begun with breakfast-”

Happiness: “No, I am not staying I only need some money for a taxi but I don’t have any money with me I need to get home.”

Nandipha: “Okay, I will go and get the money for you.” she moved away from her and she climbed the stairs to get the money for her...

Happiness: “Thank you.” she accepted the money.

Nandipha: “It’s okay.”

Happiness: “Is Mnotho still in the house?” she didn’t know why she was asking because she’d a rough morning getting off the bed without taking her phone and calling Lonwabo. She’d been doing that every morning since they’ve arrived in Johannesburg.

Nandipha: “No, he drove home.”

Happiness: “Okay, bye. I guess I will see your girls some other time.” She said to her and Nandipha nodded her head.

“Happiness?” She called her out as she was moving away to get out of the house. Happiness stopped walking she looked back at her. Nandipha moved forward to get closer to her. “I want to say I am sorry for everything that has happened.” she confessed.

Happiness: “What do you mean?”

Nandipha: “My daughter, Buhle, was sick because her father knew where you were and he wasn’t telling his family about it like his ancestors wanted him to. It was a Saturday when Buhle’s sickness began, just high fever and she would cry none stop. I didn’t sleep Saturday night with my mother since I was in her house. Sunday morning, I went to the Doctor with her and she told me Buhle was fine. But she was confused because Buhle was hot and sweating. It became worse because she had began vomiting I was scared and clueless. We argued with Ngcebo and I figured the truth on my own. He took my phone because he didn’t want me to make a phone call. But I made means to get to my mother’s house I called Mnotho and told him that you are here. Buhle was able to sleep and she woke up fine, she was also able to eat. I am sorry but I didn’t want to lose my daughter.” She confessed to Happiness who was looking at her with a blank face. There was silence after she’d said that.

Happiness: "My daughter lost a father today. She'll never see her father at least yours will see her father."

Nandipha: "But this isn't about Ngcebo it's about my little child."

Happiness: "Yes, it's about her and Lonwabo was making means to move the children where they were, for Ngcebo to tell his family. By Wednesday they would have moved."

Nandipha: "By Wednesday? Hhaybo! Buhle's sickness began on Saturday maybe you didn't hear that. She was supposed to be sick for four days without eating and sleeping?" she asked failing to believe what she'd just said.

Happiness: "It's not my fault that her ancestors made her sick. At least you were able to save your child I couldn't save my daughter's father. He was made a sacrifice for your daughter to live and my daughter lost her father for your child. It's fine though." She said to Nandipha and she turned to leave the house... Nandipha turned to the kitchen with her heart heavy but she remembered her mother's words. She wasn't about to feel guilty because she was made Buhle's mother to protect her and that's what she did...

"The girls are excited about their new dresses but you don't seem excited at all. We can postpone if you are not ready." Ngcebo said joining Nandipha in bed after a long day they were finally getting to rest.

Nandipha smiled. "Why should I not be ready because I will be marrying my prince charming? My lucky charm." She giggled as Ngcebo was rubbing her nose softly.

Ngcebo: "It's like something is bothering you."

Nandipha: "It may be a court wedding but it would still be a wedding and every wedding comes with nerves."

Ngcebo laughed. "You always hear them say that, right?"

Nandipha laughed and she nodded. "Let's sleep now it's been a long day. And we should rest." She suggested. Ngcebo supported her and they closed their eyes... Ngcebo was the first to fall asleep and Nandipha was left behind with her eyes opened looking at him. She knew that she needed to share her burdens with him and they would carry them together but she felt like she didn't want to share this one with him...

..... In his sleep he could see himself standing outside his grandfather's premises watching pain and sorrow befall his family. It was a same vision that he'd had years ago but the difference this time is that he wanted to push through to go and help but the two tiny hands are pulling him back. He doesn't see the faces and he doesn't hear the cry of the children holding him but only the cry coming from his grandfather's house.

"NGCEBO YAKWA ZULU IMA LAPHO OKHONA!" (Ngcebo stand where you are) A man's bold voice hit on his ears and he looked around, he saw his grandmother standing with his grandfather that he knew from pictures. They were on their tradition regalia and also standing outside the premises not too close to him. Their presence was with him...

Ngcebo: "I want to help!" he shouted and looked back on the premises...

"YIMA NGCEBO! YIMA! YIMA!" His grandfather shouted and his grandmother said repeatedly softly behind her husband.....

Nandipha was woken up by the sounds and groans Ngcebo was making from his sleep. She

then shook Ngcebo awake.

Nandipha: “Do you need water?” she looked at him as he was taking off his vest to wipe off the sweat on his forehead.

Ngcebo: “No, I am fine.”

Nandipha didn't say anything to him but she laid back on her position without asking even a single thing about what he dreaming. Ngcebo looked at her as it was the first time that Nandipha did this. She would ask and quickly tell him ‘I don't know why I am asking because you won't tell me.’ He wondered what did this mean? Why was she suddenly like this? He'd seen something was off with her and now, she just didn't seem to care to ask? He didn't want to think the worst that maybe she wasn't going to show up on their wedding day!

He shook his head and told himself not to worry. He then grabbed his phone and called Gobela, he saw that the time was just after 3am but he needed to call him. His phone rang without being answered...

“Are you sleeping?” Ngcebo asked cuddling Nandipha who was already dead sleeping. It didn't take her long to get back to sleep. He raised his head to look at her face and he saw that she was sleeping...

----- In KZN inside his hut, Gobela's phone rang inside his bedroom where his wife was sleeping alone... Gobela was inside the hut groaning with his forehead stamped on the floor before the bones.

Gobela: “Hheyi! Hheyi! Hheyi!” he groaned repeatedly not because he was seeing or responding to the ancestors' spirit but he was feeling pain. He was feeling pain of a vow he'd made that he would rather die than to see blood amongst the princes. He'd lived and he'd surrendered himself to his fate that he'd sealed when Mnotho was before him seeking answers... Life left his body...

S5 >> EPISODE 16

“You need to calm down because Mnotho will come back home.” Thembelihle said to Dalisu who was seated down on the dining table on a Saturday morning. She'd just served him another cup of tea. They were arguing about Mnotho as if Qalokuhle wasn't seated with them on the dining table.

Dalisu: “Don't tell me to calm down because Mnotho has disappointed me beyond measure. I can't believe he would do such an evil thing!”

Thembelihle: “Baba, please, our granddaughter is on the table with us.”

Dalisu: “What's happening with these boys, MaSthole?” he asked and ignored the statement that Thembelihle had voiced out about their granddaughter who was on the table with them. He was angry.

Thembelihle: “What are you talking about, now?”

Daliso: “Dalingcebo is cheating on his wife. There’s nothing honourable about that and he’s the one who chose this life for himself.”

Thembelihle: “I don’t want to judge him.”

Daliso: “Hhaybo! What do you mean by that? You mean he was right to cheat on his wife? Why didn’t he tell us before cheating that Nontobeko doesn’t want to listen to her? Why?”

Thembelihle: “I don’t know why he didn’t want to tell us, baba. But I did speak to him before this and I spoke to his wife. She never listened to me. Dalingcebo was wrong to do what he did and there’s no way we can help them.”

Daliso: “MaZondi will take everything he owns because they were married in community of property and he cheated on her. They’re not boys anymore that they can just sleep with any girls while committed to other women.”

Thembelihle: “I am worried about Happiness and her children.”

Daliso: “I don’t even want to speak about her now I want to speak to Mnotho first. He must come back here and we will talk-”

“Baba no Nhlakanipho!” Qalokuhle said delightedly and got off her chair she was eating her food minding her business with her grandparents talking alone. And she was the first to see Ndabezinhle who was walking inside the dining room with Nhlakanipho in his arms.

Ndabezinhle placed Nhlakanipho down and he lifted Qalokuhle. “Sawubona, MaZulu!” he greeted her and smiled while tickling her.

Qalokuhle: “Sawubona, baba. I am a big girl now, don’t tickle me.”

Ndabezinhle: “You can never be a big girl to your father.” He said and Qalokuhle laughed loudly as he tickled her again.

Daliso: “Hawu, what a surprise! Nhlakanipho, come here, Zulu.” He gave his hand to Nhlakanipho who was looking at his father playing with Qalokuhle. Nhlakanipho directed his attention to his grandfather...

“My son!” Thembelihle exclaimed and gave out her arms for Ndabezinhle, they hugged each other after Ndabezinhle had put Qalokuhle down. Qalokuhle then moved to Nhlakanipho. “I wasn’t expecting you to come back.” she added.

Ndabezinhle: “I wanted to surprise you.”

Thembelihle: “Siyabonga. Sit down, I will dish food for you.” she said and pointed the chair for him. Ndabezinhle nodded and moved to his father.

Daliso stood up and he hugged his son. “Welcome back, Mageba.” He said.

Ndabezinhle: “It’s good to be back home.” he said and moved to his seat that his mother had pointed, a seat that was next to her.

Daliso: “Why don’t you sit next to me?”

Thembelihle: “No, let him sit next to his mother.”

Daliso: “Yazi, njalo, your mother used to give you to me whenever you were crying and I will hold you until you stop crying.”

Thembelihle laughed along with Ndabezinhle, the children were speaking alone seated next to each other. “I was pregnant, Ndabezitha.” She reminded her husband with her eyes glancing at him.

Dalisu: “And you are pregnant now.”

Ndabezinhle: “HHAYI! MAMA?” he raised his voice and looked at his mother.

His parents laughed. “Your father is lying. I am too old to have children now.” Thembelihle told her son.

Ndabezinhle: “I am pretty sure Mntwana was going to have a heart attack.”

Dalisu: “He’s old now, Ndabezinhle.”

Thembelihle: “Hhaybo, he’s my baby.”

Dalisu: “Hhayi, what brings you home unexpectedly?” he looked at Ndabezinhle who was taking a plate from his mother’s hands.

Ndabezinhle: “I didn’t renew my contract. I wanted to come back home now. I have made fortune for myself and now, I want to be home closer to my son.”

Thembelihle: “That’s a good thing. Nhlakanipho, did you hear that? Your father is coming home for good now.”

Nhlakanipho: “Yes, grandma and we will live together now.” he told his grandparents delightedly. He was very happy when his father told him that he was never going to leave him but they were going to live together.

Dalisu and Thembelihle looked at Ndabezinhle. “Yes, he will live with me now.”

Ndabezinhle informed his parents seeing the questions in their eyes.

Dalisu: “And what did his mother say?”

Ndabezinhle: “She has lived with him for a long time baba and now, I want him to live with me. I didn’t say she won’t see him.”

Thembelihle: “Did she agree to it? Or you forced it on her?”

Ndabezinhle: “I didn’t force anything mom. I asked that Nhlakanipho lives with me. She tried to protest but I argued it. She agreed.”

Dalisu: “There’s no problem if she agreed. Do you have a woman in your life?”

Ndabezinhle chuckled. “No, I am not looking for a relationship baba. I won’t even get married.” He informed them.

Thembelihle: “Hawu, is it what happened between you and Naledi that’s making you take that decision now?”

Ndabezinhle: “No, and can we not talk about these things. I am home and I think that’s something that’s important.”

Dalisu: “Hheyi, wena, you’ve been away from us and we should know what’s going on with your life.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, your father is right. We have a right to know.”

Ndabezinhle: “I am satisfied with the way things are in my life. I am back and now I will focus on looking after my businesses.”

Dalisu: “Okay, I hope you won’t bring any women in the house because you’ll be living with your son. He mustn’t see such things.”

Ndabezinhle: “Hawu, baba.”

Thembelihle: “Don’t say, ‘nkawu baba’ because your father is right.”

Ndabezinhle: “Can we have breakfast in peace? How can you give me such a lecture while I

have just come home?”

Dalisu: “Okay, after I have spoken to your older brother. We will slaughter a sheep and we will celebrate.”

Ndabezinhle: “That’s more like it.”

Thembelihle: “We don’t have to wait for his brother because he’ll come back late but we should have it slaughtered now.”

Ndabezinhle: “No, mama, let’s wait for him as dad had said.”

Thembelihle: “Won’t you be leaving tomorrow because schools haven’t closed? We should celebrate.”

Dalisu: “We will do it today your mother is right. I will get on the phone.” he rose up to call Mlamuli and Dalingcebo to come up...

Thembelihle: “I am so happy that you are back home.”

Ndabezinhle: “I am happy as well, mama.”

Thembelihle: “But you should shave this beard.” She said pointing the full face beard that Ndabezinhle had. He didn’t say anything but he laughed holding his beard that his mother was talking about... He looked at his son who was busy sharing food with Qalokuhle and they were talking what he didn’t even know.

Ndabezinhle: “How are things here? It’s peaceful.” Thembelihle didn’t answer her son but she sighed and looked at him without word uttered still. “No, mama, does your look mean it’s bad?” he asked.

Thembelihle: “You will feel the stress my boy.” She said to him and Ndabezinhle shook his head wondering what was going on...

“How can you tell me that you can’t come?” Elena asked Dalingcebo on the phone. She was seated alone on the couch feeling horny. She left Siphosami in Thembelihle’s palace because he wanted to stay behind as Nhlakanipho was there and the other children were at the palace...

They were called to the palace to join in at the small ceremony to welcome Ndabezinhle back home. They had a feast in the palace and the rest of the family was there but it ended with sad news as the family was informed that Gobela had died. They were told in the middle of the feast...

Dalingcebo: “I am tired Elena. We had a long day.”

Elena: “I am tired as well but I can’t control this feeling.”

Dalingcebo: “Why don’t you masturbate because I am even sleepy?”

Elena: “How can you be like this? You know that I can’t sleep with my husband I only have to sleep with you but you are refusing me now. I don’t want to masturbate I just want to have sex!” she shouted and cried instantly, this was the only way that she was going to get him to come to her house.

Dalingcebo: “And what if my brother come to your house. He’s coming back tonight, right? I heard dad saying that.”

Elena: “He won’t come here. And it’s not like you are afraid of your wife.”

Dalingcebo: "She's in the house at least you still remember that."

Elena: "You've left her before and now, you don't even share a bedroom. Why is she even home because you are getting divorced?"

Dalingcebo: "She has a daughter with me. Do you remember that? And I told you that she doesn't want to sign the papers."

Elena: "I don't care, please!"

Dalingcebo: "Ey, I will come." He said and hung up the call...

Elena smiled and removed the phone from her ear. She felt her body loosening up now because she was soon going to get what she wanted desperately. She then removed her clothes because she didn't want to have to struggle when Dalingcebo was before her...

"I knew I would find you like this. One could swear that you are my wife now since I know you like this. You were really dying." Dalingcebo commented seeing Elena seated on the couch naked.

Elena laughed. "Please come and stop talking." She gave her hand to him.

Dalingcebo: "No, we can't have sex over here."

Elena: "We have done that before."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, but you were not pregnant." He said removing his clothes and he placed them on the single couch that was by the kitchen's direction. He turned back to his pants get a condom on his pocket. His hand came back with it and he sat on the couch with her. "I wish that I can be able to father this child." Dalingcebo told Elena looking at her tummy.

Elena: "Please, let's not even talk about this because you are the one who convinced me to stay with your brother." she said pulling his face closer to her face and she rested her lips on his lips...

He parked his car outside the gate because he wasn't planning on staying inside the house. His plan was to find the truth from Elena and drive straight to that brother that she'd been cheating with. He had driven from Johannesburg in the morning and would take breaks on the road than usual. His last stop was at the bar where he had three glasses of whiskey. Mnotho opened the gate and marched to the house ignoring the guard that was greeting him. He wasn't drunk but he was angry, he'd sat on the bar thinking about Elena cheating on him.

His chest rose and fell beneath the yellow golf t-shirt that he was wearing. He held the door's handle tightly and his jaws taunted as from the porch he could hear Elena's loud moans. His world stopped for a minute, his wife was having sex with a man in his house! He turned the key and pushed the door. He marched inside his house faster and he didn't have to search for Elena and her... His brother! His little brother!

Mnotho's face turned pale and exhausted, all the hotness and anger was drained by his blood turning rather cold because of shock that consumed his whole being as his eyes laid on his wife and brother naked...

"NO!" Elena screamed as her eyes met Mnotho's eyes. She was kneeling on the floor with her hands stamped on the floor and Dalingcebo was humping on her coming from behind...

They were both enjoying each other until Mnotho's presence made the whole room that was

steaming hot, cold, it was cold as if they were inside the butcher storeroom...

Mnotho: "Dali...ngcebo!" his voice came out slowly with pain coming within his chest. The source of the pain was his broken heart as his eyes were looking at his brother who was still in shock in a way that he couldn't even move from his wife... Mnotho's voice was covered in disappointment rather than anger. He had no one that he suspected from his brothers in his mind when Happiness told him about this but now that he could see, he was bluntly shocked.

Only then Dalingcebo thought of moving away from Elena and he calculated the distance from where he was and the couch where his clothes were. The only thing he needed to do was to run for his life.

Elena: "My love-"

Mnotho: "RUBBISH!" He roared now that this woman was speaking, his blood that had turned cold boiled instantly reminding him of the betrayal that he was seeing with his eyes because for a moment he'd forgotten, his mind went blank for a moment until now. His eyes turned into fire as he moved closer to them and that was Dalingcebo's chance to run for his life. He jumped up from the floor and ran around the couch the minute his brother took the step coming towards them...

Elena: "Please, don't hurt me!" she cried as Mnotho pulled Elena by her hair. He saw Dalingcebo was running but he allowed himself to deal with his wife first that was before his eyes. He was going to deal with his brother after.

Mnotho: "DON'T HURT YOU! CAN YOU HEAR YOURSELF?"

Elena: "I am sorry! Please, forgive me."

Mnotho: "NO!" He exclaimed and turned to leave the house as he heard Elena asking for forgiveness. He was never going to bring himself to forgive this and he'd never been betrayed this way. HE HAD NEVER!

He grabbed his gun that was beside his car seat. He placed it on his back and he moved back to his house ignoring the guard who was asking 'if everything was alright with the prince' Mnotho stepped back inside the house and he found Elena on her feet behind the couch with her whole body shaking as she was trying to dress herself. She didn't know what was going to happen and she was scared because she'd never seen Mnotho that angry...

"Why are you dressing up?" Mnotho asked her with his voice sounding deeper than usual. Now, he had his gun on his hand.

Elena shook her head. "Please, I will do... anything you want me... to do but don't kill me... and my baby. I am begging you. I can't leave Gift behind..." she begged with a shaky voice.

Mnotho: "How could you do this to me?" he felt like he needed to ask this and he asked it with tears accompanying his question. He raised his gun up as Elena was trying to speak. He sat on the couch and he cried as if he was alone in the house. He cried like he'd never cried before. He'd never cried before a woman but tonight he couldn't control it...

He'd accepted this woman, learnt to love her and his love for her was genuine. He provided her with his security, love and care. They were married and she'd hurt him like this? No, woman had hurt him like this. He'd woman doing things that had hurt him. He'd never give

up on loving the next woman unless his intentions were to have nothing but pleasure with that woman. Like, it had happened with Elena in the beginning.

Mnotho: "ANSWER ME!" He roared and pointed his gun at her looking at Elena with his wet face, his face was wet from crying and now, he was angered by the fact that Elena was also crying. He stood on his feet. "WHY ARE CRYING!"

Elena: "Please, put the gun down." She begged and slowly moved backward because she wanted to run to her bedroom and lock herself up in there. She couldn't die and leave her son... When Mnotho lowered his gun Elena turned to run but the bullet that Mnotho shot at her stopped her from running. She screamed as the bullet pierced through her skin on her shoulder. She couldn't believe that Mnotho had just shot her and she felt the warm water between her legs. She'd peed on herself when the bullet came through...

Mnotho: "You think you can run from me now?" he asked with his cold and cruel voice that made Elena tell herself she could run... She needed to run for her son's sake. She tried to run but Mnotho shot her leg and her body dropped on the floor... Mnotho didn't even go back to check on her but he destroyed everything that was in the lounge and he moved to the kitchen... When he was done he moved out of the house and he met the guard standing on the porch.

Mnotho: "My brother has been coming here and you've never seen him!"

Guard: "Nkosana? No, I have never. Maybe he used the back gate I am always here at night and-" he tried to explain it to him pretty fast as he was scared for his life now because Mnotho had a gun on his hand.

Mnotho: "Take her to the hospital, you'll see how you cover up but my name shouldn't be included. That will be your punishment for not doing what I have hired you to do here." He gave him strict instructions and the guard nodded his head quickly. He moved away from Mnotho swiftly... Mnotho ran to his car to get to Dalingcebo's house. He didn't even want to sleep without seeing him...

S5 >> EPISODE 17

"I wish you can have successful business deals always because we get to eat some good food in some fancy restaurant." Simthande commented and looked at Mntwana after they were served with the dishes that they've ordered... Mntwana had been the one who asked Simthande to celebrate with him over dinner because he'd just gotten himself a good business deal.

Mntwana: "That would be very lovely. I was thinking..."

Simthande: "About?"

Mntwana: "Looking for your father. What if he's still out there and alive?"

Simthande: "I don't think he's out there and I don't even want to start looking for him because I will be settling in for a heartbreak. And I have someone who will sponsor my

studies next semester there's nothing to worry about."

They have been living together, Simthande was still working at the club and Mntwana would fetch her after work. He would set the alarm to wake him up and he would drive to the club to fetch her. They were living together in harmony as friends, Simthande felt safe and happy living with Mntwana. He was a friend that she never thought she would ever have. She was hoping that he wouldn't be taken away from her in any way whether he had to leave the city or he would have to go back to his kingdom in KZN.

Mntwana: "I know that but you know that every person deserves to know their background. They should know where they come from and who their ancestors are and that way they will get protection from them."

Simthande: "I don't believe in ancestors Mntwana."

Mntwana: "Why not?"

Simthande: "I don't believe a sinner like me can be a bridge between me and God. I mean there are horrible people who'd lived and I should trust those kind of people to guide me to green pastures?"

Mntwana: "It's not like that and that's why we have idlozi elihle ne dlozi elibi." (That's why there's a bad ancestor and a good ancestor)

Simthande: "No, don't try and change my mind over there. I believe in myself."

Mntwana: "Okay, but knowing your roots is important."

Simthande: "I thought this dinner was about celebrating your business but now, we are just discussing me. We are discussing things that don't matter."

Mntwana: "They matter because I want to date you!" he shot a thick exclamation at her and he looked around to check if nobody heard him. He looked back at Simthande and she was looking at him a surprised face. "Look, I didn't mean to request it like that but I like you and I want you to be my girlfriend." He told her calmly.

Simthande: "You just had to ask to date me! Just because I live with you for free-" she was cut off by Mntwana raising his hand to her face.

Mntwana: "Don't you dare think like that about me because I am not an opportunist. And for the fact that I drove to my place that morning to search for you that should have shown you that I care about you. But I guess you are used to people giving out favours to you just to date you."

Simthande: "Wait, did you just use what I told you about my past, against me? You use that against me?"

Mnotho: "I am not using it against you but it's not so great that you can think so low of me." He replied looking into her dark small eyes. He didn't think that she would even think of him that way. He didn't help her because he expected something in return but he cared for her. And he wanted to help her, now as he wanted to date her he didn't want to date her without knowing her background. What if they were somehow relatives?

Simthande: "I am sorry but I wasn't trained how to think about man like you."

Mntwana: "Okay, let's drop the topic then." He bit the dust pretty fast because he didn't want to have to beg her until he sound desperate to her. But he wasn't going to give up just

like that.

Simthande: "I am not good with relationships I am too insecure and I don't want to destroy this relationship you want before it even begins." She said to him seeing the awkwardness between them wasn't too great. And she was wrong to say what she'd said to him because he'd been kind to her.

Mntwana: "We are all insecure at some point."

Simthande: "But not like me. I turn to be more insecure if I date for love and that have destroyed every relationship I have had. The last guy I was with told me my insecurities were deadly."

Mntwana: "What did you do for him to say that?"

Simthande: "I don't want to talk about it."

Mntwana: "But I want to be with you regardless of the insecurities."

Simthande looked at him and told herself that he was only saying this because he didn't know how she was like. And she'd lost good relationships because of this insecurity problem she had. "Can we just be friends?" She requested.

Mntwana nodded but he told himself he wasn't going to give up on asking her to be his girlfriend. And he was going to make it his mission to find her father even if that meant asking money from his mother. He was going to do it...

Simthande: "You just nodded and that's not an answer I like if someone nods."

Mntwana: "It's fine we can remain as friends." He said the words out loud for her and she nodded with a smile...

When Dalingcebo ran off from his brother's house, he wore his clothes at the back of the house and he ran to his car. He didn't want to drive to his house but he needed a few of his clothes in the house. There was no better place that he could run to but his brother's house. He couldn't stay in his house because Mnotho was going to kill him. He saw how angry and hurt he was he didn't blame his brother. He'd feel the same way if he was in his position. He was regretting driving to Elena's house even though he didn't want to but what was he supposed to do because Elena was crying?

He got off his car and he rushed up to his house. He'd long moved his clothes to the guestroom since Nontobeko had refused to sign the divorce papers. The house was quiet signalling that Nontobeko was sleeping. Dalingcebo then grabbed his sport bag and he began packing his clothes, just a few clothes he was going to need. He stood on the dressing chair when he was done, he took his gun that was on top of the wardrobe inside a locked hand safe. He packed it inside his back and left the bedroom to get to his car... He started the engine and drove out of the premises, he got off the car to close his gate. He then jogged his car... He was driving to Johannesburg after he'd turned off the tracker of his car. He didn't want to be found...

After an hour on the road Dalingcebo decided to call Elena just to check if she was alright. He didn't trust his brother not to do even a single thing to her. His phone had missed calls from his brother. He didn't call Mnotho back but he called Elena. The phone rang without

being answered. He tried three times but the call wasn't answered. He decided that he was going to call the guard.

Guard: "Nkosana?"

Dalingcebo: "Baba, how are you?"

Guard: "I am trying, Nkosana. How are you?"

Dalingcebo: "I am not well. Elena, how is she?" He didn't want to tell him too much just in case Mnotho didn't say a thing to him. He didn't want to expose himself to the servant that he didn't know that much.

The guard sighed. "Ey, Nkosana. I am in the hospital with her. I had to rush her to the local hospital and things are not looking good." He informed him.

Dalingcebo: "To the hospital? What did my brother do to her? And I know that he wouldn't want you to tell anyone about it but I won't tell."

Guard: "I am afraid I was told not to talk."

Dalingcebo: "I was with Elena in the house baba. I know that my brother wasn't going to allow you to speak."

Guard: "He shot her twice and she lost a lot of blood. The nurses and the Doctor are doing their best to save them. They gave me a hard time telling me to tell the police what happened before they help her. But I stood my ground."

Dalingcebo: "What about the baby?"

Guard: "They said they will operate her first because she wanted them to save her baby before taking out the bullets."

Dalingcebo: "Okay, thank you. Please, keep me informed and that means I am asking that you stay in the hospital. And don't tell my parents until my brother does. They will call you if he has told them. Please, look after her I will pay you every cent that you deserve."

Guard: "I will do that, Nkosana."

Dalingcebo: "Thank you. I will call and ask to speak to her if they're done with her. Thank you so much." he said and removed the phone from his ear. He placed the phone away after he had hung up the call. He still couldn't believe what just happened and he was scared that his parents were going to hate him for this, his whole family was going to hate him for this... He was hoping that Ngcebo wasn't going to turn against him and send him home...

The tyre of car screeched louder as he parked his car before Dalingcebo's gate. He got off the car quickly with his gun in his hand, the gate wasn't locked but it was closed. He moved up to the front door and it was locked. He banged the door louder to be heard. He was fuming as the picture of his brother on his wife's back was still inside his mind and it didn't want to exit his mind. He swore, groaned and hit the door more than once but the picture of Dalingcebo and his wife didn't want to exit his mid.

"Mnotho!" Nontobeko exclaimed and yawned, she was angry when she had to wake up because her goon husband was banging the door. She was certain that Dalingcebo was the one who was at the door. She thought he'd left the house and forgot his keys inside the house. But she was surprised that Mnotho was the one who was at the door at that time of

the dawn...

"Where's your husband?" He asked and pushed her out of the way as if she was not a woman but just a child.

Nontobeko's back hit the door and she closed her eyes shortly, she clicked her tongue and moved back to the house as Mnotho was busy shouting Dalingcebo's name.

Nontobeko: "HE'S NOT HERE!" she shouted above her voice and didn't panic as she could see that Mnotho was carrying a gun in his hand. She kept still without thinking that Mnotho would shoot her.

Mnotho: "You are lying to me." he shouted and pointed the gun at Nontobeko but Nontobeko didn't even raise her hands. She kept still without showing any emotions and reactions to what Mnotho was doing. "Where's your husband?"

Nontobeko: "He's not here I don't know where he is. Please, remove the gun on my face because this is an offence I can get you arrested for it." She said politely. Mnotho removed the gun and he turned to search the whole house because he meant to have Dalingcebo now! "What's going on?" She asked following Mnotho as he was searching the whole house.

Mnotho: "Your husband was telling us lies when he said he has found a woman as he wants to divorce you. He found no woman but he was busy sleeping with my wife and he even got her pregnant. I want him now!" Nontobeko placed her hands on her mouth and she shut her eyes as she received the news that were shocking. Dalingcebo slept with his brother's wife? She was hurt when she learnt that Dalingcebo was cheating on her but she thought that maybe she could make it work if she could stay in her marriage for the sake of keeping her marriage status as a woman leading a career that was known to be for man. She thought that while doing that maybe Dalingcebo would change his mind and see that she meant business when she told him he wasn't going to marry the skank that he'd found. But she didn't know that it wasn't someone whom he was looking into marrying it was his brother's wife!

Mnotho looked back at her and he saw that she knew nothing about this not that she would know who her husband was cheating with. She wouldn't know but he thought maybe he told her where he was heading. And that meant Dalingcebo didn't come to the house. He clicked his tongue and left Nontobeko seated down on the cold floor crying...

She didn't cry harder when she first learnt Dalingcebo was cheating but maybe that was because she didn't know the woman. And maybe that was because she thought she could punish him. She knew how the Zulu princes were taught the importance of making women they see as gold their wives without wasting any time... But Dalingcebo was sleeping with his brother's wife, a woman he knew he was never going to marry. She screamed the pain and betrayal that was burning inside her heart. She laid down on the floor and let all the pain come out, Dalingcebo was an animal! And this woman – she stopped crying immediately and got up from the floor. She ran to her bedroom and opened her wardrobe where she kept her personal licensed gun. She wasn't thinking straight as she was thinking about was shooting a bullet through Elena's head and that child that Dalingcebo thought he was going to have. He wasn't going to have that child and she was going to do that just hurt him like he'd hurt her... She didn't even change her night dress. She ran to her car like a

thug being chased by the police. She'd opened the gate and so, she drove the car out of the premises... She was driving on the quiet roads like a mad woman...

And when she got to Elena's house all the hot blood cooled down because she found an empty house that was messed up. She saw blood stains on the floor. She clicked her tongue and kicked the bottle that was on the floor. She didn't know what was going to happen next but she was going to take everything from Dalingcebo for hurting her like this... When she was inside her car she decided she needed to see a Lawyer and be the one to serve Dalingcebo with divorce papers in terms of infidelity and she was going to take everything from him including her child.

Nontobeko: "Yeah, he will find the divorce papers in the house." She spoke to herself as she drove the car back to her house...

Danielle woke up as her daughter was crying next to her. It was a Saturday morning and she'd been alone in the house as Mnotho was not home. She was angry and hurt that Mnotho had neglected them like this.

"Hey, don't cry I will go and make you some breakfast." She told Pearl and walked to her wardrobe yawning. She took her gown and wore it. She then placed her phone inside the gown. She lifted her daughter and marched to the kitchen rocking her in her arms.

Pearl: "I want daddy, mommy."

Danielle: "He's not back from work baby." she told her and placed her on the kitchen counter. She turned to look for a bowl to make her some porridge after she'd given her some cheese curls.

Pearl: "Mama, daddy works at the hospital. Let's go and visit him."

Danielle: "No, my baby, he's not at the local hospital now but he's at the hospital that's very far from us. But he will come back."

Pearl: "I want him!" she screamed and cried... Danielle sighed and sent her hand on her gown's pocket as her phone was ringing.

Danielle: "Mama?"

Sheila: "Aybo! Why is my granddaughter crying?"

Danielle: "She wants her father and he's not back home."

Sheila: "Oh! My baby, you are alone over there?"

Danielle: "Yes, and I am tired of lying to my baby, mama. I don't know why he's not coming back now because his father told him to not stay over there for long." She replied.

Sheila: "How about I send your sister to come and visit you. She will keep the two of you some company."

Danielle: "That would be great because I have to sew some dresses and I am running out of time. She can come since she doesn't have anything productive to do over there."

Sheila: "Okay, just give the phone to Nontando. I was calling just to check on the two of you and don't worry about your husband be grateful that he's trying to man up and make things right."

Danielle: "But mama, why can't he let her go because their marriage was arranged? Why

isn't he letting her go because she cheated on him?"

Sheila: "You can never understand a man's mind babe, but maybe when she left him he realised what they had with his wife. Remember they had a life before you and the other sister wife came by? And take it from me, if a woman had loved a man's child that doesn't belong to her that man will always have a soft spot for that woman because most women don't do that."

Danielle: "That's no true because he abused her and that's because he didn't love her. Why did he abuse her after she'd loved her son?"

Sheila: "What you saying is wrong and never say that because women are not abused because they're not loved. And he must have abused her the minute he started cheating I can bet my money on that. It may be difficult to understand a man's mind sometimes but it's too easy on the other hand. Once a man finds a new vagina his head spins and he can even lose his rationality. And I am still not happy that you had to get mixed up in that life."

Danielle: "But I love him."

Sheila: "I understand but let him be my baby."

Danielle: "No, mama I want him to myself."

Sheila: "That will not happen because there's someone else. Don't forget that his first accepted you even though maybe she was forced to it but did she ever treat the wrong way? No, and you even told me they cooked for you. Don't let your love for your husband make you greedy but be happy that your husband is now owning up to his wrongs and trying to make things right."

Danielle: "I will try by all means mama even though my heart wants something else. But I will try."

Sheila: "That's my girl. Give the phone to Nontando." She requested and Danielle gave her daughter the phone. She let her speak to her grandmother while Danielle tried to digest her mother's words which she saw were difficult for her to carry out...

S5 >> EPISODE 18

He was defeated when he couldn't find Dalingcebo in his house. He kept driving around the village until he found himself parking his car before the river. He almost drove the car inside the water but he stopped himself when he heard the sounds of the frogs. The river wasn't a river which his car could cross and he was crazy to even think of driving forward still... He drove the car back slowly and he stopped it a bit far from the water. He took his phone and checked the time. It was 4am and he couldn't believe that he'd driven up and down all morning because of Dalingcebo and Elena!

How was he going to get out of this humiliation that Dalingcebo and Elena had brought upon his life? Dalingcebo was just his little brother! His little brother. How could he betray him like this? He slept with his wife and even got her pregnant? Why was everything bad

happening to him? The previous year he lost his unborn baby and they fought with his wife to an extent that they almost separated from each other. That was the most difficult time of his life and he never thought they would recover from that. But they did recover and Elena wanted to divorce her, he was heartbroken by that. He thought she was divorcing him because she was really fed up with being neglected by him because he had his focus on Danielle. But no, she wanted to divorce him because she had his brother's penis satisfying her.

How was he going to face his family? His father was already ashamed of him because of everything that he'd done to Happiness and his son. He was a shameless man and that was going to be proven by this infidelity. He was going to be seen as a failure of a man who failed to satisfy his wife and his brother had to do what he couldn't do. And even got his wife pregnant...

He cried all over again as if he was a child. He cried out the woe that had befallen his life and he wasn't going to be able to come back from this. He had Happiness who hated him and she was going to hate even more now as he had the father of her child killed. Danielle was already shouting and complaining always. She wasn't understanding as he thought she would be. His mother wasn't standing with him in this and he knew that Mlamuli wasn't going to stand with him as well. His father was already disappointed. He was alone and all that he could see was his sins that were heavy on his shoulders. He looked aside and saw his gun that was on the seat.

He took the gun and checked if it was loaded, without thinking Mnotho placed the gun on his salivary glands. "I have turned into a man who's ruthless and I am no longer worthy of living. My life is pain to myself and my loved ones-" He was cut off by his ringing phone. He didn't answer the phone and he didn't remove the gun from his glands. His phone stopped ringing and before he could click on the gun his phone rang again. He looked at the caller, he drew a long breath and placed the gun on his lap. He then lifted his phone.

Mnotho: "Ngcebo?"

Ngcebo: "Are you out of your mind Mnotho?"

Mnotho: "What are you talking about?"

Ngcebo: "You are trying to kill yourself. Are you crazy, Mnotho? Or you can't see the people you are leaving behind? Your wives, parents, brothers and CHILDREN! How can you think of this?" he shouted at his older brother.

Mnotho: "What should I do? Where will I even start Ngcebo? I don't even know who I have become. I don't know who I am now."

Ngcebo: "You're Prince Mnotho Zulu and there's nothing that will change that. And don't forget that you owe Happiness so much."

Mnotho: "Where will I even begin?"

Ngcebo: "You're a man and you'll know where to begin. You can't take your life because you owe that life to Happiness and you must be the one to bring all the good things in her life and all the happiness that she deserves. You can never do that in your grave!"

Mnotho inhaled air deeply as he felt the pressure from Ngcebo's words. "I won't take the

easy way out. I will do as you've said." He promised him.

Ngcebo: "Thank you and please, when the sun rises go to Gobela's house and check on him. I have called him about 3am and he didn't answer."

Mnotho: "That means he was still sleeping Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "No, just do that and call me."

Mnotho: "I will do that and thank you."

Ngcebo: "It's not me but your ancestors and what's honourable about dying in the river inside your car?" he joked to break the ice and Mnotho swore at him, they laughed before hanging up the call... Mnotho closed his eyes and placed his forehead on the steering, he felt hope creeping back in his life. His ancestors haven't forsaken him...

Happiness was seated in her room reading the newspaper article she was crying her balls out as she couldn't believe the lies they have written about Lonwabo on the newspaper article.

'THE MOST WORSHIPPED IT GURU DIES IN GANGSTER WAR' She read the article as it reported that Lonwabo was held hostage by the gang who was his rivalry. Lonwabo's gang came to the rescue to save their 'Leader' but it was mission gone wrong when blood was shed. Happiness was angry that Mnotho had covered his evil deeds like this. She had nobody to blame now but him because Lonwabo wasn't going to be killed if it wasn't for him...

Happiness threw the newspaper on the floor and she hugged the pillow. She cried, she wasn't supposed to come back to South Africa. None of this would have happened if she stayed in Botswana with her children and her fiancé. She was happy there and she was back in this hell...

"Luvuyo!" Happiness exclaimed and she hugged Luvuyo who was looking at the wall with sorrow written on her face. Happiness's children were sleeping on the couch and Luvuyo was seated on the single couch... It was a Sunday morning and she was inside her father's house in her bedroom when the maid called her to tell her that she had a guest by the name of Luvuyo and she came home with her children.

Luvuyo stood up and they hugged each other tightly. "I am so sorry, Luvuyo. I am sorry for everything that I have done because if it wasn't for me you would have had your brother with you by now." Happiness said to Luvuyo who was still inside her arms. They were still crying...

Luvuyo: "Why are you saying sorry?" she asked and moved away from Happiness's arms. They sat down on the couch.

Happiness: "I feel like it's my fault that Lonwabo died."

Luvuyo: "No, it's not your fault and when he decided to be with you he knew what he was doing. Don't blame yourself about this because blaming yourself won't bring him back in our life."

Happiness: "What will I be without him, Luvuyo? Why didn't he listen to me? I just knew that coming here with him wasn't safe. But he--"

Luvuyo: "Stop it, Happiness! That will not bring him back now. And yes, you told us that he mustn't come with you but we didn't listen to you because we didn't think that there was

danger waiting for him.” Happiness didn’t say anything but she cried. Luvuyo held her tighter and she let her cry. She understood the pain that she was feeling, what they shared with Lonwabo was special and she’d seen how much they loved each other... Luvuyo had always lived in fear that her brother was going to leave her sooner than expected she’d lived in that fear from the time she learnt that her brother wasn’t living the straight life that she thought he was living. She’d been scared for her brother’s life since then but today, her brother didn’t die the way she thought he would die. He’d found a woman he loved after losing his fiancé and he was happy again. He even quitted his gangster life just for Happiness and his child. Luvuyo was happy when Lonwabo told her that and now, he has died not in shame. And that was comforting.

Luvuyo: “We need to talk about the funeral.”

Happiness: “He must be buried back home Luvuyo and we should make arrangements to take him from the government mortuary.” She said and got up to take Nonjabulo who it didn’t look as if she was comfortable on the couch. Luvuyo got up after her and took Njabulo for her. They marched to Happiness’s bedroom discussing the funerals plans... They placed the children inside the bedcovers of Happiness’s bed and they sat down.

Happiness: “Did you see the newspaper article? How they lied about him? I know the man who shot him and I want to find him. We need to avenge Lonwabo Luvuyo.”

Luvuyo: “I will do no such thing!”

Happiness: “Hawu, you’re just going to let it slide?”

Luvuyo: “Yes, I will not put my life on hold and embark on the journey of revenge. My mother told Lonwabo and I that a person loses themselves while trying to partake in revenge. She told us that when Lonwabo wanted us to punish our father for abusing us. My mother would want me to be happy and live my life to the fullest not do a job that’s not meant for me. I didn’t create these people and if there’s someone who must punish them it’s their creator not me. And please, don’t put your life on hold because you want revenge.”

Happiness: “I am hurt.”

Luvuyo: “I am hurt too but joy comes in the morning and trouble don’t last.” She comforted her because she saw she was hurt the most.

Happiness: “We will stick to the newspaper story?”

Luvuyo: “Yes, and even back to my relatives we will stick to it. He had enemies and they killed him. I don’t want any war.”

Happiness: “You’ll come back after the funeral?”

Luvuyo: “No, I will go but I will come back to visit my baby. Come here.” She opened her arms and hugged her. “Be happy you were loved and he gave you happiness. Don’t have hate in your heart.” She advised her but Happiness didn’t know if she could do that because she hated Mnotho...

Happiness walked to her phone that was ringing. She took the phone and answered Thembelihle’s phone call.

Happiness: “Mama?”

Thembelihle: “Happiness? How are you, my child? I couldn’t sleep last night after your

phone call and you didn't even answer my calls after." She asked... Happiness called her the previous night to inform her that Lonwabo had been killed. She called Thembelihle crying and they didn't even finish the call.

Happiness: "I am sorry I wasn't fine."

Thembelihle: "And how are you now?"

Happiness: "I am trying mama even though it's difficult and his sister just came back with the children. I haven't spoken to them because they're sleeping."

Thembelihle: "I wish I can be there with you but we have also been told bad news that our family's traditional healer died."

Happiness: "HHAYBO! How?"

Thembelihle: "His wife found him inside his hut laying on the floor he was already dead. She told us that he left her after midnight to get to his hut. She fell asleep after him and she went to the hut to clean it the next morning but she found him there laying on the floor. He was dead."

Happiness: "I am sorry he was an important part of the family."

Thembelihle: "Yes, but we will get through it and that also applies to you, MaMthimkhulu. You'll get through the pain that you are feeling now. God will hold your hand and heal all your wounds."

Happiness: "Thank you, mama."

Thembelihle: "Give the phone over to his sister because I want to speak to her." she requested and Happiness did as she'd requested... Happiness sat on the bed next to her children as they were sleeping peacefully. She brushed their beautiful faces and she closed her eyes requesting strength...

"Here's the phone." Luvuyo gave Happiness her phone after she'd finished speaking to Thembelihle. She left Happiness to cry alone as Thembelihle's comforting words made her realise that she was alone without her brother because their mother had already died and Happiness and Nonjabulo were with them because she was dating Lonwabo. Now, she was going to be alone? She didn't want to be an evil sister and blame Happiness for her brother's death because she knew that Lonwabo was an adult who knew what he was doing when he chose to be with Happiness. She knew Lonwabo wouldn't want her to fight with Happiness and she didn't want that she wanted to bury her brother with peace then leave South Africa to be with her happiness. And Thembelihle gave her hope and she listened to her...

Thembelihle: "I will keep in touch, Happiness, okay?"

Happiness: "Yes, mama and thank you."

Thembelihle: "Don't thank me."

Happiness: "Mnotho is there?" she asked and closed her eyes shut!

Thembelihle: "I don't even know where he is because his father wants him here but he hasn't come home. I am sorry for your pain you are feeling."

Happiness: "Don't be sorry, mama." She said softly and they shared goodbyes. Happiness then placed her phone down... She started at her children. She was disturbed by her phone that was ringing.

“Baba?” Happiness answered her father’s phone call.

Mthimkhulu: “I am ready to speak to him.”

Happiness: “To speak to who?”

Mthimkhulu: “The father of your child I saw how you were yesterday my child. You were not yourself and I don’t want any sorrow in your life. I will speak to him and apologise for my wrongs but that doesn’t mean I will let you marry him. You will be happy without him but I will do the right thing.”

Happiness didn’t say anything to her father but she cried. Mthimkhulu kept calling his daughter’s name... She didn’t tell her father the previous day that Lonwabo has been killed. She went to the hospital to see him but she didn’t tell him about his death. “You are saying that now because you have seen in the newspaper that he’s dead. How could be so cruel dad?” She shouted.

Mthimkhulu: “Hhayi! Hhayi! MaMthimkhulu! What are you talking about now?” he raised his voice at his daughter.

Happiness wiped her tears hearing the genuine sound of her father’s voice. She stood up and walked to stand before the window. “Baba, Lonwabo was killed and it’s all over the newspapers that he was killed. His sister is here now and we are talking about taking his body back to the Eastern Cape for burial.”

Mthimkhulu: “Happiness?” he called her on a low disappointed tone.

Happiness: “Baba?”

Mthimkhulu: “I am sorry my child.”

Happiness: “I loved him, baba. I know he wasn’t a good man but he was good to me and he treated me with love and respect.”

Mthimkhulu: “Can I see his sister? It’s important that I ask for forgiveness.”

Happiness: “I will speak to her.” she promised and turned to Luvuyo who was entering Happiness’s bedroom.

Mthimkhulu: “Okay.”

Happiness dropped the call after she’d promised her father they were going to talk later. “I just got off the phone with my father and he wants to see you.”

Luvuyo: “See me for what Happiness?”

Happiness: “He wanted me to come with Lonwabo to the hospital so that he could apologise to him but I told him what happened because I couldn’t tell him yesterday. I didn’t even know how to talk about this yesterday.”

Luvuyo: “I don’t want to see your father I want to bury my brother.”

Happiness: “Luvuyo-”

Luvuyo: “No! I don’t want to see him.”

Happiness: “But speaking to him will do you good and it will be like you are getting some sort of closure and if not for you but for my Lonwabo.”

Luvuyo: “He would have never forgiven him for taking his fiancée!”

Happiness: “Yes! He was going to forgive him because his fiancée was taken and Lonwabo was given me. And we were happy together.” She pleaded with her holding her hands

because she could see that now she was angry.

Luvuyo: "I will think about it. You'll tell your father that."

Happiness: "Okay, thank you and please get some rest now."

Luvuyo: "What about you? You don't look like you've had enough sleep."

Happiness: "Okay, let's get some rest I will tell the maid to bring your bags to the guestroom and you'll sleep here with us. We will wake up tomorrow and we will go to the mortuary."

She said leading Luvuyo out of her room and she supported what Happiness was telling her. They needed to rest...

S5 >> EPISODE 19

Dalingcebo parked his car inside Ngcebo's yard, it was a Sunday morning. Nandipha had been the one to open the gate for him. He stepped out of the car leaving his bag behind the car he marched up to the front door. He opened the door, he wasn't too sure about coming to Ngcebo's house but he didn't see any other place he could go to.

"Buhlezi? What are you doing? Sawubona." Dalingcebo greeted Buhle who was alone in the lounge trying to wear her baby 'block heels' Her mother and her sisters were upstairs in their room getting dressed. She left them because she said 'they were disturbing her'

Buhle: "Hawu! Baba! Ufikile futhi!" (Uncle, you are here again!) she said delightedly and gave her arms up to Dalingcebo. He lifted her up and sat down on the couch with her.

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I am here again and what are you doing?"

Buhle: "I am wearing my shoes, baba. We are going to church with mama and grandma and our uncle. They will come to take us."

Dalingcebo: "Ha! That's a wonderful thing and you will pray at church, right?" he asked taking Buhle's shoes that were on the floor.

Buhle: "Ehe, baba!" she replied and lifted her legs for Dalingcebo to access her tiny feet.

Dalingcebo then helped Buhle get on her shoes.

Dalingcebo: "You will pray for your father at church?"

Buhle: "Ehe, uyagula baba?" (Yes, are you sick, dad?)

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I am sick and I need Buhle to pray for me."

Buhle: "I will pray for you. Hawu! Yezwa, baba, ugo loyo nomalume futhi!" (Did you hear that? That's grandma and uncle.) she raised her voice for Dalingcebo and she looked at him as she heard the ring of the intercom.

Dalingcebo: "Let's go open for them."

Buhle: "E.e, let's go call mommy. We will go with grandma's first car and grandma's second car because we are full." She told Dalingcebo making a tiny fist with her left hand and she stamped her right palm repeatedly on her fist and that was to signal that they were 'too many of them' to fit in one car.

Dalingcebo laughed and climbed the stairs to get to their room as Buhle had suggested. He

opened the door after he'd been told to come in. And when he entered the door the girls screamed and laughed as their mother was restraining them from running to their father's brother.

Similo: "MAMA, SHIYEKE SHIYE KUBABA WETHU!" (Mom, let us go to uncle)

Nongcebo: "EHE!"

Nandipha: "No, you'll see your father when you come back from church and now, you'll be late I am telling you." she raised her voice for them and looked at Dalingcebo, she shook her head as he was laughing. She knew she was promising something that wouldn't happen as they won't be coming back...

Ntokomalo: "Baba, shicela uye nathi futhi eshontweni." (Can you go with us to church, uncle?) she requested softly and looked at Dalingcebo as Thula was dressing her up, putting on her shoes. They were all wearing the dresses that their grandmother had sewn for them and Buhle was the only one wearing heels while the others were wearing black sandals.

Dalingcebo: "I will go with you some other time."

Thando: "Hawu! Kodwa, baba, ubaba wethu yena uthe naye uzoya nelinye ilanga kodwa mina niyazi ukuthi NEKE! NEKE! NJE!" (Our father also said he'll go some other time but I know that he won't!) She shouted last part clapping her hands and the adults in the room laughed.

Dalingcebo: "He won't lie to you."

Ntokomalo: "Yes, he will. Ubaba, ulele kodwa manje." (But he's sleeping now.)

Buhle: "Ehe! Kodwa thina shothandaza enekho yena!" (Yes, and we will pray while he's not there with us)

Others: "EHE!" they all chanted loudly.

Nandipha sighed and placed her hands on her waist. "These children can talk! Your brother is still sleeping. He didn't get enough sleep last night." She told Dalingcebo and pushed the children out of their room because they've finished dressing them up. Dalingcebo followed them with Buhle still in his arms.

Dalingcebo: "I actually came up to this room to tell you that your mother is at the gate. I am not sure because Buhle didn't allow me to go and check but she told me that it's her. You know how controlling women can be I just listened."

Nandipha laughed. "Please, help Thula take them to my mother I will come down now and I will wake your brother for you." She said.

Dalingcebo: "No, just let him rest I will go to the guestroom and do the same."

Nandipha: "Okay." She said and ran to her room to dress up quickly for church. She'd taken a bath but she felt sweaty but she wasn't going to bath again...

"Hawu, you are here, why didn't you wake me? I thought you said you can't come because of the project launch tomorrow." Ngcebo asked Dalingcebo who was seated on the high chair eating.

He was thinking deeply about Elena whom that guard had just informed him that it wasn't looking good on her side but they have managed to save the baby. The baby was on an incubator and Elena was in need of blood as she'd lost a lot of blood from being shot and

operated. Elena didn't want the Doctors to begin by taking the bullets off her body but she'd asked them to take out her baby first. They did what she requested. The hospital didn't have her blood type and she was barely holding on. Dalingcebo was stressed and he was seated alone now feeling bad that this cheating had shed blood as Elena was in the hospital fighting for her life.

Dalingcebo sighed. "Nandipha told me that you didn't sleep last night and so, I told her not to wake you. I needed to sleep as well." He told his brother briefly and sent his eyes on the food he was eating... The time was just after 1pm.

Ngcebo: "Okay, how are you?" He asked and placed the bowl of cereals on the kitchen island. He poured the milk on the bowl.

Dalingcebo: "I made food enough for the both of you us. It's on the microwave unless if you haven't quit that habit of eating cereals anytime of the day."

Ngcebo: "No, I haven't quit it. I will eat the food after this. Have you heard from home, mom called me and told me that Gobela died?"

Dalingcebo: "What! Really? When and what happened?"

Ngcebo: "He died inside his hut last night because his wife found him there on the floor dead. It's a messy situation."

Dalingcebo: "Eish, and I am here because I have messed up as well. I will ask someone else to do my job."

Ngcebo: "What do you mean?"

Dalingcebo: "Elena is in the hospital because Mnotho shot her."

Ngcebo: "No ways! What did she do? And their baby? And how's that connected to you. What's happening vele?" He asked and looked at him.

Dalingcebo: "The baby is fine and inside the incubator, her guard took her to the local hospital because driving to the private one was impossible."

Ngcebo: "Wait, why do you know so much about this and mama didn't even tell me about it. And Mnotho hasn't gone home."

Dalingcebo: "Elena's baby is my baby."

Ngcebo: "THAT'S BULLSHIT!"

Dalingcebo: "Ngcebo-"

Ngcebo: "No! Don't Dalingcebo don't even begin to justify it. In that meeting you told the elders you have someone. You were referring to your brother's wife? How could you do that?"

Dalingcebo: "No, I wasn't referring to her but I was just saying that to get Nontobeko to divorce me. But she refused to give me a divorce still. I won't tell the whole family this but when we first slept together I was so sexual frustrated and she needed comfort-"

Ngcebo: "You are not hearing yourself, Dalingcebo."

Dalingcebo: "Yes! I can hear myself clear and I am telling you this because there's nobody I can talk to about this. We were both neglected by our partners and we began having this affair three years ago. We both knew that what we were doing was wrong and we have attempted a number of times to stop it but we would always find an excuse to proceed doing

this until she got pregnant. Mnotho budge inside the house at dawn and he caught red-handed. I was busy and to think that I told her I don't want to come. It's like I knew."

Ngcebo: "SHIT!"

Dalingcebo: "The anger, disappointment and hurt was on his face and I don't blame him. The whole family will hate me, Ngcebo but you can't hate me, please. I can't have you turning your back on me."

Ngcebo: "I didn't say I will do that but why didn't you cheat with someone else if you wanted to cheat, Dalingcebo? Why your older brother's wife?"

Dalingcebo: "Cheating was the last thing on my mind even though I was living alone but I was so occupied by my work and the throne that I didn't think of cheating. But the problem began when I had to drive Elena to the hospital and we were alone in our parents' beach house. I tried to resist it but I couldn't and she just gave in to it without slapping me or fighting me."

Ngcebo: "Mnotho wanted to kill himself in the morning. I saw the vision he was in the river with a gun pointed on his head I woke up and called him and luckily he answered the call on my second try. I talked some sense into his head and he promised me he won't do it. He's already having problems and regrets with the way he treated Happiness and this had to happen."

Dalingcebo looked down and shook his head. "But now, as you say mama said he is nowhere to be seen. What if-" he was broken off.

Ngcebo: "I called him he said he will go home tonight."

Dalingcebo: "I am sorry, eish! If he went to his other wife, maybe he wasn't going to find us but I thought he will go to her because he was told by Gobela not to sleep with Elena."

Ngcebo: "Wait, Gobela told him that?"

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I was told by Elena that he was sick and Gobela told him not to sleep with Elena. My guess is that he saw that he's being sick because his wife wasn't carrying his child."

Ngcebo: "And he didn't even think that I mean I would think that first if I can be sick while Nandipha is pregnant."

Dalingcebo: "Maybe she trusted her since she doesn't know people that much over there and she's not that outgoing here."

Ngcebo: "Maybe but Happiness is the who told him. He drove down to KZN to confront the wife but Happiness didn't give out names."

Dalingcebo: "Shit! And how did she know?"

Ngcebo: "I don't know."

Dalingcebo: "But why did Gobela keep the secret don't you think he died because he kept the secret just like the girls were going to die if you kept the Happiness's whereabouts a secret. What do you think?"

Ngcebo: "That's what I am thinking if he knows and his wife said that their son won't be able to attend his funeral. He will be coming back this month."

Dalingcebo: "Eish. I have created a mess."

Ngcebo: "I don't even know what to say. I didn't expect this."

Dalingcebo: "Please, don't tell anyone that I am here. I want-"

Ngcebo: "I won't tell anyone."

Dalingcebo: "Thank you." he said and stood up with the plate of food. He saw Ngcebo was disappointed and there was nothing they were going to talk when he was like that. "Are you still getting married tomorrow?" he asked.

Ngcebo: "What should I do? Things are messed up. Nandipha and the kids won't come back here because we are actually getting married tomorrow. And now, I am not sure what to do."

Dalingcebo: "Don't change your plans for the rest of the family. You deserve this and tomorrow Nandipha should be your wife as you wanted." He advised.

Ngcebo: "You're right but what if she doesn't show up?"

Dalingcebo: "Hawu, what did you do to her? Why would you think that?"

Ngcebo: "A lot has been going on between us and last night she didn't even ask what my visions were about when she woke me. She kept quiet as if nothing had happened. I think she doesn't care anymore."

Dalingcebo: "Stop being negative that girl loves you."

Ngcebo sighed and nodded trying to believe his brother's words. Dalingcebo then left him and went to the guestroom...

>> "I am sorry, my child, you wouldn't be in this pain if Nandipha had listened to Ngcebo and kept quiet about your return. I haven't even called her about this but I will call her so that she will know the damage that she had done." >> Dalisu read the text that Thembelihle had sent to Happiness on her phone... Dalisu was seated on the couch inside their bedroom on a Sunday afternoon using Thembelihle's phone to send a text message and his eyes landed on this text that he mistakenly clicked on. Thembelihle was down at Gobela's house and she was going to return in the afternoon as she left in the morning with her daughters' in-law. Elena wasn't amongst the others and they didn't know what was going on with her because her phone was switched off..

Dalisu scrolled up and by the texts that were not obvious he concluded that Thembelihle had known all along, everything that was happening.

Dalisu clicked his tongue and he searched Nandipha's number on his wife's phone. He then dialled Nandipha's number because he wanted to know why his wife said she needed to shut up about this. He was angry and he wanted to confront his wife knowing the whole truth.

"Hello?" Nandipha answered the phone call softly.

Dalisu: "You are talking to Ngcebo's father. How are the children?" He asked boldly without asking about her. He'd never called her to ask about the children whenever he wanted to ask about them or talk to them he usually called Ngcebo not their mother.

Nandipha: "Eh... They're fine I don't know if you want to speak to them. They're not here they left with my brother."

Dalisu: "It's alright. I will speak to them some other time. I want to ask you something and

you need to be honest with me.”

Nandipha: “Yebo.”

Daliso: “I heard you are the one who informed us that Happiness is back in Johannesburg. Is that true?”

Nandipha: “Eh, yes, I asked my brother to call on my behalf.”

Daliso: “Were you not supposed to tell us? What was happening?”

Nandipha: “Buhle was sick and that’s because Ngcebo knew Happiness’s whereabouts but he didn’t want to reveal them. He saw a vision that our children would be sick to death if he doesn’t do what the ancestors told him to do...” she narrated everything to Dalisu with a slightly shaky voice because she was talking to Dalisu and Dalisu recognised the shakiness of her voice.

Daliso: “How did you get to call Mnotho if he took your phone?”

Nandipha: “I had to walk with Buhle to the neighbour that I knew could help. And he helped me by driving me to my mother’s house where I made the phone call. I didn’t know his number that’s why I couldn’t use the house phone.” she replied.

Daliso: “Tsk! Okay.” He said and removed the phone from his ears. He dropped the call and he clicked his tongue repeatedly as he dialled Ngcebo’s number using Thembelihle’s phone still.

“Mama?” Ngcebo answered the call.

Daliso: “How do you think, Ngcebo?”

Ngcebo: “Baba?”

Daliso: “Wangibiza ungizwa nje kodwa lutho ukuphendula umbuzo wami.” (You are calling me while you can hear that it’s me but you are not answering my question.) He shouted at him.

Ngcebo: “It’s just that I don’t know what you are talking about baba.”

Daliso: “I thought you were on the right path of being a family man even though I hated the fact that you went back to that girl. I couldn’t change your choices since you went on and chose her even after everything she did to you. You’ve went all out for her and that shows you are serious about her but when your children are sick to death you chose another person over them. What’s that, Ngcebo? Huh?”

Ngcebo: “Baba-”

Daliso: “STOP CALLING ME! ANSWER ME!”

Ngcebo: “I didn’t choose the other person baba but I thought I was doing what’s was right not that I was-”

Daliso: “You were doing what was right? Are you a traditional healer that you can trick the ancestors? What do you know about tricking ancestors because only Sangomas and traditional healers know that? What do you know?”

Ngcebo: “I don’t know anything.”

Daliso: “And you were going to do what’s right by who? Huh? By Happiness? That’s what you are telling me now, right?”

Ngcebo: “Baba, she has suffered-”

Daliso: “Voetsek! You were supposed to tell me that your brother has been abusing her. You saw that but you didn’t tell me. You didn’t tell not even one elder about it if you didn’t want to tell me. But you told your mother who knew about this but she kept quiet. Were you helping Happiness by being quiet?” he looked at the door as his wife walked inside the door. Ngcebo: “Yes, because I wanted her to be happy with her children and the father of her child.”

Daliso: “That’s nonsense! You wanted her to be happy, how does one become happy by running away from her problems? And what about your daughter? A full grown woman was supposed to be happy at an expense of my granddaughter’s life? Is that what you are telling me?”

Thembelihle: “Hhaybo!” she exclaimed and sat on the opposite couch.

Ngcebo: “No, but I was going to make means to keep Buhle and her sisters protected baba.”

Daliso: “What means? Huh? Because the only thing you were supposed to do if you wanted to help Happiness was telling us that your brother has been abusing Happiness. And I was going to deal with him because you know I hate women abusers but no! You kept quiet and let your daughter suffer and her mother had to walk with the child at night looking for help like a widow who was alone in the world. And what were you doing? You were in the house laughing with other children while one of them was sick to death. Is that what you were doing?”

Ngcebo: “I am sorry baba. I know I was wrong.”

Daliso: “Unganyanyisi mina! It’s not Buhle’s fault that her grandmother was told that Happiness is unhappy with Mnotho and her grandmother kept quiet with that. What did she do to help an unhappy daughter in-law? She did nothing just like you wanted your daughter to die thinking you are being honourable. Angilindele nje ukuthi ungangiphoxa wena usukhule kabi manje. Ukulwela umndeni wakho akulona icala! Awoni muntu ngalokho. Kodwa ngathi usuzobheda ke uma wenza nje! Gha!” (I don’t expect any disappointment from you now because you’ve grown. It’s not a crime when you fight for your family. You wouldn’t be sinning against anyone. But now it’s like you’ll start taking a wrong path if you do things like this.) Daliso dropped the call without giving Ngcebo any chance to answer for himself. He clicked his tongue and placed the phone down. He stood up and his wife stood up after him.

Thembelihle: “What was that about? Did Nandipha call you?” she didn’t know what to think because she wasn’t expecting this. But Nandipha wouldn’t even dare to call Daliso. Why would she call him?

Daliso: “I don’t even want to speak to you, MaSthole.”

Thembelihle: “I didn’t expect to come back to you shouting at Ngcebo for trying to protect Happiness. There’s nothing wrong that he did. Nandipha was supposed to listen to her husband but she failed to do that.”

“We were supposed to bury a child because Happiness was supposed to be protected? If you wanted Happiness to be protected, you were supposed to tell us that she’s being mistreated by Mnotho but you kept quiet. You wanted this girl to keep quiet as you did? But she didn’t

do that she did what you failed to do. She was supposed to watch her child die because you as a mother failed to protect Happiness?” he asked looking at Thembelihle and she didn't answer him. “Answer me, MaSthole!” he shouted.

Thembelihle: “I didn't know he was physically abusing her. She only left a note for me that I found after her disappearance.”

Dalisu: “Being mistreated is enough to know something is wrong! It's enough! Ngcebo had lost a child before and I am ashamed to learn that you wanted him to lose another child. His mother! Gha!” he clicked his tongue and turned to his phone that was on the charger. He took it and searched for Mlamuli's number.

Thembelihle: “That's not what I wanted but he was working on saving his daughter without implicating Happiness. And Ngcebo doesn't have a hard heart like yours, Mageba.”

Dalisu: “What is it that you are going to say to Buhle's mother? I learnt about this truth because of the text messages I saw on your phone. I might not want that girl in my house but Ngcebo is doing what I taught him when he stands by her side and their children. And it disgusts me that he did this.”

Thembelihle: “What I talk with my daughters' in-law shouldn't bother you. And just because you don't want to understand Ngcebo's view that doesn't mean he wasn't doing an honourable thing.”

Dalisu: “Lalela la MaSthole, it's not Buhle's fault that Happiness chose to date a man whom she wasn't married to instead of fighting for herself and her son. She didn't need to tell her father Mnotho was abusing her since she didn't want him to be killed by her father which was a selfless thing for her to do. But she was supposed to tell Mnotho's father that she's being abused by Mnotho. I wasn't going to run to Mthimkhulu but I was going to fix my own son. She didn't need to come here and tell me about her fake marriage but she was supposed to fight, women fight!”

Thembelihle: “Not everyone has strength to fight!”

Dalisu: “Then don't blame Buhle's mother because she has the strength to fight for her own children. Don't blame her because even I as a man I was going to put my sons first which is why I am disappointed in Ngcebo.”

Thembelihle: “You are saying this because all you care about is your own and not, other people. That's why you are speaking like this.”

Dalisu looked at Thembelihle without commenting he left the room and marched to his study dialling Mlamuli's number...

“Baba?” He answered the phone call.

Dalisu: “I want Mnotho here. Find him!”

Mlamuli: “Baba-”

Dalisu: “I don't want any arguments but find your brother and bring him to me not tomorrow but tonight.”

Mlamuli: “Yebo.”

Dalisu hung up the call and he released a long sigh before closing his eyes...

S5 >> EPISODE 20

“You are hiding in here and dad is looking for you.” Mlamuli said to Mnotho who was laying on his bed inside the house he shared with Happiness. He was topless and his face was pinned on the pillow. “Mnotho!” he raised his voice and shook Mnotho... He had driven to Danielle’s house to check for him and he didn’t find him. He drove to Elena’s house and he didn’t find anyone, the house was locked and there was nobody inside the house. It was no longer a mess because a guard had it cleaned up because Dalingcebo asked him to do that. Mnotho lifted his body and looked at his brother. He’d been inside the house with nothing but his thoughts.

Mnotho: “I am sorry.” his deep husky voice managed to say to his brother who was just looking at him. And by the look on his face he knew what it meant.

Mlamuli: “Dad is looking for you and mama has been calling Elena without getting through to her. Siphosami wants his mother and dad wants you.”

Mnotho: “I am coming.”

Mlamuli: “I am not leaving this place without you.” he informed and didn’t move from his position. Mnotho got up from the bed and he went to dress up to get to his father’s house. “You won’t say anything?” Mnotho asked.

Mlamuli: “What do you want me to say because you allowed the hatred to rule you? What do you want me to say because I told try to make Happiness happy but you didn’t listen to me? Now, what should I say?”

Mnotho didn’t answer him but he followed him to the door. They both hopped inside their cars. Mlamuli was driving the car for himself, he drove out first and Mnotho followed behind him speeding up to their parents’ house...

“Mama, we are here.” Mlamuli announced and they sat in one couch with Mnotho.

Thembelihle was seated on the lounge with Siphosami and Qalokuhle. Ndabezinhle had left with Nhlakanipho because he needed to attend school the following day which was going to be a Monday. Siphosami got up and went to his father.

Thembelihle: “Okay, I will go call your father but you don’t look well Mnotho.”

Mlamuli: “How can he look well mama knowing what he has done?”

Thembelihle: “Mlamuli, I am not talking to you and I understand you are angry that your brother did what he did but now, I am talking to him.”

Mnotho: “I am fine mama.” He replied and placed Siphosami on his lap... Thembelihle wasn’t convinced but she left them to get Dalisu... “What’s wrong? You don’t look well. You missed me?” He asked Siphosami.

Siphosami: “Yes, and where’s mommy, dad?”

Mnotho: “She’s not home but she will come back.” he knew that Elena was in the hospital and she’d given birth to a baby boy but he didn’t tell anyone about what happened. And he wasn’t feeling any regrets with what he did because Elena had betrayed him. He still wanted

Dalingcebo as well.

Mlamuli: "Where's she?" he asked and looked at Mnotho but Mnotho looked at his father as he was leading their mother back into the lounge.

"Qalokuhle, go and call the two guards." He instructed Qalokuhle and she got up fast, marched out of the house to do what she'd been told by her grandfather. Thembelihle and Dalisu sat down, and when Mnotho greeted his father he didn't greet back.

Thembelihle: "Why are you calling the guards?"

Dalisu looked at the door without answering his wife. He then looked at Mnotho. "Put Siphosami down Mnotho. Take him to the room." He instructed the guard who knew what he was talking about. Mnotho had already put Siphosami down as his father had said. The children left the room after Dalisu told them that they should leave the room.

"Nkosana?" The guard requested to take Mnotho's hand.

Dalisu: "Don't request a thing but take him and go with him. I didn't say be friendly to him. Why are you friendly?" he shouted at the guards and they did as Dalisu said. They held Mnotho on the either sides of his arms.

Thembelihle stood on her feet along with Mlamuli. "You can't do what I am thinking you'll do Dalisu." Thembelihle said looking down at Dalisu.

Dalisu: "I will do it and you will be watching." He said and took a hold of Thembelihle's wrist. She tried to battle with him but Dalisu was stronger.

Mlamuli: "Baba, please! Don't let mama watch you."

Dalisu: "Your mother should watch her son being beaten up because she had the nerve to keep quiet knowing that a daughter in-law was mistreated by our son. She will watch that." He said dragging Thembelihle along with him as he moved out of the house and Thembelihle was resisting going with him.

Thembelihle: "Leave me alone, Dalisu!"

Dalisu: "I will not leave you alone and you'll know next time when this happens again that you don't keep quiet with such things."

Thembelihle: "I didn't know he was hitting her!"

Dalisu: "EXCUSES!" He shouted and kicked the door of the hut that was slightly opened. He moved Thembelihle inside the hut first and looked back at Mnotho. "Hurry up! Don't walk slow as a man with no direction. You should also see this and all your brothers were supposed to be here but it's fine. I will talk with them, come!" he shouted at Mlamuli and he ran up to his father.

Dalisu: "Don't make him sit on the bench he must kneel. Give that bench to his mother over there." He gave out instructions as they've tied Mnotho's arms up on the thick strings and he was seated on the bench without his shirt on. They've ripped it off as Dalisu instructed them.

Thembelihle was standing by the door crying and she couldn't leave the room as Dalisu had locked the room and put the keys inside his pocket.

The guard rushed the bench to Thembelihle and she sat on it because she could feel that her knees were getting weak. She didn't want to see what was about to happen here. It'd been

long since Dalisu used his disciplinary room for their sons and he knew that Thembelihle hated it when he brought them here to whip them for their wrongs. But today, it was extreme to have Mnotho hanged up as if he was a nobody.

Dalisu: "Give me the bullwhip." He gave out his hand after he'd folded the sleeves of his shirt... Mnotho was already feeling hot and sweaty because he knew what was about to happen and he didn't want to object to it.

Dalisu: "You will know mfanawami ukuthi umfazi akashawa! I am ashamed of you today because you are counted along with those whims who think hitting their wives is being honourable and manly. Who gave you the right and who taught you that nonsense?" he spoke to Mnotho while whipping him with a black arm's length leather bullwhip. It would cling painfully on Mnotho's skin and he would groan as each strip hit his skin.

His mother was crying with her eyes closed and her head faced down but her ears hearing all the sounds of what was happening.

Mnotho: "I am sorry, baba."

Dalisu: "It was embarrassing to be told 'Ndabezitha your son abuses my daughter' I have never been so embarrassed by my blood who hates his own blood. Your mother and I have natured you with nothing but love and care and you hate and abuse your own son. What were you teaching him? Huh?" he shouted further still hitting his back and moved when needed because he needed him to feel the pain of being physically abused. He knew that it was never going to make up for all those years of abuse but it was going to make him sleep better at night. "MaSthole, look at your son or else I won't stop hitting him until you look at him. You are the one who kept quiet, right? And you still expected Buhle's mother to see her child in pain because you wanted Happiness to continue running? Look at him, now!" he roared above his voice and Thembelihle was forced to raise her head. She looked at Mnotho as he was beaten up by his father who was angry and disappointed at him.

Dalisu: "Give him the bench! Tsk!" he clicked his tongue and threw the bullwhip on the floor. The guard asked for the bench to Thembelihle and she stood up to give him. Mlamuli moved forward and held his mother.

Dalisu: "Sit on it, Mnotho." He instructed and Mnotho sat on the bench. Dalisu sighed and he moved to his front which he had also whipped. "You will sleep here tonight and think of everything that you've done."

Thembelihle: "No! You can't do that. There's no blanket no sponge here." She said moving closer to Dalisu and she held his arm. Dalisu didn't look at her.

Dalisu: "I wanted to leave you hanged up like this but I won't. Untie him!" He pointed the guard and then Mnotho. The guard did what Dalisu said. Dalisu was holding Thembelihle's hand as she was trying to fight him.

Dalisu: "Tomorrow, your mother won't be the one to look after you but you'll leave to go to your house. I dare you try and hit another one of your wives."

Mnotho: "I won't do it again, baba and I don't object to anything. I know that I was wrong and I am sorry."

"Good!" Dalisu exclaimed and turned to leave the room with Thembelihle still by his side as

he was holding her. “There’s nothing to cry about.” He said to Thembelihle who was still crying because she couldn’t believe what she was forced to watch by her husband.

Thembelihle: “You think what you did will fix things?” She asked looking at him as he was taking off his shirt inside their bedroom.

Daliso: “I don’t know but I know that you won’t wake up to go open up for him because he accepted that he was wrong. And don’t nurse him like a child.” he said to her before leaving her for the bathroom... Thembelihle laid down on her bed and closed her eyes with her feet curled up...

The next morning, which was the 5th of April. Thembelihle woke up and the first thing that she did after taking her bath was march to the hut where they left Mnotho. She’d slept with a mental note that she was going to wake up and open the hut for Mnotho but she slept like a pig without waking up. She left her husband on the bed still sleeping... When she reached the hut it was wide open and Mnotho wasn’t inside the hut. She looked around the yard and she saw nobody around. She then marched to the guards on the gate.

She greeted them and they greeted her back. “Where’s Mnotho? Did you by any chance saw him leave?” She asked looking at them.

Guard: “Ndabezitha was the one who opened for him at 4am and he asked Ncube to drive him to his house.” He replied.

Thembelihle nodded and she marched back to the house, she went to Qalokuhle’s room to wake her up for school after she’d made breakfast for everyone. She smiled as Qalokuhle was awake taking off her clothes. “Sawubona, MaZulu wami.” She greeted.

Qalokuhle: “Good morning gogo. You see, I woke up without you waking me up. I am a big girl now.” she said with a clean smile on her face. She yawned.

Thembelihle laughed. “I like that and I will award you because your grandmother will drive you to school today. How’s that?” she asked.

Qalokuhle: “Thank you, you are the best granny!” she exclaimed running up to get off her room to get to the bathroom. Thembelihle looked at her as she ran away, she laughed alone as she knew that the maid might have woken her up. She never woke up on her own and that was just that... She then marched to the boys’ room to wake Siphosami up. She made a mental note that she needed to pass by Elena’s house to check what was going on...

“Sawubona, mama.” Happiness answered Thembelihle’s phone call she was driving back to her house after dropping Qalokuhle and Siphosami at school. She’d passed by Elena’s house but it was empty. She’d called the guard who was watching over them but his phone was off...

Thembelihle: “How are you?”

Happiness: “I am holding on, mama and how are you?”

Thembelihle: “My head is all over the place and how are the funerals preparations. I want to come to the funeral.”

Happiness: “They’re going well but accepting that he has left us is very painful mama and his sister is hurting but she’s trying to be strong. And what hurts the most are the lies that were written in the newspaper about him.”

Thembelihle: “You haven’t told me what happened. If the newspaper report wasn’t reporting the truth. How did he die then?”

Happiness: “He’d long quit that life mama and he was killed by his enemies. I was there when he was killed-”

Thembelihle: “Hhaybo! And they didn’t kill you? Why didn’t you tell me all about this Happiness? You had to go through all that trauma?”

Happiness: “I am hurting mama and it’s hurt the most when I had to tell my children they will never see him. Nonjabulo threw tantrums and she’s been grumpy as if she can understand death. She doesn’t want to accept that God took her father.” She told Thembelihle and she cried.

Happiness decided to tell her the story she decided to stick to with Luvuyo because she didn’t want to carry the burdens of the shootout that Lonwabo had done because of her. She’d carried a lot of burdens because of this family and she’d protected them for peace’s sake. She didn’t want to have them insult her again. She didn’t want that because Danielle’s uncle killed Lonwabo for that shoot and she was angry. She was angry at everything that was happening and her hurt didn’t want to end.

Thembelihle stopped her car by side of the road. “And what about Njabulo? What did he say or how did he react?” She asked and wiped her tears.

Happiness: “He’s quiet and they’re always following me with his sister. I wish Lonwabo listened to me mama when I told him that he mustn’t come back here because it wasn’t safe. But he didn’t listen.”

Thembelihle: “He wanted to protect you and be here with you, that’s what a man who loves a woman does. He holds her hand and protects her.”

Happiness: “But he died!”

Thembelihle: “Forgive him, my child. Let it go and accept that he’s gone. It’s not easy to accept death my child but day by day we live with it. We carry the memories of our loved ones who’d pass, we carry their memories with us and the best we could do is treasure them than to drown in sorrow of their passing.” She comforted her and wiped her tears.

Happiness: “I wish you were here.”

Thembelihle: “I will try and come that side but I am not promising coming soon. I will definitely come for the funeral. I hope that you will visit me with your children. I have missed my naughty Njabulo and I would like to know Nonjabulo as well. I will speak to your father if you don’t have a problem.”

Happiness: “I could use being around you than being alone in the house. I don’t want to feel alone after the funeral because Luvuyo will head back to Botswana. She won’t stay.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, I will keep in touch and I am sorry that Ngcebo’s plans to save you all were interrupted. But I will forever be grateful to him.”

Happiness: “It has happened and it can’t be changed. Thank you for the call.”

Thembelihle: “Be well.” She said and they hung up the call. She laid her forehead on the steering and she cried...

S5 >> EPISODE 21

“Do you think I am fit to get married?” She asked looking at her mother. She was seated before the mirror and a stylist was decorating her styled locks putting on white beads on them. She’d have them twisted after the church service the previous day.

Today, was a Monday and she was getting married. She was nervous and she woke up not so sure that she was doing the right thing but she decided that she was doing what her love for Ngcebo wanted.

Faith smiled and held her hand. “Any woman who knows what it means to love, care and protect loved ones is fit to get married because those three things are most essential to a family woman. I remember when Ngcebo was abroad because of work and the little one needed to be sent to the hospital. I was so angry when you wanted him to work without worrying about Nongcebo –” She was broken off.

Nandipha laughed. “And you were angrier that he was angry because I didn’t tell him our daughter was sick because he couldn’t understand I didn’t want to stress him. Lord! Mom, you were dramatic.” She finished off for her sentence and they laughed with her mother, the stylist laughed as well.

Faith: “He didn’t want to see your view of things.”

Nandipha: “But you also didn’t want to see my view of things, mama.”

Faith: “Child! You were carrying a double weight on your shoulder and I don’t like it when you are not happy. But Ngcebo, loves you and he makes you happy. That’s all I want for the seven of you to be happy.”

Nandipha: “Thank you, sis Nandipha. Can you be the first to kiss the bride?” she joked and pouted at her mother. They laughed, Faith then peck her lips.

Stylist: “Now, you can wear the dress we will do make up last.” She suggested holding Nandipha’s shoulder and Nandipha drew a long breath before standing up. She removed her gown from her body.

Faith: “I will check on Palesa and the girls.” She said taking Nandipha’s phone that was ringing. She smiled and gave the phone to Nandipha. “Your mother in-law is calling you.” She told her.

Nandipha: “No, I won’t answer the phone.”

Faith: “What’s the matter? Why are you not taking the call?”

Nandipha: “I will answer it later, mama. Please, go check on my big girl and the little rats. Thula is there but you know how they’re trouble.” She encouraged her mother moving from her mother’s in-law’s phone call. She didn’t trust that Thembelihle had anything good to say to her and she didn’t want to have her mood ruined before marrying her Prince.

“Alright.” Faith said and walked out of the room wondering why Nandipha didn’t want to answer Thembelihle’s phone call... She got to the room in time because Palesa and Thula were really in need of a third hand.

Faith: “HHAYI! HHAYI! Listen when you are told to keep still because if you keep running around your mother and father won’t get married. And they will cry a lot if they’re not married to each other.”

Similo: “HAWU! NAMPELA GOGO?” She was the first to ask as they have stopped running away from getting dressed. They were looking at their grandmother who’d shout at them.

Faith: “Yes, and you don’t want your mother and father to cry, right?”

Girls: “EHE!”

Buhle: “Please, dress me up aunt.” She requested looking at Palesa.

Palesa: “You came to our rescue.”

Faith: “No, problem and I think you should go get dressed because time is not standing still. I will help over here.”

Palesa: “Thank you.” she said and left the room, her son was with Ngcebo in his house. They were going to come to the court with him.

Nandipha smiled and held Palesa’s hands as they were dressed up for the day. “I am quite nervous like it’s a big wedding.” Nandipha told Palesa and they giggled as a tear came out of Palesa’s eye. “Why are you crying now?”

Palesa: “It’s that just we’ve been through a lot together and you were just my roommate but we found a friend in each other.”

Nandipha wiped her single tear with a tissue that was nearby. They were inside Faith’s bedroom. “I love you and thank you for sticking with me even when I was annoying. And believe me, I was scared that I was going to wake up with nobody beside me because of my pregnancy.” She said and they laughed.

Palesa: “I did the same right? I was pregnant and feeling like I was just some shit of a human with baby daddy who ran away from me. But you became my everything even when my mother died, you were there for me and my son. And at some point of my pregnancy I treated you like you were the father of my child, wanting food cravings from you.”

They laughed. “We’ve abused each other I guess.” Nandipha said and they hugged each other tightly. “If it wasn’t for you and Duma, I wouldn’t be here. I can never forget you.” she added.

Palesa: “I love you too, Mrs Rasta.” She said and they shared cheeks kisses before leaving the room to get to the girls and their grandmother...

“Ha! Ha! Naze nabahle!” (You are beautiful!) Nandipha complimented her children and smiled delightedly looking at them on their sunflower and burlap tutu dress with thick straps. They all had a sunflower on their afro.

The girls smiled and looked at one another, they were seated on the couch quietly looking at themselves when their mother walked inside the room followed by Palesa. “SHIYABONGA!” (Thank you) they said loud and giggled, they felt beautiful and happy.

Similo: “HA! Mama, inkoshazana emhlophe!” she commented and the elders laughed while Similo’s sisters agreed with her.

Nandipha bent down to her daughters, she gave them kisses as they were already pouting for her. She was wearing an off the shoulder light champagne tulle dress with appliques flowers.

Nandipha understood she was going to a court wedding not a big wedding but she wanted to look beautiful for her Ngcebo. She felt she was beautiful, she believed she was beautiful... "What if she doesn't come?" Ngcebo asked Dalingcebo looking at him and he looked at Mntwana shortly. They were already at the court on their suits waiting for Nandipha and her bridal shower. Mntwana arrived in Johannesburg in the morning he took a plane from Cape Town. They were waiting with Randall and Phemelo. Banele was on his way. They were seated on the chairs inside the smaller room of the actual court where the wedding was going to take place.

Dalingcebo: "Ngcebo, are you having period pains?" he asked, he stood up and looked at him because he'd been complaining to Dalingcebo since the previous night that maybe she wouldn't come.

Mntwana and Randall laughed as Dalingcebo was walking away to answer his phone leaving Ngcebo swearing at him. "Don't even mind him because he doesn't know what you feel, boy!" he tapped on Ngcebo's shoulder but Ngcebo pushed his hand away from him. Ngcebo: "And how do you know because you've never been married and he has been married. How do you know, boy, boy?" he asked him and Mntwana didn't answer him but he laughed.

Randall: "Everyone wants to be seen as a man in here."

Ngcebo: "Yes, sbari but you know that I am the man I am making your sister my wife today. What do you say?"

Randall: "As long as she'll visit us."

Phemelo: "What are you laughing about, uncle?" he asked and looked at them all and they laughed instead of answering him...

"I have to tell your parents prince because she's dead now." The guard told Dalingcebo on the phone. He'd just delivered the news that Elena passed away in the hospital before his plans of having her transferred to the private hospital by the night of this Monday happened.

Dalingcebo opened his eyes and exhaled. "Did you tell my brother Mnotho that Elena has died?" He asked and walked slowly back to the courtroom.

Guard: "I haven't told him because his phone is off. But it's best that I drive to your parents' house and inform about this."

Dalingcebo: "I thought I could save her but I was late."

Guard: "Don't blame yourself because you know how slow things are in public hospitals because of the number of people they have to cater for but you were trying your best."

Dalingcebo: "Okay, you can drive to inform them. I will make means to come back and see my son." He promised and they hung up the call with the guard. He sat next to his brother he wasn't about to tell him what he'd been told because he wanted him to focus on his wedding...

He smiled as this woman appeared from the entrance of the room. He felt the peace and happiness reigning down his body. Today, he was taking her as his wife and they were going to share the rest of their lives together. Who would have thought that they would see this

day? He'd never seen himself as a married man with kids but now, he couldn't imagine his life without these six ladies that God had brought in his life. And after today, after a few hours he was going to be 'Nandipha's husband'

She looked at Randall and held on his hand tightly as he was walking her to her near future husband. A man that she never thought she'll find herself committing to because she wanted just an ordinary man and they would be a small simple family living a simple life. But she didn't get that, yes, their lives had simplicity when it was just them but factors contributing to what made them weren't just simple and she knew there was no running away now.

'Umfazi akabaleki kodwa uyama alwe alwele konke okungokwakhe. Uzoba njenge skhukhukazi Nandipha, uwafukele amatshwele akho unakekele uyise wawo.' MaNtombela's words that she'd spoken to her the previous night rang inside her mind now. She called MaNtombela to tell her she was getting married and she was happy for her. She shared words of wisdom with her as she always wished that one day she would pass down such words to her... And today, she was getting married she was going to be a wife from this day forward...

She'd just placed her phone down after trying to make a call that was unanswered when her maid called her and told her there was someone who wanted to speak to her and Dalisu...

"What's wrong, Ntanzi?" Dalisu asked the guard who was seated on the couch waiting for them. Thembelihle had joined them.

Thembelihle: "Yes, tell us because Elena is not in her house and we were worried about her. Siphosami has been asking about her."

Ntanzi: "I am sorry to inform you that she died in the hospital this dawn and I am sorry to come now to inform you. I didn't want to come while you were still sleeping." He told them politely.

"HHAYBO!" Thembelihle and Dalisu exclaimed and looked at each other.

Dalisu: "You can't just tell us that she died without explaining what happened and why you didn't tell us that she's in the hospital."

Thembelihle: "Yes, tell us."

Ntanzi: "I arrived in the house since I work at night and the door was wide opened I rushed up to the house. And it was messy with Elena laying on the floor in her pool of blood. She was alive and I rushed her to the hospital, she died in the hospital because she was short of blood and the hospital didn't have her type of blood." He lied to them. He'd called Mnotho and told him that this was the story that he told the Doctors and he was going to tell his parents. He told him about Elena's death and Mnotho only said 'Okay'

Thembelihle: "And what about my grandchild?"

Ntanzi: "He's alive and inside the incubator in the hospital. It's a boy."

Dalisu: "When was this?"

Ntanzi: "Saturday, night."

Thembelihle: "Hhaybo! And you are telling us that today. Why didn't you come here and tell us? Or why didn't you call? We didn't even go to see her what did she think about us? And

the nurses?”

Ntanzi: “She wanted me to guard her because she was scared and she told me that she didn’t want the family to come see her while she was like that. And we have arranged that she was going to be taken to Richards bay tonight but she died before that could happen.” He told them the truth there because even Elena didn’t want her in-laws to come see her. She only spoke to Dalingcebo on the phone.

Ntanzi felt the burden that Mnotho had put on his shoulders to make him lie to Dalisu and his wife. But he was just a servant that’s what they did...

Dalisu: “Thank you.” he said and pointed the door with his eyes because now Thembelihle was crying and he had to comfort her. Ntanzi then left them. Dalisu stood up and pulled Thembelihle up by her shoulders. “Don’t cry.”

Thembelihle: “Why is everything bad happening to us? Mnotho has lost his wife and does he even know that she’s dead? He has recognised that he was wrong and now, why is this happening? His wife died.”

Dalisu: “We will go speak to him today. I will call Mlamuli and we will go to his house. Don’t cry, sthandwa sami.” He brushed her back slowly and let her cry...

S5 >> EPISODE 22

“Why did he choose to come to this house?” Dalisu asked Thembelihle as their driver drove them through Mnotho’s house that he shared with Happiness... When his father freed him from the disciplinary room Mnotho asked the driver to drive him to this house not Danielle’s house. He was in pain and he wanted to be alone with this physical pain that he was feeling. Thembelihle: “I think he didn’t want his wife to know what had really happened I don’t think you would tell me that your father hit you.”

Dalisu: “That’s too bad because I will call their wives into Nkosazana’s palace and I will tell them about this along with their husbands. I don’t want to have daughters’ in-law who will be beaten up.”

Thembelihle: “You can speak to them but there won’t be a need for you to tell them that you have beaten up Mnotho.”

They stepped out of the car and marched to the front door of the house. “I am afraid I will do just that and they will see that I mean business.” He said following Thembelihle inside the lounge where Mnotho was laying on the couch shirtless and there was food on the coffee table. The TV was on as he was with Mlamuli who was eating but Mnotho wasn’t eating. They were not really watching the TV but Mnotho had just told Mlamuli the truth about Dalingcebo and Elena the affair that led him to shoot Elena. Mlamuli was disgusted by this and he had made a decision that Mnotho supported.

Thembelihle didn’t comment further on the statement that her husband had just voiced out. She only looked back at him and they sat down on the free couch. “We are coming from

Danielle's house and she told us you haven't been there since you got back." Thembelihle said to Mnotho. She looked at him closely and the strips on his skin were visible showing he'd been whipped.

He rose up and sat up straight. "I wanted to be here alone." He informed.

Dalisu: "How are you?"

Mnotho: "I am fine, baba and how are you?"

Dalisu: "We've received the bad news from Ntanzi last night. Did he tell you or he didn't tell you?" he looked at Mnotho and then Mlamuli. He could recognise that he'd hit him bad as the strips were visible but he didn't regret it.

Thembelihle: "What's wrong, Mlamuli? You look angry." She asked before they could answer their father's question because she could see that Mlamuli looked angry and there was disgust that accompanied the angry look.

Mlamuli: "I have just been told something that's nerve wracking."

Dalisu: "What's that and answer my question first. Your mother just disturbed me while I was asking a question." He looked at Thembelihle.

"I am sorry." She said looking at him with her hands placed on his knee. She then looked back at their sons without removing her hand from Dalisu's knee.

Mnotho: "Yes, I know that Elena died and before you can ask, and worry yourself about a lot of things I am the one who shot her." he announced without showing any remorse and the pain, he had no regrets because he couldn't see himself living with Elena and having to share parenting responsibilities with her after what she'd done to him. She'd ripped his heart out of his chest and he could barely feel like he was alive...

This morning he felt much better after speaking to his daughter, Pearl on the phone but when he had to narrate what happened to his brother. Mnotho recognised that he was hurt and angry...

There was total silence from Mnotho's parents after he'd told them he was the one who shot Elena. In Thembelihle's mind all she was thinking about was the fact that her son was danger walking and she didn't have a clue about ways or things to do to help him... She looked at Dalisu who was looking at her with a 'what's happening' worried face and Thembelihle read through it.

Thembelihle: "You are not serious, right?"

Dalisu: "He's not serious MaSthole. What can I do to a son who'd killed a mother of his son?"

Mlamuli: "Why don't you ask what she did?"

Thembelihle: "Is there a valid reason that he could kill the mother of his son? And Mlamuli why are you raising that up as if you are supporting your brother's actions. You are seated here convincing each other that what Mnotho did had a valid reason?" she spoke quietly because her blood pressure was down and her nerves were down because she didn't expect this.

Dalisu: "What led you to take such an action?"

Mnotho: "She's been cheating on me with Dalingcebo and that baby that she was carrying is

not my baby but my little brother's baby.”

“MLAMULI! A PAPER BAG AND WATER!” Thembelihle shouted at Mlamuli as Dalisu had his grip tighter on Thembelihle's hand. He was battling for a breath because of the shock that consumed him disabled his ability to inhale the oxygen. His chest closed in as if he had a load blocking him to breathe.

Mnotho jumped off the couch as if he had no pain of his own. His father was wincing for air and his mother was only crying holding his hand. Mnotho placed his knee on the couch and he untied his father's shirt buttons from his neck down to his chest. “Mama, rub his inner wrist!” He raised his voice for his mother while he was trying to take off his father's suit blazer.

Dalisu's eyes were widened and his brain had frozen for that moment until Mlamuli came back with the paper bag and they placed it on Dalisu's mouth covering up to his nose.

Mnotho pulled him straight because he'd laid on the couch with his body stretched straight along with his right leg while his left leg was still bent on the couch. They then encouraged him to breathe. Dalisu then began inhaling and exhaling on the paper bag, the limited ounce of breathing in air and breathing it out gave him strength...

They all sighed and the two brothers sat back on their couches as their father had removed the paper bag from his mouth. He took the glass of water and stood up from the couch.

Thembelihle: “Where are you going now? Don't go outside and be angry alone, Dalisu.

Please.” She begged him and stood up after him. Dalisu walked away still without listening to his wife. Thembelihle looked at her sons, she hadn't even digest what Mnotho have told them because she was worried about her husband and that was the only thing in her mind.

Mlamuli: “Baba, listen to mom.”

Mnotho: “Let them follow each other.” He told him, glancing at Mlamuli who was on his feet in attempt to follow their parents.

Mlamuli: “This is not right and Dalingcebo should be banned from here.”

Mnotho: “I don't want to see him Mlamuli. I don't want him alive.”

Mlamuli: “You won't keep killing people when they wrong you because nobody killed you for every wrong you have done. And tell me, why did you kill Happiness's baby daddy?”

Mnotho: “I didn't kill him I told you what happened.”

Mlamuli: “You were going to kill him, Mnotho if Happiness didn't come to that warehouse. I am so ashamed of the things you've done and you let me support you while you were wrong.”

Mnotho: “I am sorry Mlamuli I have said that.” He said to him and Mlamuli didn't say anything further but he left the room making his way to the bathroom... Mnotho closed his eyes and his mind began enslaving him with thoughts that he couldn't control at all...

“Mnyeni wami.” Thembelihle called Dalisu out and she sat next to him on Happiness's garden chairs. The flower garden had long wilted as it owner was no longer around to look after it as she'd done over the years. The Tuesday was sunny and quiet as the children of the village were at school...

Dalisu: “I don't want to talk now, MaSthole because where will I even begin? What went

wrong with these boys? Dalingcebo?”

Thembelihle: “We need to talk to them.”

Dalису: “Do you think they can be in one room? Mnotho killed his wife for cheating on him with his brother!”

Thembelihle: “Mnotho has become the danger even to himself and I think that we need to send him away for a while.”

Dalису: “What do you mean?”

Thembelihle: “We can send him to prison so that he can be able to suffer the consequences of his actions. I don’t want my sons away from me but I think this is best for him it will make him-” she closed her eyes and let her tears fall as she couldn’t believe that she was thinking this now. What else would she do to help her son? She had never thought that there would come a day where she’ll think that one of her sons deserved jail to have their morals restored.

Dalису: “That is not the solution! We will never get him back if we can send him to prison. Why would you even think like that?”

Thembelihle: “We can have him back, baba. We won’t send him to prison for long. It will be easy to get him out maybe after a year. You know how people can just trick the officials-”

Dalису: “No, MaSthole! Dalingcebo is the one who wronged his brother.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, but Mnotho is out to kill as he has killed his wife. How can he shoot a pregnant woman? How can he even lift a gun at a pregnant woman? We need to do this for his own good.”

Dalису: “That will not happen and you are sending him to prison for wrong reasons and that will not happen.”

Thembelihle: “What will we do then? You are not taking my input I will let you solve this alone then and in the end just know that I want my sons alive. All seven of them.” she raised her voice on him and she stood on her feet to leave him because he wanted to have his way and he didn’t want to even consider what she was putting to the table. A disgrace had befallen them and Mnotho was out for blood, these were drastic times and they needed nothing but drastic measures... She stopped walking and closed her eyes as pain covered her heart. Her younger son slept with his older brother’s wife? How did that happen? Why did Dalingcebo do this and that woman let him sleep with her? Who initiated this first between them and how long were they having an affair? She asked herself these questions and she had no answer to them.

“Don’t cry.” Dalису said softly and he held his wife who’d cringed her upper body, her hands holding her knees... Dalису pulled her up by her shoulders.

Thembelihle: “I don’t want to be around for any of this because I am ashamed that something like this happened under our watch.”

Dalису: “There’s nowhere you can run to, MaSthole.” He said and moved back to the house with her, he was still holding her. He’d reminded himself that he was a man and

Thembelihle was his woman. He didn’t need to be weakened by this disgrace their sons had brought into the family. Mnotho who’d married a loose woman and Dalingcebo who’d slept

with his brother's wife...

"How did you learn about this?" Dalisu asked Mnotho, the four of them were back in the lounge to discuss this matter that was bitter in their tongues.

Mnotho: "Happiness and I were fighting and she blurted it out to me."

Thembelihle raised her swiftly to look at Mnotho as he told them what she didn't expect. She wasn't expecting this? She heard it from Happiness?

Thembelihle moved her head to look at Dalisu and he was already looking at her. "You knew about this MaSthole?" Dalisu asked what he'd guessed quickly after Mnotho told them who told him about the affair.

Thembelihle: "Hhaybo! No! How could I know?"

Dalisu: "MaMthimkhulu tells you everything and you keep quiet with everything that she tells you."

Thembelihle: "No, she didn't tell me about this. And how did she find out about this Mnotho. Did she tell you?"

Mnotho: "No, she didn't tell me. It was in a heat of an argument about her affair with the father of her child. My questions were not answered."

Mlamuli: "I can't believe she chose to blurt this out while she was angry and she never told anyone while she was sane."

Thembelihle: "People reveal things when they're angry and you won't blame Happiness for your younger brother's infidelities."

Mnotho: "Nobody is blaming here mama. What are you saying?"

Thembelihle: "I am telling you that she was angry and if you were fighting about her infidelity it would be acceptable that she revealed this one because I am sure you were shouting at her that she cheated on you while you never loved her. You never treated her right."

Mnotho: "It's my fault that she cheated?"

Thembelihle: "That's not what I am saying and the matter at her hand is not about Happiness but Dalingcebo and your late wife." She said and looked at her hand then her husband.

Dalisu was quiet but he could hear their argument... Thembelihle couldn't believe that Happiness didn't tell her such a thing. She kept it hidden from her and she thought she trusted her with anything. But maybe she had a reason and she was going to ask her...

Mlamuli: "I want Dalingcebo to be banned from here."

Thembelihle: "THAT WILL NOT HAPPEN!" She shouted and clapped her hands once with her eyes looking at Mlamuli who'd announced the unexpected.

Mnotho: "Who should leave? I am not the wrong one."

Dalisu: "You are brothers and you should forgive each other."

Mnotho: "I will never forgive Dalingcebo for this."

Thembelihle: "Was it alright when you were banned from your birth place, Mlamuli? It was right?"

Mlamuli: "I didn't do such a thing."

Dalisu: "You disrespected your father and that's a disgrace as well."

Mnotho: “I am expected to work with Dalingcebo after he’d disrespected me and slept with my wife? I didn’t bring Elena here for her.”

Dalису: “Why does it seem like you have an eye for loose women because even your first wife cheated on you? How do you choose these women?”

Thembelihle: “Happiness is far from being loose and Mnotho’s treatment led her to cheat on him. If he treated her right, I am sure she wouldn’t have done what she did. Her cheating is justified unlike Elena.”

Dalису: “You can’t say that because we don’t know Elena’s reasons to cheat. Isn’t said that when a person is unhappy they leave that partner?”

Thembelihle: “She was prisoned here, Ndabezitha. And Elena was loved by Mnotho. She disrespected our son and that can never change!”

Dalису: “Dalingcebo will not leave from here and we will sort this out because we don’t want you to hate each other. You will not kill your brother and should he die I will send you to prison mfanawami.”

Mnotho: “You are protecting Dalingcebo, baba?”

Thembelihle: “Killing people doesn’t solve problems and you can’t have your brother’s blood in your hands Mnotho. You are hurting me even more as you are thinking of nothing but killing.”

Mlamuli placed his hand on his head and he digested this argument trying to find a solution to this because his parents were right. Dalingcebo didn’t deserve to be stripped away from his place of birth. He’d been there and it wasn’t good at all. He was older than them and taking a decision with anger wasn’t what he needed to do right now. “Mnotho, our parents are right. It was wrong of me to request that Dalingcebo must be banned from our lands. It ours and his, no matter what he has done nothing can change that. And you are still to request forgiveness from Happiness don’t you think that you should forgive him if you want to be forgiven?” Mlamuli raised a point and looked at Mnotho. But he didn’t look back at him.

Thembelihle: “Your brother is right Mnotho.”

Dalису: “Let’s resort to reality that says it’s early to speak about forgiveness to him because this is still fresh. My son, all I am asking from you is that you do not even think to kill your brother because it will not take away anything.” He pleaded with Mnotho who had his head looking down.

Thembelihle: “Your brothers will come back and we will begin the funeral arrangements. And if you don’t-”

Mnotho: “I want to be left alone and I won’t attend her funeral.” He announced and stood up, he left his parents without waiting for them to speak any words to him further...

Thembelihle: “How will I even look at Dalingcebo after learning about this truth? Why did he do this to his brother?” she looked at Dalису as it hurt her deeply that Mnotho’s life was crumbling down and this had to happen. He was her son and she could never turn her back on him. And as his mother, she could see the hurt in his eyes... Dalису held Thembelihle...

Mlamuli: “Don’t cry mama.” He said softly as his mother cried...

S5 >> EPISODE 23

Faith was smiling looking at Nandipha and Ngcebo who were facing each other now as they vowed to be together for eternity.

From Ngcebo's side, there was Dalingcebo, Banele, and Mntwana. Nandipha's side had Faith, Randall, Palesa, Duma and their children... But Faith was bothered by Nandipha's phone that kept vibrating on her bag. She then got up from her chair to answer the phone that was ringing...

She stood outside the court and the phone rang again, Thembelihle was the one calling Nandipha. She swiped green and placed the phone on her ear and before she could even greet Thembelihle. She began speaking...

Thembelihle: "I have been calling since morning and you didn't even answer not even my single call. You have lost all your respect wena and I was supposed to strike you with a wet stick like a child not slap you. What has gotten over you -" she shouted without greeting Nandipha and letting her speak. She didn't get a chance to learn that Nandipha wasn't the one on the phone.

Faith: "Hhaybo! Did I hear that well? You slapped my daughter! For what exactly? Why did you slap my child?" she raised her voice as she was enraged by what she'd heard from Thembelihle.

Thembelihle: "Hawu, Faith-"

Faith: "I asked you a question and so, please answer me because clearly there's a whole anger wing set out for Nandipha. What did she do!"

Thembelihle: "Don't raise your voice because you don't know what's going on and I won't share izinkinga zomuzi wami nawe. You are not part of them." (I won't my house problems with you.)

Faith: "We mam' ndlunkulu, ungazongibhedela mina! If you have a problem with my child, I should know that you have a problem with my child. You called Nandipha shouting because you are angry at her and when I am asking as her mother you are telling me about your house." She shouted out of anger.

Thembelihle: "Don't shout at me. You are disrespecting me."

Faith: "Why should I respect you? For what reasons should I respect someone who hits my child? You are not a queen to me but you are a queen to your husband and if you step on my toes I won't sit back. What did Nandipha do to get a slap from you? Who gave you a right to slap my daughter!"

Thembelihle: "I am a mother to her as well and there's nothing wrong if I discipline her. And why don't you ask her what she did to get a slap from me because I wasn't going to slap her for no reason. And she..." she tried to explain the situation to her and she was broken off by Faith before she could finish. She was angry and what she needed was to vent her anger out, things were not going well, things were a mess and her mind wasn't thinking straight for all

this was too much for one person. It was too much!

She had a weight on her shoulders and she didn't know where to offload it. She didn't know who was supposed to help her carry this weight. Without realising the damage, she was doing. She vented it all out in hope for something she wasn't about to achieve...

Faith: "Just stop! Don't even finish that you are telling me. I won't argue with you while my daughter is busy marrying your son. I won't waste my breath on you. I saw your true colours when you held a grudge for Nandipha's children because of your son's decision that they must not visit you. I saw you for who you are that time. Nandipha won't be marrying Ngcebo to be abused by you." she stamped and turned to go back to the courtroom.

Thembelihle: "Don't make such decisions because this got nothing to do with them getting married. I forgot that they are getting married today and I understand that's the reason she wasn't answering her phone. And my son loves your daughter so much that it's ruining him now because he only thinks for her and nobody else. But that doesn't mean that I want them to be separated from each other. I love Nandipha as my daughter in-law I have loved her like my own child and if I don't love her I wasn't going to discipline her when she was wrong."

Faith: "No, we will free your son from these chains of being ruined. Because now, you are just barking as a dog and let me tell you Queen mother you are barking at the wrong tree. Please, don't call my daughter to talk such things to her. Nandipha is not a dumping site for your nonsense." She said and hung up the call. She looked at the phone as it rang,

Thembelihle was calling again. Faith didn't answer the phone...

She was angry at her daughter the most for hiding such things from her. Why would Nandipha burden herself with such things?

She picked up her feet and ran back to the court room but she was late as Dalingcebo was the last witness after Palesa to sign. He'd signed Ngcebo and Nandipha's marriage certificate.

Faith closed her eyes as they were told that they were done with the court proceedings. The rest of the guests clapped their hands and they moved to Nandipha and Ngcebo...

"Mum, where did you disappear to? You didn't even see them being announced husband and wife." Randall asked his mother who was standing by the entrance looking defeated. Randall had Similo and Thando in his arms and they were sleeping. All the girls fell asleep except Nongcebo.

Faith: "Your sister made a mistake." She told him and marched up to Nandipha and Ngcebo who were following behind Ngcebo's brothers. She left Randall confused... She stopped walking and she told herself she was going to speak to them outside the court on the parking lot. Nongcebo ran up to her granny leaving her mother's side who had Buhle in her arms and Ngcebo had Ntokomalo. They were leaving the courtroom...

"Gogo, umama no baba shebeshadile!" (Granny, mom and dad are married now) She told her grandmother delightedly holding her hand. Faith smiled and lifted Nongcebo off the floor to follow the others.

Faith: "Yes, Nongcebo, are you happy?" she asked and looked at her. Nongcebo giggled and nodded. Faith saw she had to wait...

"Can I speak to the two of you?" Faith requested to Nandipha and Ngcebo... They all drove

to Ngcebo's house after the photoshoot. They had food prepared for them and they sat down to eat and be marry...

Now, they have seen everyone off and the only people left in the house were, Dalingcebo and Mntwana. The children were asleep...

Ngcebo: "Okay, we can speak over here." He said pointing the couches. Nandipha and Ngcebo sat in one couch. Faith sat on the single couch, she told Randall to go without her.

Faith: "I am not happy about this marriage and the two of you need to have the marriage annulled."

"WHAT!" Ngcebo and Nandipha exclaimed and they looked at one another. They were still wearing their wedding outfits.

Nandipha: "Mama-"

Faith: "Don't even speak Nandipha because you've been carrying burdens that are not meant for you and you kept quiet about it. Your mother in-law-"

Nandipha: "MAMA!" She raised her voice and stood on her feet, she shook her head for her mother giving her a desperate look. She didn't know what she was going to say but she guessed maybe she'd spoken to Thembelihle. She'd seen the missed calls on her phone and she saw there was Thembelihle's phone call that was answered.

Faith: "Why are you stopping me from talking?"

Nandipha: "That's because there nothing to talk-"

Ngcebo: "I want to know the reason behind your mother's request Nandipha. Please, sit down." He said and pulled Nandipha back on the couch. Nandipha sat down and looked at Ngcebo shortly then her mother. She didn't want to have her mother to reveal whatever truth she had about her mother in-law. She didn't want Ngcebo to fight for her with his mother. She knew he was fond of his mother the most and she didn't know what it would do to them if he had to learn everything that happened that night. Maybe he was going to stand with his mother and maybe he was going to stand with her. She didn't know and she didn't even want to find out.

Nandipha: "Mama, I love Ngcebo-"

Ngcebo: "Keep quiet Nandipha because your mother is speaking and I want to hear what she has to say." He shouted at her with his eyes looking at her and Nandipha didn't say anything, she looked aside.

Faith looked at her daughter and the fear and pleading in her face made her angry. She didn't want this for Nandipha. She wanted her to be happy fully and yes, Ngcebo made her happy but it didn't look like Ngcebo knew what was going on. It didn't look like Ngcebo knew what she had going on. "You know nothing about what happened between your mother and Nandipha? I don't know the story fully as well but Nandipha knows what's going on." She said without telling Ngcebo about the phone call.

Ngcebo: "What's going on, Nandipha?"

Nandipha: "Your mother and I, had an argument and now, my mother is making it a big deal. It's nothing but a normal argument."

Faith: "Can I speak to Nandipha alone, Ngcebo?"

Ngcebo: “No, now, the two of you want to shut me out of this conversation. I am not going anywhere and I want to know what’s going.”

Faith: “Go and ask your mother if you want to know what’s going on. I want to speak to my daughter now. Nandipha, stand up!” she shouted at them and kept her eyes still on Nandipha showing her she meant business.

Nandipha: “Mama-”

Faith grabbed one of the girls’ doll that was on top of the table and she warned : “I will whip you with this doll Nandipha stand up!”

Nandipha stood up quickly and looked at Ngcebo who had his head looking down thinking about what Faith had told them. They needed to have their marriage annulled and that was because of his mother? What did she do?

“Mama, you were supposed to speak with me first and don’t involve Ngcebo in this because he doesn’t know-” Nandipha was broken off by her mother. They were standing by her mother’s car.

Faith: “Don’t tell me that because you have your mother in-law blaming you for something that doesn’t even involve you. And you kept quiet about it.”

Nandipha: “Mama, it’s something that has passed and Ngcebo has been-”

Faith: “You are only 24 years old Nandipha and you’ve been through a lot of stress because of your in-laws. I am afraid that you’ll be stressed out by his family not your husband that you are married to and by the time you reach 30 years you’ll be-”

Nandipha: “Mama, you always tell me to be positive and now you are not being positive mama. It was just one argument and I won’t leave Ngcebo for it. And please, if you want to see me happy don’t tell him. It was something that happened once and let’s not dwell on it.”

Faith: “Did she really slap you?” she asked holding her cheeks and Nandipha closed her eyes as her mother touched her. “You should put your health first for your children’s sake Nandipha and I don’t want you to stress out.”

Nandipha: “I am not stressed and please, don’t call his mother. Just let her be. I will live mama and I will also sleep when I have to sleep.”

Faith looked at Nandipha and she closed her eyes. She didn’t know what she could do to make things easy for her daughter. For her not to have any troubles and stress following her. She figured telling her to leave Ngcebo wasn’t going to do her good because Nandipha didn’t want that. Maybe she needed to trust God that she was going to be happy... Faith gave out her arms to Nandipha and they hugged each other.

Nandipha: “What will I say to Ngcebo, now?”

Faith: “You’ll tell him to ask his mother I know his mother won’t tell him. It doesn’t look like she wants him to know.” She replied stepping inside her car. Nandipha then rushed to get inside the house to open the gate for her...

“I have something for you.” Nandipha said to Ngcebo joining him on his bed. He was quiet and Nandipha had tried to speak to him but all he wanted was for Nandipha to tell him what happened between her and his mother.

Ngcebo: “If you are not telling me what your mother was talking about don’t think I will

accept anything coming from you.”

Nandipha: “I did nothing wrong, Ngcebo why don’t you ask your mother?”

Ngcebo: “She’s telling me you had an argument and I want to know about that argument that went down here.” He looked at her, Nandipha didn’t tell him anything. Ngcebo then laid down and faced the other side giving Nandipha his back without asking what was it that she had for him.

Nandipha: “Okay, if you are angry at me be angry but I will tell you what I have for you.” she told him and sat on the bed facing his back. She placed her hands on Ngcebo’s arm.

“There’s an event tomorrow night in Pretoria, business people will be there and some celebrities will be there. It’s a high profiled event and I have secured a place for you to be amongst the guests. Some artists will be showcasing their paintings and drawings because these business people like such things.” She informed him and paused for a few seconds as if she was waiting for Ngcebo to breathe a comment. But he didn’t...

Nandipha: “I know that you are not about business and all that but the reason I want you to go to this event is because of those sneakers that you had changed and redesigned just for yourself and have your name on them. In my meeting with the Department of Education last month I met someone I know, she’s one of my trusted readers and she told me that a sneaker brand is looking for a public figure who’ll have his range of sneakers for men. They will be on that event. We were just talking about different things when this came up. And so, I know how much you love sneakers.” She said and stood up leaving Ngcebo to get to the closet...

Ngcebo looked at her as she walked away, he had been listening to her speak and he had an interest in what she was talking about...

Nandipha came back with the suit that she had designed for Ngcebo. “I asked Greg to design this suit for you and you’ll wear it in this event wearing it with the sneakers that you have re-designed. You know the ones I am talking about and you must have your locks tied up on the far back not neatly. I am sure if they can see your sneakers they will have an interest and want to speak to you. You’ll have your own range of sneakers and you’ll have fun doing that. Oh, well, the girls and I will get some money from daddy.” She said and giggled but Ngcebo didn’t say anything. Nandipha then turned back to the closet with the brown suit with thin pink lines that made the fabric scotch, not business suit fabric type of suit. It was suitable for casual wear and formal if the owner saw it fit. She had confidence that Ngcebo was going to attract eyes and she’d prayed that her wishes for him come true because she saw how he much he liked buying sneakers and change them...

She moved back to their bedroom and Ngcebo was still on that position with his eyes closed. Nandipha went to switch off the lights for her to sleep. She felt bad that he wasn’t saying anything even about this and she thought he was going to be happy...

“Baba, I needed to request something but with the way things are I don’t know if it would be appropriate.” Thembelihle told Dalisu on their way back to the palace... They were coming from the hospital they’ve drove with Nkosazana to have Elena’s body transferred to the

private mortuary. They did all the proceedings while Dalisu was waiting for them in the car to finish up what they were doing. And when they were done they went to the nursery together to see their grandson. Nkosazana was there with them when they met the baby... They were alone in the car with Dalisu driving the car on the dark quiet gravel road with a few cars driving opposite them.

Dalису: "What is it?"

Thembelihle: "Happiness's baby daddy will be buried this Friday in the Eastern Cape and I wish to go there just to support her."

Dalису: "That will never happen."

Thembelihle: "Hawu, kodwa baba. What would be wrong if I go there just to support her? Remember that Happiness is still my daughter in-law traditionally and her child as well is ours according to tradition."

Dalису: "I do not object that because it's the truth but you will not go to the funeral of the man that your daughter in-law cheated with. What example would you be setting Thembelihle? And what should other daughters' in-law think if they can hear that you went to the funeral of Happiness' lover?"

She looked down and didn't answer him because she understood that Dalису was speaking the truth. It wouldn't be a right thing for her to go to the funeral of a daughter in-law's lover. "You are right. I won't go to the funeral but I have asked her to come visit me with her children. I don't know if that would be inappropriate as well. She promised me that she will come because she could use being around me. I want to help her heal baba." She told him.

Dalису: "I don't have a problem with her coming here with her children because I have missed my grandson. But do you think coming here to this mess will do her good? How will you help her then?"

Thembelihle: "Leave that to me and baba, I know that our son has hurt her but don't you think they deserve each other?" she looked at her.

Dalису: "I didn't even suspect that they were acting this relationship they had. They had me believe that their marriage was genuine MaSthole."

Thembelihle: "Yes, I never thought so too. And when Happiness told me that Mnotho was hurting her I could see that she loved my son but Mnotho didn't appreciate her."

Dalису: "I don't think we should encourage them to get back together because what if Mnotho hurts her again."

Thembelihle: "No, baba, I am not making excuses for him but you know our son. He was just getting the arrogance from these two women in his life and I told him that them both they don't amount to Happiness. Even his ancestors see Happiness as a diamond suitable for him."

Dalису: "You are telling me that you want them back together?" he looked at her shortly and back to the road, he took a long turn taking them to the road of their palace. He didn't expect this conversation but he was looking into it with an open mind.

Thembelihle: "Yes, I want Happiness for Mnotho. I believe in my son and should he be given a second chance he will treat Happiness as his queen."

Dalису inhaled deeply. "And what about the elders? They will never forgive what

MaMthimkhulu did and you heard how aunty focused on her cheating rather than the abuse our son inflicted on her.” he made her aware.

Thembehle: “Yes, they may be against her coming back but if the two of them want to be together nobody can stop them.”

Daliso: “I hear you and I believe that MaMthimkhulu is a good woman that can’t be questioned. But I don’t like that she chose cheating than to fight against the injustice our son did to her.”

Thembehle: “Let’s just say she was scared baba and I admit that I was wrong to keep quiet about the abuse. I was supposed to tell you and for that I am sorry, Mageba.”

Daliso stopped the car in their parking inside the palace. They didn’t step out of the car but Daliso looked at Thembehle. “You’ll learn to do things differently next time mkami. And tell me, what if MaMthimkhulu doesn’t want our son back? I believe it won’t be easy for her to accept him back.”

Thembehle: “Yes, and it can even take her years if possible. But I will be behind my son encouraging him not to give up on her. I won’t put any pressure or ideas in Happiness’s head but I will support Mnotho.”

Daliso: “That’s a good thing because she mustn’t be influenced.”

Thembehle: “Yes, but I want her to visit me.”

Daliso: “Okay, I don’t object to that and it would be better if she can forgive him sooner because that way we will appease to her ancestors and they will do the same. We don’t need to have this anger of the ancestors following us.”

Thembehle: “Yes, you are right baba. Let’s go, have dinner and we will rest. The children must be asleep now.” she said and they stepped out of the car. They marched to their house holding hands.

Daliso: “Did Ngcebo call you? He said they will be coming back home tonight. He said Dalingcebo was with him in his house.”

Thembehle: “No, he didn’t call but Mntwana told me they’re coming back home.” she replied as they step inside the house... Daliso then sat down on the dining table and Thembehle moved to the kitchen with a smile that she didn’t think she would have after having such a horrible day. And she had this smile because of the hope she had that she might get Happiness back as their daughter in-law. She prayed and hope that she could be the light and joy in her son’s life. And Mnotho will be her king and her absolute happiness. It would take time but she was serving a living God and her God wasn’t going to let her down. He was going to unite them and she was positive about that...

“How are things now?” Thembehle asked Happiness on the phone. She was seated on her dressing table moisturising her body and her husband was in the bathroom taking a shower. The phone was on the loud speaker.

Happiness: “It’s getting better, mama. I am not in the yard with the family all day because I wasn’t married to him but I go there regularly.”

Thembehle: “Hawu, where are staying with the children then?”

Happiness: “We are in his house and it’s painful being here without him. But his family

brought three girls to be here with me. Luvuyo requested that and they agreed to it. I have the children and these girls.”

Thembelihle: “It’s okay. Kodwa mntanami, why didn’t you tell me about Elena’s affair with Dalingcebo?”

Happiness sighed. “I am sorry mama but I learnt it from the conversation on the phone. I had a little time left there when I learnt about the affair and I had a lot going on in my head. I am sorry that I didn’t tell you. And I didn’t mean to blurt things out to Mnotho like that but I was angry. I was hurt as I have just seen Lonwabo die. I didn’t do the right thing.”

Thembelihle: “Don’t feel responsible for this Happiness. You have a lot of things on your shoulders and please, face those things.”

Happiness: “I am just sad you won’t be coming to the funeral anymore.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, I can’t come because we will have two funerals this weekend. And Nkosazana promised me that they will plan Elena’s funeral I will have to be with Gobela’s wife because they’re a big part of our family.”

Happiness: “I understand mama.”

Thembelihle: “But you still going to come and visit me? I should also meet Njabulo’s sister and I don’t want you to be alone.”

Happiness: “Yes, I will come mama. I don’t want to be alone as well.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, we will speak on the phone. Get some goodnight sleep and if you can’t sleep you can take sleeping tablets.”

Happiness: “I will do that. And I hope that things won’t turn ugly between the two brothers.” She said to Thembelihle.

Thembelihle: “I don’t even want to think about it now. I want to sleep and please do the same.” She said and they hung up the call after wishing each other goodnight. Thembelihle sighed and closed her eyes...

S5 >> EPISODE 24

“Baba?” Ngcebo answered his father’s phone call. He looked at Nandipha’s side of the bed and it was empty. He sat up straight.

Daliso: “How are you?”

Ngcebo: “I am fine and how are you, baba?”

Daliso: “There’s nothing that’s good but how did your wedding ceremony go yesterday? You didn’t even call to inform me if everything went well.”

Ngcebo: “Hhayi, I had a lot of things in my mind baba but everything went well. But why are you saying nothing is good?”

Daliso: “Last night we were told that Elena died...” he narrated everything that the guard told them and Ngcebo was surprised at this revelation but he figured Mnotho must have told the guard to cover up for him.

He didn't see what had happened between Mnotho and Elena but he was only shown that his brother was in the river trying to kill himself. He woke up and called Mnotho telling him to stop what he wanted to do.

Ngcebo: "That's very bad, baba."

Dalису: "Yes, and I ask that you come back home because we will have to be together until the funeral."

Ngcebo: "Have you spoken to Mnotho?"

Dalису: "No, I don't even want to answer that question but you will tell Mntwana and Banele. I will call Ndabezihle. I will send someone to Dalingcebo's house."

Ngcebo: "Dalingcebo is also here with me along with Mntwana. I will tell them and we will come back home. But baba, what will happen because Gobela is also dead and who'll be buried first?"

Dalису: "We will discuss everything once you are all here."

Ngcebo: "Alright, we will come back."

Dalису: "Okay, that's good. Bye."

Ngcebo: "Bye." He dropped the call and he closed his eyes shut. He stood up thinking about this, Elena being dead and he wondered how Mnotho was feeling now that another person died because of him. He was hoping that he would be able to forgive himself for everything...

His eyes laid on the suit that Nandipha showed him the previous night. He smiled and touched the suit. He couldn't deny that he fell asleep happy last night. He was surprised of everything that Nandipha had planned out for him. She was unbelievable and even though he was angry with her the previous night. He fell asleep with a smile on his face that he didn't tell Nandipha about and he wasn't about to tell her...

"Hee! I have a wife? I wonder how much she paid for this suit." He chuckled and shook his head, he turned back from the suit that belonged to him. He needed to shower for his day ahead was going to be long...

Ngcebo opened the door to the guestroom that Dalingcebo was using. He sat on the empty bed facing his brother's direction. He had his eyes closed but he wasn't sleeping. "I can see that you are not sleeping." Ngcebo said.

Dalingcebo: "You'll talk about Elena's death?" he asked softly without opening his eyes nor sitting up straight.

Ngcebo: "Yes, and you didn't tell me about it Dalingcebo."

Dalingcebo: "Ntanzi only told me about it when we were in court and I didn't want to give out bad news in a wedding."

Ngcebo: "Do you think he'll ever tell the truth?"

Dalingcebo: "About what?" he asked and sat up straight. He looked at Ngcebo.

Ngcebo: "About Elena that she was killed by Mnotho. Dad told me that he doesn't know who shot her because when he reached there Elena was already on the floor. He rushed her to the hospital."

Dalingcebo: "I don't know but maybe he'll tell the truth to our parents and they will ensure

that they cover it up.”

Ngcebo: “Eish, I can’t believe he shot a pregnant woman and you, did you answer Nontobeko’s phone calls?”

Dalingcebo: “My phone is switched off I only had it on yesterday because I had organised that Elena will be transferred to The Bay hospital with the baby. But that didn’t happen because she is dead now.”

Ngcebo: “Dad said we should come home.”

Dalingcebo: “I won’t be coming home with you. What if Mnotho kills me, Ngcebo? I don’t want to die.”

Ngcebo: “He won’t kill you and we won’t tell him that you are home. It didn’t sound as if dad knows about this affair.”

Dalingcebo: “I think they don’t know yet because my phone hasn’t report to me that one of them called me.”

Ngcebo: “This is a mess and the two of you will be enemies now?”

Dalingcebo: “I will ask him to forgive me.”

Ngcebo exhaled and stood up from the bed. “I am hungry and so, let go have breakfast if it’s ready.” He said marching to the door.

Dalingcebo: “I am sleeping.”

Ngcebo: “You are grieving your woman?”

Dalingcebo: “Tsk! Voetsek! Don’t joke about such things.” He shouted at him and Ngcebo laughed closing the door behind him. He could see that Dalingcebo was scared to go back home and since he came to his house. He had been stressed and he would sleep all morning. Ngcebo was completely clueless about what was going to happen next. He was hoping that the spirit of forgiveness would reign upon everyone in the family...

She was standing before the stove cleaning it after she’d finished making breakfast. The girls were inside the lounge playing with Mntwana. She’d asked him to feed them porridge while she made breakfast, they have taken their morning bath. Mntwana had fed them and they were waiting for their actual breakfast. She was quiet paying attention to what she was doing but her mind was replaying the voice note that she’d listened to in the morning from her mother in-law. She clicked her tongue as she felt that nothing was right. Ngcebo wasn’t even happy about what she’d told him last night. And she’d dedicated her all to this event thinking he would be happy to try out this opportunity. But maybe he just didn’t like it and his silence was his way of telling her that he didn’t like to try out this opportunity. It wasn’t a promised opportunity but Nandipha had great faith and confidence that should he set his sneakered feet on that event he would attract these people.

“It’s okay then if he doesn’t appreciate what I did for him. Maybe I just got the wrong idea about his habit of changing sneakers.” She spoke alone trying to comfort herself. She wiped her hands and lifted the plates. She marched to up to the kitchen exit to get to the dining room... Ngcebo was seated there with his phone on his hands.

“Good morning.” She greeted him and placed the plates on the table.

Ngcebo: “Good morning. Tonight we have to drive down to KZN because Elena has died and

we are needed to be home that way we will help with everything that needs us there.”

Nandipha: “And what about her unborn baby? How did she die?” she asked with her hands placed on her mouth as she wasn’t expecting the news. Gobela had just died and now, Elena?

Ngcebo: “Her son is alright but she lost a lot of blood which led to her death. She was shot inside her house and we don’t know who shot her.”

Nandipha: “Jehova! Where was Siphosami? He didn’t see that right?”

Ngcebo: “No, he was in mom’s palace.”

Nandipha: “Okay, I will go call the girls and Mntwana.” She said and walked away after he’d nodded his head. She wondered alone and felt her heart for the two little boys who’d lost their mother. Who would have had a heart to shoot a pregnant woman? Or maybe it was someone in drugs looking for some money to buy more drugs? She sighed and shook her head. But at least the children had a caring grandmother she was going to look after them. She made herself believe that before ending the girls’ party that they were having with Mntwana...

“Hello?” Nandipha answered Nontobeko’s phone call. She was standing before the sink washing the dishes after breakfast.

Nontobeko: “Hey, how are you?”

Nandipha: “I am fine and how are you?”

Nontobeko: “I am fine. I just got off the phone with mama and she told me that you got married yesterday.”

Nandipha: “Yes, I called you last week to tell you but your phone was off.”

Nontobeko: “I only had my phone on last night I have been hella busy the whole week and I am tired. How was the wedding?”

Nandipha chuckled. “It was just a small wedding.” She replied.

Nontobeko: “It doesn’t matter but what matters is that you are Mrs Zulu now.”

Nandipha giggled. “No, I am not Mrs Zulu but I am Mrs Rasta.” She corrected her and Nontobeko laughed loudly.

Nontobeko: “Okay, Mrs Rasta. How are the girls?”

Nandipha: “They’re good and when are you going down to KZN?”

Nontobeko: “Ay, I won’t be coming down. I didn’t tell you that I am getting divorced? Dalingcebo cheated on me with his brother’s wife. The one whom I was told by my mother that she’s dead.”

Nandipha: “No! You are lying, Nontobeko.”

Nontobeko: “I am not lying but I am being serious. Mnotho is the one who came into my house he told me about it. He was with a gun that he pointed at me asking me about Dalingcebo.”

Nandipha: “Ha! He pointed you with a gun? Didn’t he know that you are immune to guns. They don’t scare you, female Chuck Norris.”

Nontobeko laughed. “You are married now, Nandipha. You should stop being crazy. And I guess he didn’t know but I didn’t even react to it.”

Nandipha: “No, but how are you, like really? Dalingcebo is your husband and I know that

your love for him is legit.”

Nontobeko: “I have been hurting the past week I would work and feel the hurt running deep at night but hey, it’s not the end of the world.”

Nandipha sighed. “Lord, I know I would have been crying and whining even now if it was me in your situation.” She admitted.

Nontobeko: “I am no longer that stone hearted as people said I was Nandipha and the pain does no longer get blocked up but I feel it raw.”

Nandipha: “I am sorry. You are going through the most hey.”

Nontobeko: “Look, at you telling me that I am going through the most, mother in-law has stopped blaming you?”

Nandipha: “Argh! No but that’s not the most even though mama wanted Ngcebo and I to have our relationship annulled. But it’s nothing compared to having your husband cheat on you.”

Nontobeko: “Don’t worry about me and don’t stress yourself child I think that she’s just having a lot of stress and it’s too much to handle. I mean you know that she’s not that person to hate. I thought that she hated me but I realised that we just got off the wrong foot and I didn’t give her the respect as an adult. No adult can keep quiet while a child is disrespecting them but I thought all that showed she didn’t like me but I was wrong. She wanted me to have my child to raise and she put aside her wishes to raise the first granddaughter, she just wanted me to heal because I have lost a baby before but I wanted to work. And she didn’t judge me for wanting that. She pushed me to my limit only because she wanted me to face my past and I came back a better person. I enjoyed my job even more after the therapy that she pushed me to do. She’s a good and a supportive mother and I think you know that Nandipha. And maybe now she can’t handle the stress. You know what the stress does to a person.”

Nandipha: “Yeah, I hear you and I understand what you are saying.”

Nontobeko: “Don’t worry nje just enjoy being a married woman.”

Nandipha laughed. “I wish I can do that. Thank you for the phone call and I really think you should come for the funeral.” She said.

Nontobeko: “I would be crazy if I can do that. I have to go now send my regards to the girls.” She said.

Nandipha: “I will do that, bye.” She said and hung up the call... Nandipha looked at her phone and she sighed, she also thought she was going to enjoy being a newly married woman but she was wrong...

She was seated on the bed with her laptop typing the last necessities of her short stories’ book. She’d finished typing all of them and she didn’t want to miss the deadline of submitting them to the publisher... Her girls were sleeping on the bed next to her, they were not sleeping comfortably. They cried when she refused to let them sleep on her bed and when she suggested to get the sponge for them to sleep on the floor they refused. She let them sleep on the bed, Thando and Similo were sleeping by the edge of the bed while the others were up closer to their mother on their father’s side of the bed. Normally she would

let them sleep on her bed when they were being hard-headed about it and if they sleep she would transport them to their room. But tonight, she let them be because if their father come back from wherever he went with his brothers they were going to drive down to KZN. She was hurt when Ngcebo told her that he was going out with his brothers and he didn't even comment about the event that she told him about. She didn't bring it up again to him because she didn't want to keep seeing how uninterested he was in this event.

"Maybe he saw it wasn't for him and he didn't want to tell it to my face." She spoke alone and rested her chin on her fist as her mind had stopped concentrating on the book but it was thinking about Ngcebo. "How could he hurt me like this though? He chose going out with his brothers and he ditched the event. He didn't even say a thing about it. I shouldn't have bothered myself with it and I swear to God I will never go all out for him when I see opportunities like this. I should have just DM TK because he is a good designer and maybe he was going to be happy when I tell him about this. Not my husband who couldn't even smile at me. Mxm!" She spoke alone and slammed her laptop closed. She placed it aside and she laid her head on the pillow.

Nandipha: "He's lying I won't cry about this." she convinced herself and closed her eyes but she could feel her heart turning into a stone. She woke up 'Umcamelo inkongozelo yezinyembezi' she thought that and convinced herself she wouldn't cry if she wasn't laying down. But she was lying to herself. It was hurting that he didn't show any reactions to her idea that she was excited about from the day she was told about the event... She cried. He opened the door and his eyes laid on her crying... As soon as Nandipha heard the door being opened she quickly laid down for Ngcebo not to see she was crying but it was too late because he'd seen that she was crying.

"Why are you crying?" He asked standing by her side of the bed and he placed his hand on her shoulder to look at her.

Nandipha: "I am not crying but there was something in my eyes."

Ngcebo: "Don't you want to open your eyes and look at me?" he asked without commenting further about her crying.

Nandipha: "My eyes are still paining and it's better if I keep them closed."

Ngcebo chuckled. "But I am sure that if you can open your eyes and look at me your eyes will stop paining. I know uyazifela ngendoda yakho and uma nje amehlo akho engabona yona manje azolapheka Rastakazi." He softened her with his words and he was hoping for a positive response from her because now, he wasn't speaking to her crazy little head but he was speaking to her sweet little heart. A heart that he was certain that it loved him...

Her heart jumped a little but she wasn't about to show him that she was weak. She didn't smile but she sat up straight with her eyes still closed. And when she opened them she smiled instantly. She removed her feet from the bed and Ngcebo moved back to give her space. Nandipha stood before him and she screened him from head to toe.

Ngcebo: "I knew you will smile."

She laughed and hugged him. "You look so handsome and when did you take the suit? Look at you! Why did you play me like this Ngcebo?" She asked as she'd moved away from him.

She looked at how perfectly he looked on the suit that she'd bought for him and the sneakers that she wanted him to wear.

Ngcebo: "Didn't you see me pretending to pack it up with the rest of my suits when you stepped inside the closet?"

Nandipha: "I was so hurt, Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "I am sorry but I was angry with you last night I just didn't want to admit that all this made me happier."

She giggled. "And were you a head turner?" she asked and crossed her fingers showing it up in the air as she waited for a response.

Ngcebo: "Well, I had fun in that even and I bought you a painting."

Nandipha: "Ah! Ngcebo! Answer my question."

Ngcebo: "Ain't you happy I bought you a painting?"

Nandipha: "I will be happy after you have answered my question."

Ngcebo: "They approached me and asked me about the sneakers."

Nandipha: "REALLY!" She placed her hands on her mouth.

Ngcebo: "Yes, and they asked a photographer to take the pictures of them and pictures of me as a whole. They asked a few questions if I have thought of having a sneaker line... You know how it goes and I answered them. They said in about 14 or 10 days they will contact me. They liked my sneakers."

Nandipha hugged him tightly and she jumped in joy while she was inside his hold. Ngcebo was just laughing. "I am so happy for you." She said and pecked his lips. Ngcebo held her face and kissed her...

Ngcebo: "I really had fun tonight and thank you."

Nandipha: "And your brothers? How did you get them in?"

Ngcebo laughed. "They were not with me but they were inside Ndabezinhle's house. They were going to drive home from Ndabezinhle's house. I just didn't want you to know they are with me."

Nandipha: "I was so hurt!"

Ngcebo: "I am sorry." he said sending his forefinger underneath the shirt that she was wearing. She wasn't on her nightwear. He unbuttoned the shirt with one finger and his face moved down to the visible flesh by her breast. He kissed that part of her body. "I have kissed your heart." He said.

Nandipha giggled. "And we should leave now. Did you take pictures using your phone I should send them to Greg? He asked for them" She asked and they turned to the bed to take the girls.

Ngcebo: "Why does he want my pictures? Does he want me?"

Nandipha: "Sies! Ngcebo!" she exclaimed as they walked down the stairs to put their girls inside the car for their journey to KZN...

He got to his house at 7am on Wednesday. He couldn't deny it to himself that he was nervous as he was back home. He couldn't help but feel like Mnotho had eyes watching him

and he would kill him anytime. But he was his little brother why would he want to kill him? Dalingcebo asked himself as he sat down on the couch inside his house KwaNongoma. He looked around the empty house and he closed his eyes with his head looking up. He needed to go to the hospital and see his son. He reminded himself and stood on his feet without making any delays and debates with himself because that was what he did best lately... His eyes noticed the papers on the coffee table, he placed his bag down and he took the papers to read them.

Dalingcebo: "Divorce papers!" he exclaimed and sighed as he read the divorce papers that were stating that Nontobeko was divorcing Dalingcebo because of infidelity... He sent his hand down to his bag without letting go of the divorce papers that he was reading. She wanted 50% of his wealth and like Ngcebo had predicted she wanted the other house. Dalingcebo sat down with these papers and he decided that he was going to speak to his lawyer first before signing...

"What will you do?" Ngcebo asked Dalingcebo as they walked through the hospital hallways following the nurse who was taking them to the baby.

Dalingcebo: "I will give her what she wants but I will not let her take Qalokuhle. She'll just have to forget about that."

Ngcebo: "And if the court favours her?"

Dalingcebo: "That Judge would be on some drugs. A woman can be a mother but the court doesn't just give the child to her because she's a mother who gave birth to the child. A number of things will be taken into consideration and if I have to take the matter to high court or even supreme whatever? I will do it because Nontobeko will not take Qalokuhle."

Ngcebo: "Ey, I don't wish to be you right now."

Dalingcebo: "I don't wish to be myself either and I think that I will have my car windows changed into bullet proof windows." Ngcebo stopped walking and he laughed at the statement that Dalingcebo had made. Dalingcebo looked back at him. "There's nothing funny about this Ngcebo." He made him aware.

Ngcebo: "You are so fuckin scared Dalingcebo huh?"

Dalingcebo: "Look, what happened to Elena. Do you want to be in this world without your twin brother? Just tell me!"

Ngcebo: "No, but you need to chill because he won't kill you." he told him something that he could recognise that he wasn't sure about because he didn't know the person Mnotho had become. He had Lonwabo killed and he killed his wife. What if he kills his brother for real?

Dalingcebo: "I am not risking anything. I will do it."

Ngcebo: "Okay, do it for your safety then..." he encouraged and kept quiet as their eyes laid on the tiny baby that was on the incubator. The nurse had informed them all about the baby and she allowed them to have privacy.

Dalingcebo: "She was only six months pregnant Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "Eish, but the nurse said the baby will live."

Dalingcebo sighed. "I will have to raise him myself. I won't give him to mama because Mnotho will be going in and out of the palace. But if the baby is with me in my house he

won't be seeing him and be reminded of how he came to this world." He made a decision looking at the baby that they couldn't even see whom he resembled. He was too small...

Ngcebo: "That's a good idea but that means you'll hire a nanny just like Mnotho did with Siphosami."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, let's give him a name. He must have a positive name regardless of how he was conceived."

Ngcebo: "Qhawe. I don't see the any other name because he survived a bullet, cabanga nje. His mother was shot and he survived that can only mean he's a warrior. Qhawe Zulu, what do you think?"

Dalingcebo: "Qhawe Zulu? Yeah, that's his name." he supported and nodded his head with his eyes still looking at the baby...

Ngcebo: "Dad said there'll be a meeting tonight. Did you tell Nontobeko about Elena's death? She's still part of the family."

Dalingcebo: "I haven't answered any of her calls." He replied as they were walking out of the hospital making their way to Dalingcebo's car. He drove from his house to Ngcebo's house to fetch him as he'd promised to go with him to the hospital to see his son...

Ngcebo: "You'll come to the meeting?"

Dalingcebo: "No. I don't want to see them as yet." He looked at him shortly and Ngcebo nodded. They stepped inside car and Dalingcebo drove off...

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"Who named him?" Nandipha asked Ngcebo following him to the Viano. She was busy playing with the keys behind him throwing them in the air and catching them back to her hand... They were talking about Dalingcebo's son.

Ngcebo: "I am the one who named him." he replied and got on to the passenger seat while Nandipha hopped in on the driver seat.

Nandipha: "That's a good thing. Zulu little warrior." She said with a smile on her face and she drove back, moving the vehicle out of the premises.

Ngcebo: "Yes, and when are we making our own?"

Nandipha: "Hha! I haven't even recovered the post pregnancy fat and you are here asking me about another baby, Mr husband."

Ngcebo chuckled. "It would be a good thing if you can be pregnant now and then work on the pregnancy that way after giving birth you'll work on your body at once knowing that you won't be pregnant again."

Nandipha: "And if we get another girl like your mother and father who have just the same gender?"

Ngcebo chuckled. "It would be God's will, nana. There's nothing we can do to change that. We will love our child." He replied.

Nandipha: "I am not ready to be pregnant again. I should finish my studies this year and next year I must finish the six months that's due. And you know that's important for me to do. I want to do that."

Ngcebo: "But does that mean you don't object to us trying for the last baby when you are done with your studies."

Nandipha: "Yes, and if it's a girl you won't request any other baby from me."

Ngcebo: "No, I won't do that. I am not applying for a crèche." He said and they laughed with Nandipha. "Did you agree to do that magazine issue on your body changes?" he asked and looked at her.

Nandipha: "I will send an email to them tomorrow I will do it."

Ngcebo: "And who changed your mind about it because when Palesa and I tried to speak to you about you refused."

Nandipha: "I asked an advice from my trainer and he said I must go for it. Maybe my experience will help someone else out there to either accept themselves or try to change themselves."

Ngcebo: "Yes, but don't promote obesity on that issue you must speak your truth. And you know what the truth is."

Nandipha: "Hha! Ngcebo." She parked the car inside Nkosazana's palace. They left their girls with Thula in the house as they had to come to the palace to attend the meeting that Dalisu had called.

"Yes, what's the point of doing a magazine cover if you are going to lie about it?" He asked stepping out of the car Nandipha was already down.

Nandipha: "You have a point I won't tell any lies I will be honest."

Ngcebo: "Sdudla sami, my fohloza!" he teased her and he laughed running back to their vehicle as Nandipha was running after him calling his name. "We are inside the king's place MaZondi behave yourself." He reminded her and he laughed holding her hand pulling to him. He kissed her cheek as she was sulking up on him. He looked at her.

Nandipha: "You are making me lose my morals."

Ngcebo: "What's wrong with being my fohloza because you are your husband's my fohloza, swidi lami lomkhuhlane, yehheni sqanda' mathe sami."

Nandipha giggled and held red cheeks. "Let's inside Ngcebo." She encouraged him and Ngcebo supported her. They marched up to the main house...

Ngcebo and Nandipha greeted the family members who were already present inside the lounge. They were already getting up to get to the dining room as Nandipha and Ngcebo stepped inside the lounge...

"Unjani?" Nandipha whispered to Danielle whom she was walking beside as they followed the elders to the dining room.

Danielle: "I am fine Nandipha and how are you?"

Nandipha: "I am fine I found that shop you were told me about, of custom dolls. I will take the picture of your daughter when I leave."

Danielle: "Oh! Okay, that would be lovely and I am pretty sure that she will be very happy

when that doll comes back.”

Nandipha: “I bet and I am thinking of getting my girls the same dolls.”

Danielle: “I really loved the idea and you should do that.” She supported her and Nandipha nodded with a smile as they sat down next to each other...

Uncle elder: “Ngcebo, where is your twin brother?”

Ngcebo: “He didn’t think that it would be a good idea for him to come.”

Aunt elder: “And who did he inform about that because he was supposed to be here in this family meeting.”

Mnotho: “He did a good thing by not coming because I don’t want to see him.”

Ndabezihle: “You won’t run away from him for too long.”

Mnotho: “I know but I don’t want to see him now.”

Uncle elder: “We hear you Mageba and we understand. Your father wanted to speak about something before we talk about the actual issue that brought us here which is the death of a daughter in-law.”

Dalisu: “Yes, I want to talk about physical abuse in your relationships.” He said and looked at his daughters’ in-law from Nkosazana down to Candice who was also present to the family meeting because she was a bride of the family. “I want to make it clear that as your father in-law I don’t condone physical abuse where your husband will hit you if you did something wrong. And should such a thing happen you must not hesitate but tell your mother in-law she will tell me and I will deal with your husband, my son who would have hit you. Don’t wait for it to run deep but should he slap you speak out sooner.” He advised.

Thembelihle: “Yes, we are not that ancient to believe that a husband should discipline his wife by hitting him. And I don’t think as a wife you can hit your husband but we must never say never so, if someone is being abused physically in a relationship. We should be informed.”

Uncle elder: “Yaze yayinhle ke lento enikhulumayo. Ehe, our fathers told us that you strike your wife if she’s stubborn and disrespectful and we took that teaching because we thought it was right. We didn’t know that it was destroying our loved ones in a way. In my 50 years of marriage what I have learnt is that you don’t earn respect by instilling fear to your partner. And that should get through you. Syezwana?”

“YEBO!” They all chanted in support that they can hear what was being said.

Dalisu: “Mnotho is my older son and I have hit him for hitting his wife. I spoke to him and he will never do that. I don’t care how old you are but if you do such nonsense I will take drastic measures to discipline you.” he looked at his sons to get the message through them.

“YEBO, BABA!” His son chanted...

Aunt elder: “Siybonga ke.”

Uncle elder: “And now, we should move to the funeral I don’t think it’s a good idea that this woman be buried in our royal graveyards.”

Thembelihle: “HAWU! Why not?”

Aunt elder: “She has disgrace our family and we will not have her buried with our ancestors. That shouldn’t happen.”

Mlamuli: “And what will people say if we bury her differently? They will see that something happened and don’t forget that they don’t know what happened but it’s something within the family.”

Uncle elder: “That’s not their business but as the elders we don’t want her buried along with our ancestors.”

Ndabezinhle: “Baba, what do you say?”

Dalisu: “Heyi! I also don’t want her to be buried with our ancestors but we can’t have people questioning our decision not to bury her in our graveyard.”

Uncle: “What are others saying? Ndlovukazi?” he looked at Nkosazana and the rest of the daughters’ in-law.

Nkosazana: “I wasn’t expecting that and I am clueless about it. But I support that we shouldn’t have people question our actions and we don’t want the media thinking we might have buried her somewhere else because of her skin. We know how these people find a story even when there is none.”

Uncle elder: “Those will be speculations and it will not shame our kingdom. An opinion cannot destroy us.” He said and the other elders supported his point.

Nandipha: “Can I raise my point?” She requested politely and her eyes didn’t look at the rest of the family but Ngcebo.

Aunt elder2: “Yes, speak, MaZondi.”

Nandipha: “I understand what Siphosami’s mother did, disgraced the family but that can never change that she’s a mother to two royal princes. And I believe that she should be amongst the other ancestors that way she will be able to look over her children together with the others.”

Uncle elder: “MaZondi, she’s a white woman. What if she doesn’t do that?”

Nandipha: “Yebo mkhulu she was white, but she adapted to our customs and traditions when she was married into the family that makes her one our own if I can say. And we can never be sure if the ancestors who’d passed didn’t do such things. Maybe they did them but they were never found and now, they’re with the rest of royal ancestors watching over their children. She’s a mother and no disgrace can change the fact that she deserves to be buried with respect like the rest of us does. The ancestors will be informed about what has happened and we will plead that they accept her for the sake of her children. If it will console your hearts this must be done for her children not her.” she raised her point and sent her head down to look at her hands.

The elders looked amongst one another when she was done speaking. “What do you think about this, Zulu?” the 1st aunt elder asked the other elders and they whispered amongst themselves.

Uncle elder: “Dalisu, I think we will need to consider this not for her or for ourselves but for the children. What do you think?”

Dalisu: “I accept that for the sake of the children. Mlamuli?”

Mlamuli: “I think we will need to do what’s best for the children because they’re innocent in all this mess that has befallen us.”

Mnotho: "I don't object to that."

Dalisu: "That's out of the way now and we must not forget that we also have to support Gobela and his wife, sadly his son won't be able to come back for the funeral. He was the part of our family and it's our duty to ensure that he's buried the way he deserves to be buried."

Thembelihle: "Yes, and we have divided the duties with Nkosazana. Gobela's funeral will be on Saturday and Sunday we will bury Elena. We don't want to prolong things."

Uncle elder: "Hhayi, that's out of the way. Mnotho?"

Mnotho: "Mkhulu?"

Uncle elder: "There must be no bloodshed between you and your brother."

Mnotho: "How will I work with Dalingcebo? I am not saying that I will kill him but I want him to be banned from here."

Elders: "HHAYBO!"

Thembelihle: "Mnotho, we said that cannot happen."

Banele: "Bhuti, if you are saying Dalingcebo should leave you are trying to say his children should leave as well. And Qalokuhle and Qhawe will have to live away from their family. How will they know their roots?"

Ndabezinhle: "You are not thinking that straight and why can't you forgive him for the sake of peace?"

Mnotho chuckled. "Would you forgive me if I slept with your wife? No, what am I saying because you don't have a wife. Did you forgive Nhlakanipho's mother for cheating with a man from your squad?"

Ndabezinhle: "That's different Mnotho."

Mlamuli: "You are not answering his question. Did you forgive Naledi?"

Ndabezinhle: "Naledi is not my brother! And yes, I have forgiven her because she was doing what she wanted to do which is why I say this is different."

Ngcebo: "You can't force a person to forgive. That's one thing you can never do and we should let bhuti Mnotho's heart tell him when it's time for him to forgive Dalingcebo. Forgiveness can't be forced."

Aunt elder2: "But Ngcebo, they will not work together in harmony if they don't forgive each other-"

Mnotho: "I will not forgive Dalingcebo."

Dalisu: "Musa ukungena u-Aunt emlonyeni!" he shouted at Mnotho with his head turned to look at Mnotho.

Mnotho: "I am sorry."

Dalisu: "You are angry and all you want is blood, I will let you have this blood."

Thembelihle: "HHAYBO!" She exclaimed and looked at the aunts who had exclaimed the same words to Dalisu's words.

Dalisu: "After the funeral on Wednesday evening I will have the servant inform the men around us that they must come to MaSthole's palace. Mnotho and Dalingcebo will fight-"

Thembelihle: "No! That's not a solution, Ndabezitha-"

Daliso raised his hand for Thembelihle. "I am not done talking! Mnotho will be the one to decide on that day whether they will fight using sticks or they will fight by hands. That's what will happen and nobody will change my mind. Wednesday at 6pm. Now, we can go our separate ways." He stamped looking at the elders and the uncles were nodding their heads in support.

Thembelihle: "You won't even ask Mnotho if he wants this?" she asked looking at her husband. She didn't want this fight because Mnotho had been beaten up by his father and he hadn't healed. How was he going to fight?

Daliso: "He wants it and if he didn't want it he would have long said he doesn't want this fight. Syabonga, Zulu for coming." He said looking at the elders and they supported him that the two brothers were going to fight... The meeting was then adjourned after the aunt elder had said the grace prayer after the aunts had made a decision about who were going to be mourners in Elena's house. They were going to do everything in her house...

"We will meet at her house tomorrow at 10 am and you can bring the girls over there because the rest of the children will be there." Nkosazana said to Nandipha. She was walking Nandipha and Danielle along with Candice to their cars as the meeting was over. The brothers were still left behind.

Nandipha: "Okay, I will come. How's being here, Candice?"

Candice: "Uhm... It's what I have expected." She replied and after she'd released the long sigh, the three ladies laughed.

Danielle: "You'll get used to it."

Candice: "I hope so."

Danielle: "Ndlovukazi, Elena's mother was informed about her daughter's death?" She asked and looked at Nkosazana as they've reached their cars.

Nkosazana: "Yoh! I will have to ask your husband about it because it wouldn't be a good thing if we don't tell her."

Others: "Yeah."

Nkosazana: "We will see each other tomorrow then, goodnight."

Ladies: "Goodnight." They said and turned to the cars after Nkosazana had turned her back on them...

"Awu, Ngcebo yakwa Zulu, we heard you got married on Monday." Aunt elder informed Ngcebo as they were leaving the house with him and Thembelihle was walking alongside them. The others were following behind.

Ngcebo: "Yebo, MaZulu. I am a husband now. Can you believe it?" he looked at her and they laughed along with his mother.

Aunt elder: "It's not believable but I wish the two of you nothing but happiness." she said holding Ngcebo's shoulder.

Ngcebo: "Siyabonga MaZulu." he said softly holding the car's door for his great aunt to step inside the car... Ngcebo looked back at his mother after they've shared their goodbyes with aunt.

Thembelihle: "Why is your smile vanishing now that you are looking at your mother,

Ngcebo?”

Ngcebo: “It’s nothing. I should go now.”

Thembelihle: “You can’t tell me you are still upset that Nandipha and I had an argument. I am not allowed to argue with your wife? Tell me if that’s not allowed. If she’s queen of England and now, I shouldn’t argue with her just let me know. I won’t argue with her.”

Ngcebo: “You are not speaking like my mother now.”

Thembelihle: “I am angry with you because you want to get yourself involved in matters that don’t need you. I can never tell my son about my arguments with his wife. That’s unacceptable.” She shouted at Ngcebo and he, he didn’t say anything to his mother. He looked down for a while...

Ngcebo: “I beg you not to ruin my marriage for me because if you can do that I promise you mama. I will never forgive you. Please.” He begged her. He didn’t want to keep asking because he could see he was never going to know what was it that made Nandipha’s mother want them to have their marriage annulled. But he saw a need to tell beg his mother not to ruin his marriage.

Thembelihle: “How can you say that because I am your mother and all I want is for you to be happy? How can you say that?”

Ngcebo: “I can never be happy if my wife’s not happy. I know that you know that ‘happy wife happy husband’”

Thembelihle: “You are not being a child Ngcebo now and that’s nonsense because I am telling you that as a mother I argue with my daughters’ in-law.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, but don’t ruin my marriage. Dad is here, you must go and have some rest.” he said holding his mother’s shoulder and he kissed her cheek. “Goodnight, mama.” He said and jogged to his vehicle...

Nandipha slid down the vehicle’s window as Mnotho was knocking on the window. She was alone in the car waiting for Ngcebo.

Nandipha: “Yebo.”

Mnotho: “How are you?”

Nandipha: “I am fine and how are you?”

Mnotho: “I looked around the room for someone who can help me with this but I saw no one better but you. And I would like that what we will discuss here stays between the two of us.” he said to Nandipha. He’d battled with himself trying to decide if it was right for him to speak to her or not. He felt like he needed to have an opinion of a woman just to get if what he wanted was possible or not. And he couldn’t speak to Nkosazana because she was still angry that he had been abusing Happiness... He had decided that speaking to her was a bad idea but he found himself going to the car...

Nandipha: “Okay. What’s wrong?”

Mnotho: “I would like to believe that you are aware of everything that has happened between Happiness, Njabulo and I.”

Nandipha: “Yes. I am aware.”

Mnotho: “My wish is to fix my relationship with the both of them and include Nonjabulo in

that relationship but I really don't know where to start because of the damage that I have done. So, as a woman if you can advise me what can I do?"

Nandipha sighed, this was highly unexpected for her. She kept quiet for a little while. "You want Happiness to come back here as your wife?" she asked.

Mnotho: "Yes, that's what I want-" he replied and looked back, Ngcebo was jogging towards the vehicle. "Can you please give us some privacy, bafo?"

Ngcebo: "Oh, okay." He turned to give them privacy he'd requested.

"Yes, as I was saying I want them back home and my fear is on my son the most. I fear that I have done a lot of damage on him." he confessed.

Nandipha: "Njabulo is a child. He's just almost 3 years and you can still build new memories with him. You see children are different from adults and you can rub all that hate and pain Njabulo has by loving him. It won't even take a year for you to restore the relationship."

Mnotho: "But Nandipha you don't understand. There was no relationship to begin with. I have never given him love as a father."

Nandipha: "And you can still begin the relationship. You will love him and that will erase all the hurt, fear and pain you've instilled in him. By the time he's six years old he won't even remember that you've hurt him before because he'll be loving you as his father. And love keeps no record of wrong. Children are not like adults but their hearts are naturally forgiving but you'll have to work on that and be patient. Once Njabulo has accepted you back everything will fall into place and don't forget the love you give Njabulo you should give to his sister. And be positive, my mother always says positive thoughts generates positive actions and that's a famous quote you should adapt."

Mnotho sighed. "Ey, Thank you. I feel like I am far from redemption." He admitted as he was finding it easy to speak to her.

Nandipha: "Don't enslave yourself with guilt you will lose your mind if you do, take it from me, I know. Just begin with the children and not with just words but action because love is action. And I think Happiness doesn't need words and sweet messages but she needs the kind of love that's action. And if it doesn't work out don't push too hard."

Mnotho: "Thank you. I hope I didn't bother you with my problems."

Nandipha: "No, you didn't." Mnotho then nodded and said his goodbye to Nandipha. He walked away with no regret that he'd approached her...

"I want to drive to Dalingcebo's house first." Ngcebo told Nandipha as he was driving the viano out of Nkosazana's palace...

Nandipha: "Please, drive me to the house first because you'll have a long talk with your brother and I will be just a third useless wheel in there."

Ngcebo laughed. "I won't do that, my fohloza." He said and looked at her shortly waiting to see her response.

Nandipha: "Ngcebo! Please, stop calling me that. And I want to go home. I am not against you going to your brother's house but I am against you taking me there along with you. Please, kindly drive me home and you can drive back to him. You can even sleepover if you wish I wouldn't mind."

Ngcebo: "Ha! Okay, I will go."

Nandipha: "And I hope that you won't go to that fight that will take place on Wednesday." She looked at him and Ngcebo was looking at her but he sent his eyes back to busy dark road they were driving to.

Ngcebo: "Why must I not go?"

Nandipha: "What if something bad happens over there? Remember that you must not be anywhere near the disaster."

Ngcebo: "Yes, but it's not the disaster. It will be just some stick fighting or hand fighting that we will be seated down watching."

Nandipha: "I understand that but Ngcebo-"

Ngcebo: "Ey, Nandipha, stop it! You always find worry even in somethings that you shouldn't be worried about. There's no disaster in two people fighting and so, you need to stop worrying over nothing. It's so tiring to have you whining over useless things." He shouted at her as he felt that she was being unnecessary about this now... Nandipha didn't say anything as he shouted at her. She laid her head on the window and closed her eyes...

He lifted his phone and he dialled Happiness's number. He was certain that she wasn't going to answer his phone call as he'd tried more than enough to call her but she never answered the call.

"What do you want?" Happiness answered Mnotho's phone call... Mnotho could hear the hostility on her voice and he understood it.

Mnotho: "How are you?"

Happiness: "How can you ask me that question? And how can you be so evil that to send that story about Lonwabo. Why did you lie about his death?"

Mnotho: "What was I supposed to do Happiness?"

Happiness: "YOU ARE ASKING ME!"

Mnotho: "I didn't call to fight with you but I called to genuinely ask about your wellbeing. I don't think it's a crime if I worry about you."

Happiness chuckled. "Mnotho, leave me alone I have been ignoring your calls for one reason. I don't want to speak to you." She shouted.

Mnotho: "Okay, can I speak to Njabulo?"

Happiness: "Excuse me? Who?"

Mnotho: "I am his father Happiness and you can't change that."

Happiness: "You must be out of your mind if you think I will let you speak to my son because he doesn't know you as his father."

Mnotho: "Can you please give Njabulo and I a chance. And Nonjabulo too, I want to be a father to them."

"Mxm!" She exclaimed and hung up the call... Mnotho looked at the phone that he had removed from his ear and he closed his eyes...

"Why haven't you been coming home, daddy?" Pearl asked her father who'd just joined her on the bed inside the master bedroom... Mnotho drove to Danielle's house after the meeting.

It'd been a long time without seeing them and all he wanted was to see his daughter since his wife was angry with him.

Mnotho: "Daddy has been very sick and he didn't want his beautiful Pearl to see her father sick. You were going to cry if your father was sick, right?" he asked and tickled Pearl. She giggled loudly and nodded her head.

Pearl: "We will play tomorrow daddy?"

Mnotho: "Yes, Pearly!" he rubbed Pearl's scalp and they laughed... Mnotho kept rubbing her scalp to get her to sleep but his mind wasn't with her. He concluded that he was right to think like this before as he'd received an advice. Yes, his first step to get the right path of life was having a relationship with his son. He needed to be a father to Njabulo first and he wasn't going to leave Nonjabulo outside. They were not going to grow without a father because he was going to be their father whether things go right or wrong between him and their mother. He nodded his head and he looked at Pearl. She was fast asleep. He then covered her with the blankets and he laid his head to rest since Danielle wasn't coming back from the bathroom. He needed to rest...

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"Baba, I didn't think that you will come." Happiness said to her father who was inside his car... Mthimkhulu's car was parked outside Lonwabo's mansion and they were alone in the car at the backseat of the car. Mthimkhulu's driver and bodyguard were outside the car... It was Friday night Happiness had just gotten back from Lonwabo's rural home. He was buried the way they have wanted with Luvuyo, with respect and dignity because they knew he didn't die as a thug that the newspapers had reported but he died as a good man who loved his fiancée and their children along with his sister. Happiness thought she would be able to be strong on this day just for her children but the pain proved her wrong because she felt her world crushing down before her eyes as Lonwabo was buried down to the ground. A day she never thought she would witness with her two eyes. She always thought she'd found her happiness finally! But she was wrong, her happiness was snatched away from her...

Mthimkhulu: "It would have been wrong of me not to come support you while I was out of the hospital. I couldn't just sit in the house."

Happiness: "Thank you. But you are driving home, now?"

Mthimkhulu: "Yes, I will drive back home because I don't want to sleep in hotels. It's not that late but I was hoping that I could talk to Lonwabo's sister."

Happiness: "Ey, baba, I told her that you are here but she didn't want to come and greet you. I think that it's still early for you to speak to her."

Mthimkhulu: "But didn't you tell me that she'll be leaving after the funeral?"

Happiness: "Yes, she'll be leaving baba but I will ask her to pass by the house before she leaves the country. Don't worry because even if she doesn't speak to you, Lonwabo had long

let go of that past. He had me, baba and he was happy with me. I don't want you to stress yourself but what you can do now is live your life the way mama would be happy to see you." she advised her father seeing that he was worried about this matter and she didn't want him to worry. It wasn't a good thing for her father to worry about Lonwabo forgiving him because she knew that with the way that their life was Lonwabo was going to forgive her father. He was a better man, her Lonwabo died a better man and that was what comforted her at night.

Mthimkhulu sighed. "I will try my best my child and that will mean I have to get rid of a number of bad things in my life." He admitted to his daughter and he saw a smile on Happiness's face. And that was pleasing to him.

Happiness: "That's a good thing baba and the children wanted to see you especially Njabulo. He'd the one who told me that he saw his grandfather."

Mthimkhulu chuckled. "I will see them when you come back home and that way I will get to know Nonjabulo more. She's not used to me." he said, Happiness had gone to the hospital with her children to meet their grandfather. Njabulo was happy to see his grandfather but Nonjabulo was quiet. Mthimkhulu tried his skills to get her to loosen up but she was reserved and Happiness was surprised by this because Nonjabulo wasn't really scared of people. But Njabulo encouraged her that their grandfather was a good grandfather and he was going to play with them. She loosened up...

Happiness: "But her brother is helping her get used to you."

Mthimkhulu: "I believe in my grandson. And when are you coming back home? You can't stay here because you are not married to Lonwabo."

Happiness: "Yes, I know that I can't stay but I will come back on Sunday. I told you that I will be going to KZN on Tuesday."

Mthimkhulu: "Hhayi. What's happening there? What business do you have in KZN Happiness?" he raised his voice as he didn't like what he was hearing.

Happiness: "Njabulo has been away from his family for too long baba and his grandmother asked that I visit her with both my children."

Mthimkhulu: "Let Njabulo visit his grandparents there's no need for you to go over there. And remember how that woman from their family was speaking about you. Do you want to be humiliated?"

Happiness: "I won't be going there for that but I will be visiting Njabulo's grandmother, baba. I could use being around her in this difficult time that I am facing. You know that she's like a mother to me and she supports me."

Mthimkhulu sighed. "Okay, but don't stay there longer because I don't like that you are going there. But if being around the queen mother will help you heal then you can go visit her with your children." He said.

Happiness: "Thank you, Mthimkhulu for everything and don't worry because everything will be alright. I know God will fix everything and we will stay together in your house with my children."

Mthimkhulu: "I believe those words my child." he said and placed his hand on Happiness's

head and she smiled...

“Mama?” Mnotho answered his mother’s phone call.

Thembelihle: “How are you and where are you?”

Mnotho: “I am in MaNkosi’s house and I am on my way out.”

Thembelihle: “You need to get here because Siphosami is crying. Your father and I had just told him that he will never see his mother and he’s crying.”

Mnotho: “Okay, mama. I will come.” He hung up the call... Thembelihle looked at Dalisu and they didn’t say anything to each other... They were seated on the lounge alone and Siphosami had left them. He rushed out of the house and Thembelihle told Qalokuhle to go and be with him. She was also with Siphosami when they told him that his mother was gone.

Dalisu: “I have run out of strength and today we have to go and speak to Dalingcebo. They have disappointed me to the point where I don’t even know what I can do to punish them. I don’t even know what to say to them.”

Thembelihle: “Ey, baba, and now I will have two babies to land in my hands. There will be Siphosami and there’ll be Dalingcebo’s new born.”

Dalisu: “There’s nothing we can do because Dalingcebo doesn’t have a wife.” He said and they both sighed... They were feeling the burden...

“Baba, is it true that I will never see mom, again?” Siphosami asked his father. Mnotho saw them seated on the chairs outside the house and he went to them without going to his mother’s house... Siphosami was on his lap now.

Mnotho: “Yes, it’s true but that doesn’t mean you won’t be happy.”

Siphosami: “But I want my mother.”

Mnotho: “Hey, I am your father and I am still here. People who are living in this world are not in control of life, my son and you’ll be a strong boy. Your mother will be watching over you up from the sky and she’ll be smiling.”

Siphosami: “Really?”

Mnotho: “Yes! Your father can never lie to you... Come Qalokuhle, let’s go.” He said standing up on his feet after he’d wiped Siphosami’s tears. Qalokuhle stood up and followed Mnotho. “I will take you two out to grandma’s lodge and we will eat your favourite meals. How’s that? Would you like that?”

Kids: “YES!”

Qalokuhle: “Baba omdala. Let’s go call Pearl as well.”

Siphosami: “Yes.”

“Okay, we will drive to her mother’s house.” He promised and he placed them inside his car and he fastened the seatbelt. He left the kids to go to his parents to inform them that he was taking them...

“Don’t rush to go out with the children.” Dalisu said to Mnotho and he pointed him back on the couch. He’d just told them that he was going out with the children and they had no problem with that.

Mnotho: “What’s wrong?”

Daliso: “I have been thinking that since your brother has a new born and he doesn’t have a wife. How about you take Siphosami and live with him in your second wife’s house?”

Thembelihle: “Hhayi! Hhayi! That must not happen. How can you take such a decision without informing me about it baba?”

Daliso: “I am making a suggestion because you’ll have your hands full if you will be taking Dalingcebo’s child. He can’t look after a baby. What does he know?”

Thembelihle: “I don’t trust Ntandokazi to look after Siphosami as her own. They hated each other with his mother and now, we will give Siphosami to her and trust her with Siphosami? That will not happen.”

Mnotho: “What should we do then, mama?”

Thembelihle: “Leave my grandson here and I will look after him. I can’t just give him up to Ntandokazi. What if she accepts him and she doesn’t treat him, right? I don’t want Siphosami to go to a home where he might be abused.”

Mnotho: “Ntandokazi is not evil.”

Thembelihle: “I didn’t say that she is but there are evil stepmothers because of such things, Mnotho even though your situation is different. A man will cheat and give his child to his wife and his wife will abuse the baby. Happiness is the only person who had a heart for Siphosami and I don’t want to trust anyone else with my grandson. He will stay here with me.”

“Ay, let me not keep the children waiting.” He said standing up because this conversation wasn’t going anywhere... His mother had made up her mind...

Daliso, Thembelihle and Ngcebo stepped out of the car they were driving on. It was a Friday night and they have decided that they needed to speak to Dalingcebo. Dalingcebo had gone to his parents’ house on Thursday night but he was told that he should go back to his house because his parents didn’t want to see him as yet. They were going to come to him...

And now, they decided it was a good time for them to face him before the funeral.

Thembelihle didn’t trust that she was fit to sit down with Dalingcebo and her blood pressure had gone up since the news of Dalingcebo and Elena’s affair. It was bothering her and stressing her that her sons were going to hate one another. She wanted them to forgive each other but she knew that wasn’t going to happen overnight because Mnotho was angry with his brother.

Daliso: “Don’t worry yourself too much and shout too much because that will have an effect on your health.” He said to Thembelihle as they were seated on the couch now inside the lounge. Ngcebo had gone to look for Dalingcebo inside the other rooms because he wasn’t in the lounge.

Thembelihle: “How can you tell me not to worry because you are also worried about this? Why did our son do this, Ndabezitha?”

Daliso: “MaSthole, yesterday you were told to avoid being upset and you should try to calm down because I don’t want to lose you.”

Thembelihle: “My sons are making me sick, Dalisu!” she exclaimed and looked aside without crying because she’d cried too much about this. She didn’t want to cry any longer. She didn’t want to worry any longer but she couldn’t control it. She couldn’t control her emotions and thoughts...

Dalingcebo: “Sanibona baba no mama.” He greeted his parents and sat on the single couch that wasn’t closer to the couch where his parents were seated. There was silence after Dalingcebo had greeted his parents. He raised his head as he’d sent it down after greeting them and now, he was lifting it up because he wasn’t hearing a response from his parents. Dalingcebo’s gaze met his parents glare. They were quietly glaring at him and on their faces Dalingcebo could see the disappointment accompanied by what he wasn’t sure if it was hurt or disgust. He’d done wrong things but none of them amounted to this.

Dalingcebo: “Ngiyaxolisa.” (I am sorry)

Thembelihle: “UXOLISANI!” (You are sorry for what?) she shouted at him and she unexpectedly threw her handbag at his direction. The handbag hit Dalingcebo’s face as it reached him fast while he was raising his face slowly. Dalisu held Thembelihle after she’d thrown the handbag at Dalingcebo.

Dalису: “MaSthole, calm down.”

Thembelihle: “Don’t tell me to calm down, Dalisu because there’s no greater pain than this. Our son has brought shame in our home. After everything we’ve done to raise you to be men that you are today, Dalingcebo you had to do this. You have decided to shame us.”

Dalingcebo: “I know I was wrong mama and I am sorry.”

Thembelihle: “Stop saying sorry because you are not sorry! But you are sorry that you are caught! This will bring division amongst you and how will you work with Mnotho? Huh?”

Dalingcebo: “I don’t know mama.”

Dalису: “What were you thinking when you slept with your sister in-law?”

Dalingcebo: “I don’t have any excuse baba.”

Thembelihle: “I want to go baba. There’s nothing I will say to Dalingcebo because looking at his face makes me angry.”

Dalису: “Ngcebo told you about the decision that I made that you and Mnotho should just fight so that this anger that’s burning inside him will be toned down? Did he tell you that?”

Dalingcebo: “Yes, he told me and I will come on Wednesday.”

Thembelihle: “Did you even go to see your child?”

Dalingcebo: “Yes, I have been going to the hospital since the day I came back.”

Thembelihle clicked her tongue and stood up. “And who’ll raise that child? You’ll expect me to raise that child since you don’t have a wife? You are not divorced with Nontobeko but she’s not here she couldn’t even call and that shows how much she never valued this marriage. You two married into the same family and these two sisters are the biggest mistakes you’ve ever made in your lives. The biggest! Gha!” She clicked her tongue and she left the house without waiting for her husband to announce that it was time to leave now.

Dalису: “Ngcebo, you are coming with us?”

Ngcebo: “No.”

Daliso: “Your mother is just angry and she has every right to be angry with you, Dalingcebo. I am even short of words because of this.”

Dalingcebo: “I am really sorry.” he said looking at his father who was on his feet now. Daliso didn’t say anything further but he left the house...

Ngcebo sighed and placed his feet on the couch, he closed his eyes while Dalingcebo rubbed his closed eyes. There was silence between them for about ten minutes. They were both thinking, Dalingcebo he was thinking about possibilities of him coming out of this mess. His elders had called him to his grandfather’s house in the morning and all they did was to shout at him. He felt regret and the biggest regret was the fact that Elena died. That was one of his biggest regrets and his biggest mistake was sleeping with Elena not marrying Nontobeko. He refused to believe what his mother had just said to them because he knew that he loved Nontobeko and she loved him but he didn’t love her enough to stay with her apart from the affair. Love alone wasn’t just enough and all he wanted was to free her, to let her live her life as she wanted. Maybe he wasn’t made for her but she was never a biggest mistake of his life. If his mother saw her as a mistake that was her problem not his.

Dalingcebo: “Nontobeko gave me a daughter, precious beautiful daughter and we loved each other. We had a good relationship at some point and if mama thinks she’s a biggest mistake of my life then she’s mistaken.” He voiced out his thoughts as he guessed that Ngcebo might be thinking the same thing as he was quiet.

Ngcebo: “The night after my wedding Nandipha’s mother told us that we must have our marriage annulled and the reason behind that annulment was my mother. I don’t know what happened because they’re keeping me in the dark but I can’t help but feel like she has a problem with Nandipha now.”

Dalingcebo: “But why would she have a problem with her because when everyone didn’t understand Nandipha’s actions she understood them?”

Ngcebo: “I don’t know and I don’t want to say I don’t care because I do care.”

Dalingcebo: “Maybe it was just one argument and you don’t have to worry about it that much Ngcebo.”

Ngcebo: “How can I not worry about it after she’d called the woman I chose to make my wife a biggest mistake of my life? Look, you are divorcing Nontobeko but you still refuse to accept mama’s words that she was a biggest mistake of your life. How much more for me? Nandipha is my wife.”

Dalingcebo: “She was just angry.”

Ngcebo: “Hhayi, no, it’s fine. Let’s not talk about it. I should go home now. I will take your other car and drive home.”

Dalingcebo: “Okay, I will see you at the funeral tomorrow.” He said standing up and Ngcebo followed him to get the keys from him.

Ngcebo: “Yeah. I had a very long day and it’s better because I will find the girls sleeping. They go to bed early these days because they’re always tired.”

Dalingcebo chuckled. “The rural areas soil is like that. Nontobeko’s mother told me that she will come for the funeral tomorrow and she will sleep here for the second funeral on

Sunday.” He told Ngcebo walking him out of the house.

Ngcebo: “Oh! That’s a good thing. She’ll be coming here alone?” he asked and stepped inside the car.

Dalingcebo: “No, she won’t be alone.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, I will see you at the funeral and now, you better go and workout because it will go down on Wednesday.” He joked with him and they laughed as Dalingcebo fisted his shoulder showing his fist through the window.

Dalingcebo: “Is it true that dad whipped Mnotho for abusing Happiness?”

Ngcebo: “Tjo! Yeah and he even said it to all of us that if we can do it he’ll do the same. And come to think of it, I should have gotten that whooping because I have once hit Nandipha badly.”

Dalingcebo: “Ngcebo! You need to get what’s due to you. I should tell him.”

Ngcebo: “Don’t even think about it because that’s in the past now and I didn’t mean to do it. Come on.”

Dalingcebo: “Yeah, right! I won’t tell him but should Mnotho panel beat me on Wednesday I will reveal your secret so that we will have the same pain.”

Ngcebo: “Udakiwe! Nandipha won’t allow that to happen unless if you want her to go all crazy on you, full force crazy!”

Dalingcebo laughed. “Ey, I don’t even want to try that. Drive safe boy.”

Ngcebo: “Sho, bafol!” He exclaimed driving the back to exit the gate... Dalingcebo then moved back to his house to be all alone. He was worried because Mlamuli was not speaking to him and it was obvious that Mnotho wouldn’t speak to him. What was worrying him was the fact that he was working with Mlamuli and Mnotho on the kingdom and as they were not on speaking terms that made him worry that how were they going to work together. Or maybe things were going to be better after Wednesday... The other brothers were the first to confront him about this affair before the meeting that was held at Nkosazana’s palace. He understood and accepted all the anger that his family was directing to him. It was bitter to swallow but he had no better choice than to swallow it. And if even after he’d tried hard to forgive himself it didn’t ease the guilt that Elena died because of him...

He looked at his phone as it rang and he sighed before answering the phone. “Nontobeko?” He answered her phone call for the first time after his affair with Elena was revealed to the family.

Nontobeko: “Why haven’t you signed the papers and have them submitted?” She asked him on a firm voice without asking about his wellbeing.

Dalingcebo: “I haven’t got time to speak with my lawyer.”

Nontobeko: “That’s not my problem Dalingcebo. What are you doing with the time that you have? You are sleeping with your sister in-law.”

Dalingcebo: “Hawu! How can you say that because you know that she’s dead? Your mother told me that she told you about the two deaths in the family and you won’t be coming to the funeral.”

Nontobeko: “Yes, why should I come?”

Dalingcebo: "I wasn't asking but on that divorce agreement I am not signing up that you will take Qalokuhle."

Nontobeko: "Hee! And what do you mean by that because Qalokuhle is my daughter and you can't stop me from taking her."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I can stop you because who's gonna look after her? Your mother? You can't possibly bother your mother with Qalokuhle. She's older than my mother and she won't-"

Nontobeko: "She will live here in Cape Town."

Dalingcebo: "That's nonsense and you know what, I will give you everything that you stated you want but when it comes to Qalokuhle's custody I am afraid that will be just another case."

Nontobeko: "I can't be up and down in court attending cases I have work."

Dalingcebo: "Oh, and you think you'll have time for our daughter that you want to take from her family? You must be joking if you think that I will let that happen. You will not take Qalokuhle."

Nontobeko: "I can't believe a dog that you can be Dalingcebo. You've been sleeping with Elena right under my nose. I loved you but you just couldn't appreciate my love. I was faithful to you and only you but you decided to disrespect me by sleeping with your brother's wife."

Dalingcebo: "My cheating got nothing to do with you."

Nontobeko: "That's a lie! That's a lie because that's not what you said to your family. And yes, maybe you are right you cheated on me because you are a greedy, disgusting man and I will take whatever I can from you. You have hurt not only hurt me but you degraded my dignity and reputation."

Dalingcebo: "Why are you speaking as if the whole world knows about this affair? And can we not waste our energy and fight about this?"

Nontobeko didn't say anything but she clicked her tongue before hanging up the call...

Dalingcebo looked at his phone and he groaned before putting it away. He closed his eyes to pray... He didn't know if that day, the day of the fight he was supposed to let Mnotho fight him and defeat him. Or he was supposed to fight and defeat Mnotho. He was clueless and all his mind was thinking about now was the fight not the phone call he'd just had...

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She wasn't too sure about driving in to the palace because there were number of people going up and down as if there was a ceremony. Her father's car wasn't at the palace's gate but she could see what was happening on the yard, the people going up and down. She then looked back at her children and they were sleeping peacefully on the car seats...

Happiness chose to drive the car to her old house because she was scared to enter the palace.

Maybe it wasn't appropriate for her to enter the palace after everything that had happened. And what if she distracts what was going on in Thembelihle's palace by showing her face. How was she supposed to show her face to those people with her daughter? Going to this house was the best solution for her. She debated with herself and concluded in the end as she was approaching the house...

She stepped out of the car and she rushed to front door. She went down and checked for the front door key under the mat but it wasn't there.

"Maybe he has moved in here?" She spoke out loud as she couldn't find the keys under the doormat. She then clenched on the door and it wasn't locked. She shook her head and moved back to the car to get her bag and her children's suitcase... It was a Tuesday morning as she was in KZN. She got back to her father's house on Sunday. She was leaving Luvuyo behind who'd promised her that she was going to pass by her father's house before leaving South Africa for Botswana. Her children spent their time with her father and she got to have some time to herself as the children didn't even sleep with her. And now, as she was in KZN her father had pleaded that she must not stay in KZN for far too long a week was enough but Happiness bargained for two weeks...

"No ways!" She exclaimed and dropped her bags on the floor as her eyes laid on Mnotho's horrible back... He was sleeping on the bed inside the master bedroom. He was topless and the bedcovers had his lower body covered. His face was pinned on the pillow but when he heard the noise of the bags falling and the voice of a woman he knew. He raised his head because he wasn't really sleeping he was actually awake.

"HAPPINESS!" He exclaimed and quickly rose up from the bed. He stood on his feet and looked at her, he rubbed his eyes quickly and opened them again because he couldn't believe that she was here.

Happiness: "I didn't know you are here and I am not here for some reason connected to you but I am here because of your mother. I saw the palace is busy I didn't want to go there and have your aunts on my backs."

Mnotho: "I am sorry about that day-"

Happiness: "I will drive to the lodge since you have moved in here." She informed him curtly without giving him a chance to finish his sentence.

Mnotho: "No! No! Don't do that and please, stay here. Where are the children? You didn't come with them?" he asked and removed the bedcovers for her quickly because he knew they were not clean... Happiness didn't answer him but she carried the bags inside the bedroom. Mnotho looked back at her. "Happiness, I asked you a question." He told her.

Happiness: "I said I am not here for you and please, you can stop doing that and leave the house because I don't want to be with you in here."

Mnotho: "Okay, but-"

Happiness: "PLEASE!" She shouted at him widening her eyes that were balls of fire as she was maddened by the fact that he was asking him questions that showed concern now. After she'd told him that she wasn't here for him.

Mnotho: "I am sorry. I will go." He said moving away from the bed. Happiness clicked her

tongue and she marched out of the bedroom to wait for him to leave. She was going to wait inside her father's car...

She placed her phone on her ear and she was waiting as it rang. "MaMthimkhulu?"

Thembelihle answered Happiness's phone call.

Happiness: "Mama, unjani?"

Thembelihle: "Please, don't tell me that you are no longer coming!"

Happiness: "No, it's not that."

Thembelihle: "What's wrong then because your voice doesn't sound like you are alright. What's wrong?"

Happiness: "I have just bumped into Mnotho. Eh, I saw a lot of people in your palace and I figured that I should drive down to the house we used with Njabulo. I didn't want to just rock up there."

Thembelihle: "Oh! You did a good thing because the whole family is here. But what is Mnotho doing in that house?"

Happiness: "I don't know and I didn't ask him. I am in the car waiting for him to leave I don't know if I will see you tonight."

Thembelihle: "Yes, you will see me. I will spend the night with you and the children. Don't worry about food because I will come down with it."

Happiness smiled. "Okay, thank you, mama." She said.

Thembelihle: "I will see you." she promised and Happiness removed the phone from her ear. She looked aside and her eyes sat on her flower garden. She stepped out of the car and closed the door. She marched to the garden that had been revamped and new flowers had been planted... Mnotho was the one who personally revamped the garden on a Wednesday of the previous week. He saw the need to revamp the garden on a Tuesday and he asked a servant to buy the flowers for him. And on Wednesday, he revamped it.

Now, Happiness was looking at this garden having the flashes of memories, how she would come to look at her flowers just to have a peace of mind. How she would talk to the flowers when she was stressed. How she would come out of the house late at night to cry in this garden. And she also remembered the good times where she would sit down and have drinks with Nkosazana or Nontobeko and even the late Elena. She would sit down with Njabulo and they would have a good time together... She forced a smile not because she was cherishing some memories but because she was seeing the flowers. She closed her eyes and she felt the rest of her heart after the anger that had aroused inside the house with Mnotho. Now, she was having a heart rest and it felt good to have such a feeling... She only opened her eyes when she heard the sound of the car being started while she didn't take note of the sound of the garage being opened. She looked back and Mnotho was driving his car out of the garage. Happiness moved away from the garden after Mnotho had left... She carried Njabulo in her arms wondering who might have hit Mnotho because he had visible marks that showed he was whipped. He was dark-skinned but he wasn't that dark on the upper body and thighs along with legs. She could see the marks clearly and that made her wonder...

"MaMthimkhulu?" Thembelihle exclaimed with a smile on her face as Happiness was

standing before the sink filling in water on the kettle.

Happiness smiled and looked back at Thembelihle. She moved from the sink and she rushed to get to Thembelihle. They hugged each other tightly, the hug that forced the tears off Happiness's eyes.

Thembelihle: "Yes, don't hold your tears back, my child."

Happiness: "Oh! Mama, when will the pain end?"

Thembelihle: "It will end and that would be when you are not expecting that it could happen. Don't be afraid but grieve my child." she comforted her and held her tight until they heard voices calling 'mama' Thembelihle and Happiness backed away from each other.

Thembelihle looked back at Njabulo and Nonjabulo who were standing behind her naked as they were inside the bathroom waiting for their mother to come back and bath them.

Thembelihle: "Hawu! Sanibona! Njabulo no Nonjabulo." She smiled and she went down on her knees with a smile kept still on her face. She pulled Njabulo and Nonjabulo to her. She hugged them both, Njabulo was smiling at his grandmother and Nonjabulo was just seeing a new face she had no smile.

Njabulo: "Nonjanja, this is my grandmother."

Nonjabulo: "Really?" she asked but she wasn't looking at Njabulo who'd just told her that Thembelihle was his grandmother. "Daddy told me that my grandmother went to heaven and daddy went to heaven too." She said softly and looked down at her hands that were bonded together.

Thembelihle looked back at Happiness and then at Nonjabulo. She held her chin up for her to look at her. "And now, you are looking at another grandmother. That's your grandmother. Don't you want to give your new grandmother a big smile?" She asked tickling her tiny underarms and Thembelihle heard the laughter that melted her heart, the two children laughed as she tickled them both. "What do you say?" she asked Nonjabulo.

Nonjabulo looked at her mother with a smile and Happiness nodded. "I am happy! I have a grandfather and a grandmother!" She exclaimed delightedly and she jumped lightly.

Thembelihle laughed as her heart fell in love with the pretty girl that resembled her mother.

Thembelihle: "Your mother was about to bath you?"

Njabulo: "Yes, gogo but can you bath us?"

Happiness: "Njabulo your grandmother is tired."

Children: "Hawu!"

Thembelihle got up from the floor. "Don't worry, your grandmother will bath you and you will tell me stories about places you've seen. How's that?"

Children: "YEAH!" they supported and ran off to the bathroom side leaving Thembelihle behind. She laughed and looked back at Happiness.

Happiness: "Thank you for being here."

Thembelihle smiled and nodded, she then followed the children to the bathroom. She admitted to herself that after the long hard weekend they've had as a family with two burials she felt relaxed for the first time after that long hard weekend...

“You two go and watch TV because your sisters are sleeping now.” Nandipha said to Similo and Ntokomalo who were standing behind her inside their bedroom. She’d just put the three girls to sleep after bathing them with Thula’s help and she was with her now as they’ve just put them to sleep.

Ntokomalo: “We want to go and watch the TV with you, mama.”

Similo: “Yes, because daddy left us alone in the lounge.”

Nandipha: “Why did he leave you?”

Ntokomalo: “He said he’s going to grandmother’s house.”

Similo: “Yes, and why don’t we go to grandma’s house, mama?” she asked a question they have never asked before. Nandipha looked at her but she didn’t answer her. She held both their hands and she moved out of the room...

Nandipha: “You will go watch TV and I will come to join you. I want to speak to your father my babies, okay?” she said pointing the direction to the lounge as they were standing by the door of Nandipha’s bedroom. Ntokomalo and Similo nodded, they let go of their mother’s hand.

Similo took Ntokomalo’s hand into her hand. “Unibambelani manje? Mimi?” (Why are you holding me, Similo?) Ntokomalo asked her identical sister and she tried to pull her hand away from Similo’s hand.

Similo: “HAWU! MUSA UKUDONSA ISHANDLA SHAKHO! NIYAKUBAMBA NJE!” (Don’t pull your hand away from mine because I am holding it.)

Ntokomalo: “EHE! UNIBAMBELANI?” (Yes, why are you holding me?) she shouted at Similo with her child-unreasonable temper.

Nandipha: “NTOKOMALO! THERE’S NOTHING WRONG IF YOUR SISTER IS HOLDING YOUR HAND.” She shouted at Ntokomalo as she was still standing by the door looking at them as they walk away. She stopped moving inside the bedroom the minute Ntokomalo asked the unexpected question to Similo.

“Kodwa, mama, yena uMimi uyanihlupha nje kodwa uyanibamba manje.” (But Similo’s likes to bother me at times and now, she’s holding me.) she told her mother, they’ve turned to look back at her as she was shouting.

Nandipha: “She’s your sister. Usume edlala nawe hhayi ukuthi uyakuhlupha. Uyadlala nabanye angithi? Hold her hand and go watch TV.” She told Ntokomalo and pointed Similo. She didn’t move until Ntokomalo had held Similo’s hand after turning to the lounge’s direction... Nandipha knew that Similo liked bothering her sisters but she never wanted the others to use that word ‘Uyangihlupha’ she didn’t think it was right for them to know and believe that about their sister because Similo loved playing around even with them as their parents she would do it, joking around and being naughty...

“Where are you going Ngcebo?” Nandipha asked Ngcebo who was standing before the mirror dressing up. It was a Wednesday evening and Ngcebo had been home with them all day long. They have decided that they were leaving, going back to Johannesburg the following day. Nandipha had never stopped convincing Ngcebo that he mustn’t attend the fight and just to stop her from talking any further Ngcebo told her they were going to leave KZN on

Thursday.

Ngcebo: "I am going home I will come back after the fight I won't stay."

Nandipha: "No, you are not going over there Ngcebo." She told him straight and she moved forward to be closer to him as he was fastening his sneakers.

Ngcebo: "We have been debating over the same thing Nandipha. I am telling you that nothing will happen they will be fighting and we will be watching them fight. There is no bloodshed there."

Nandipha: "Ngcebo, you were told not get anywhere closer to this betrayal mess but you are involving yourself you've been going up and down even attending some meetings that didn't need you."

Ngcebo: "How can you say that because my father asked me to be there when they speak to Dalingcebo? And Dalingcebo is my brother what's wrong if I support him?" he asked and looked at her feeling angered by what she was saying now. She was being insensitive unnecessarily as she would do at times. What was wrong when he supported Dalingcebo because now, he was alone with everyone turning their backs on him.

Nandipha: "There's nothing wrong and believe me if you didn't see this vision I wasn't going to stand in your way but now, I am against you leaving because your ancestors have warned you to stay away from this mess."

Ngcebo: "I told you that we are leaving tomorrow that will be me staying away and if they ask me to stay at home I won't stay. But now, I am going home."

Nandipha: "You are not going anywhere!" she exclaimed and ran to the door but Ngcebo took a few steps towards her and he held her arm. "Leave me alone Ngcebo. You don't want to listen to me I will force you to do what I am telling you because it is right thing for you to do." She shouted and tried to send her free hand to the door handle. She couldn't deny that she was scared that something wrong might happen over there and if that something wrong happens Ngcebo was going to be the first to be caught in between that crossfire. Ngcebo was everything to her and the girls, she wouldn't forgive herself if something was to happen to him while she could have simply lock him inside their bedroom. But now, as Ngcebo was fighting her it wasn't that simple to lock him up.

Ngcebo: "STOP IT!" He shouted at her and he forcefully pulled her away from the door, stretching his arm while Nandipha was still on his hold and he let go of her unexpectedly.

Nandipha's body landed on the floor and she cried as her body hit the floor painfully. "Fuck!" he swore and went down to help her get up from the floor because he didn't mean to hurt her. But he just wanted her to stop fighting him because there was nothing that was going to happen.

"LEAVE ME ALONE!" She shouted and pushed Ngcebo from her as he was trying to help her get up from the floor. Ngcebo was seated on his legs when he tried to help her get up but when Nandipha pushed him, he sat on the floor by force. Nandipha wiped her tears and she got up from the floor.

Ngcebo: "Nandipha visions don't necessarily mean they will happen as they appeared. Just like that one where I saw us getting married but there was a disaster. That was for Mnotho's

wedding and my ancestors know that I care about my family. They know I support everyone and nothing will happen in the fight it's just stick fighting."

Nandipha: "JUST GO! OKAY? GO! WHY ARE YOU STILL STANDING BEFORE ME EXPLAINING YOURSELF? LEAVE NGCEBO!" She screamed looking at him with her fireflies' eyes. She was beyond angry and she could feel that she was going to explode a number of things that she was going to regret the next day.

Ngcebo: "Don't be this angry with me. I don't want to stay here and be worried." He pleaded with her going down to her level he held her thighs.

Nandipha removed his hands from her thighs and she got up from the bed. She moved swiftly to the door and she opened the door for Ngcebo.

Nandipha: "The door is opened just go and support your family but when something, anything goes wrong there and something happens to you don't you dare come here and expect that I will nurse you. You'll stay there with your mother and brothers they will nurse you."

Ngcebo: "How can you speak like that? And what can possibly happen in stick fighting Nandipha?"

Nandipha: "I DON'T KNOW OKAY! Your brother killed his wife for goodness sake! He shot a fuckin pregnant woman and you are asking me what can happen? What if he doesn't want any fights? Huh?"

Ngcebo: "Don't think like that because now, you are accusing him and you've been in that position of being accused before –"

Nandipha: "I said go and don't come back here injured just go be with your precious family and leave me alone. Tsk!" she clicked her tongue and left Ngcebo inside their bedroom... She drew a long breath and wiped her face before showing her face to her daughters. She smiled at them when she saw them looking back at her.

Nandipha: "Move! Move!" she clapped her hands twice and they giggled, they moved away from each other. They allowed their mother to sit between them.

Ntokomalo: "Uyeza nobaba?" (Dad is coming?)

"BABA, WOZA UZOHLALA NATHI!" Similo screamed for her father and she battled to get off the couch. Her mother helped her. Similo ran up to her father who was by the look of things he wasn't coming by the lounge's way to sit down with them... She laughed and held his hand.

Ngcebo: "I will sit down with you when I come back, Mimi."

Similo: "Hawu, baba unahambi hlala nathi." (Don't go, stay with us)

Ngcebo: "I was with you the whole day, MaZulu. Go to your mother and I promise you that tomorrow we will go eThekwini." He promised his daughter and he lifted her off the floor.

Similo: "Hawu! Shobona ulwandle futhi, Ntoko!" (We will go see the sea again?) she asked delightedly looking at Ntokomalo who was laughing.

Ntokomalo: "Shocula kakhulu futhi kusasa. Shobona amagagasi amakhulu." (We will sing louder again tomorrow. We will see the big waves.) She said and they giggled with Similo...

Ngcebo placed Similo next to her mother.

Ngcebo: "I love you." he said to Nandipha with his eyes looking at her. Nandipha didn't look at him she didn't breathe a word.

Ntokomalo: "Mama, uthi ubaba uyakuthanda." (Mom, dad says he loves you)

Nandipha: "Cha, Ntoko he's saying that to you and your sister not me.

Ntokomalo: "Oh! Mimi!" she giggled and sent her head forward to look at Similo who was already giggling.

They both looked at their father. "SHIYAKUTHANDA, BABA!" They exclaimed at once and they clapped hands for themselves for no reason at all. Ngcebo laughed and he left the house after he'd kissed the girls as they requested. He didn't say anything to Nandipha.

He stepped inside Dalingcebo's car that he was still driving because Nandipha had been using the viano since she was going up and down with the girls going to Elena's house since the funeral preparations...

She was angry with him but she could help but feel uneasy now that Ngcebo had left the house. Nandipha stood up after she'd told the girls she was going to come back to them shortly. They were seated alone in the lounge. Thula was in the guestroom. Nandipha marched to her bedroom to get her phone...

"Kwenzenjani?" (What's happening?) That was the first thing Thembelihle asked Nandipha as she answered her phone call. She didn't greet her...

Nandipha: "Eh, sawubona, mama unjani?"

Thembelihle: "I am fine."

Nandipha: "I am calling because I need your help. Ngcebo left the house just a few minutes ago. He's coming that side for the fight and I am afraid that something might happen to him."

Thembelihle: "Something like what? He's coming home what can happen?"

Nandipha: "I don't know but I am asking that you don't let him in the palace. Please, send him back home because he knows that he mustn't be--"

Thembelihle: "There's nothing that can happen to Ngcebo while he's watching his brothers fight. You just don't want Ngcebo to support his twin brother. You want him to stay in that house with you and do what? What must he do there because he must be here where his family is."

Nandipha: "But he was warned not be anywhere--"

Thembelihle: "He wouldn't come here if he knew that there's danger. I think now you are using these visions just prison my son in that house."

Nandipha: "It's not like and I wouldn't have called you if I am not desperate. Please, you are his mother and I am begging you that you--"

Thembelihle: "You are being worried over nothing and I can't possibly see danger when Ngcebo sit down and watch the fight. How should I say that he must not come into his home?"

Nandipha didn't answer her but she dropped the call seeing that she wasn't going to help her. Nandipha sat down and closed her eyes, she opened them and tapped on her phone. She looked at Dalisu's number with her heart pumping against her chest. She was scared to call

him.

Nandipha: "I can do this!" she encouraged herself and tapped dialled...

"Dalisu, speaking, hello?" Dalisu accepted the phone call.

Nandipha: "Eh, sawubona, baba. You are speaking to Nandipha, Buhle's mother. I am sorry to call but I need your help." She explained herself to Dalisu and held her tummy as she felt her intestines turning.

Dalису: "What is it?"

Nandipha: "Eh, Ngcebo is coming that side to watch the fight and I am scared for him because he'd seen a vision that stated it clearly that he mustn't be involved in all that's happening..." she then narrated Ngcebo's vision to Dalisu exactly as Ngcebo had narrated it to him. She could recognise her voice was slightly shaking because she was scared that Dalisu would shut his hand to her face and tell him she was being unreasonable...

Dalису: "Oh, I didn't know that. And you want him to come back home?"

Nandipha: "Yes, I don't want to risk anything. Please."

Dalису: "Okay, I will speak to him when he gets here."

Nandipha: "Thank you." she said and held her breath. Dalisu then hung up the call...

Nandipha removed the phone from her ears and she closed her eyes...

"Please, be safe out there." Danielle pleaded with Mnotho. She was standing before him and she was brushing his head as he was seated down on their bed. She'd been scared since the beginning of the week after the two funerals.

Mnotho: "I am not scared on bit."

Danielle: "You may not be scared but I am scared Zulu."

Mnotho held her hands and he looked up at her. He gave Danielle a smile. "I know that the past weeks had been difficult not just for me but for you as well because I haven't been home with you and Pearl." he spoke to her.

Danielle: "But now we are talking about the fight."

Mnotho: "Yes, I know but I will need your support because I will need to build my relationship with my children from Happiness."

Danielle: "If you say your children you are talking about her daughter too?"

Mnotho: "Yes, I can never exclude her because she's a brother to Njabulo. They're twins that practically makes them one person and even if they were not, I wasn't going to exclude her. I can't make things work if you won't understand that sometimes I will have to go to Johannesburg just to see them since their mother doesn't live here anymore. Once things are good between me and them I will even ask them to visit us here and I hope you won't have a problem with that." He spoke with her without telling her that he was going to try fixing things with Happiness too. He didn't want to bring that up because that was going to be a fight that he didn't want to begin.

Danielle: "Why would I have a problem with your children? And I was expecting that Siphosami will be coming to stay with us since his mother is no longer alive but you are not saying anything about him."

Mnotho: “But babe, you and his mother didn’t get along.”

Danielle: “And so, what does that supposed to mean?”

Mnotho: “I just thought it would be less stressful if he lives with mom.”

Danielle: “Wow! So, you are telling me you don’t trust me with your son?”

Mnotho: “No, that’s not what I am saying but-”

Danielle: “No! how can you think I will hate a child because of his mother? Who raised me, Mnotho? Was I raised by my biological mother? Did my biological mother and stepmother get along?”

Mnotho: “No, but-”

Danielle: “No! I am really hurt that you can think I am incapable of loving your son but I have only known the love of a stepmother. I just wonder what else do you actually think about me.”

Mnotho: “No, MaNkosi-”

Danielle: “No, don’t explain yourself Mnotho. Let’s go.” She said throwing the brush on the bed and she grabbed her bed leaving through the door. She was hurt that Mnotho thought such about her. He didn’t need to have say things straight forward but it was clear to her that he didn’t trust her with his son...

S5 >> EPISODE 28

“You are ready? Boxer!” Ngcebo asked Dalingcebo who was seated on the couch inside his house. He was fastening his sneakers’ laces and he was feeling nervous about this day. He was scared that something might go wrong and he would have to be separated from his children...

Dalingcebo: “I am ready but I think I will just let him fight me without fighting.”

Ngcebo: “Why would you do that?”

Dalingcebo: “So that I won’t defeat him and what if he chooses the stick fighting and he aims at my head? Ngcebo, then what?”

Ngcebo: “Look at you being worried like a sissy now.”

Dalingcebo: “I am not being a sissy but you would be nervous as well.” He said and got up from the couch. He stretched out his arm and he took his car keys from Ngcebo. He was leaving the car with Dalingcebo because he wasn’t going to use it anymore. “You’ll leave what time tomorrow?” he asked and he took the keys of the car that he was using. He’d sent the car he had with him to have the windows of the car changed to bullet proof windows because he was scared that he would be shot while driving around the village.

Ngcebo: “I will leave in the morning.” He replied as they followed each other to Dalingcebo’s car... Dalingcebo got in on the driver seat and he drove once Ngcebo had taken his seat.

They drove to their mother’s house having a neutral conversation and they were laughing as if nothing was wrong.

Ngcebo: "And now, after this fight you'll have a divorce to face."

Dalingcebo: "Ey, don't even remind me about that. I have a lot of things going on in my life and I will have to find a nanny for Qhawe. I don't want to bother mama about anything concerning him."

Ngcebo: "Shit, can you realise that you'll be single again?"

Dalingcebo chuckled: "Yeah, I am going back to those drought seasons."

Ngcebo: "Maybe someone will come along."

Dalingcebo: "I miss seeing Palesa, though." he said and turned his head to look at Ngcebo as they took the road to their mother's palace.

Ngcebo: "Just stay out of trouble and that means stay away from Palesa."

Dalingcebo: "Oh, you are trying to tell me that Palesa is trouble?"

Ngcebo: "No, she's my wife's friend and there'll be trouble there if you can start seeing Palesa. I think we've had enough drama."

Dalingcebo: "You'll have to know that I won't let that girl go just like that. I have my eyes on her and she'll be mine."

"Udakiwe!" Ngcebo swore at him and they stepped out of the car after Dalingcebo had parked the car inside Thembelihle's palace. Ngcebo looked back at the guard who was running towards them while Dalingcebo was busy laughing at Ngcebo who'd sworn at him... The palace was full of men who'd made a circle at an open space of the palace. They were eating and drinking before the fight could begin. Dalingcebo was looking around the palace while Ngcebo had his eyes on the guard.

"What's wrong?" Ngcebo asked the guard as he'd stopped before him.

Guard: "Nkosana, your father told me that I should tell you to come to his study the minute you get home."

Ngcebo: "Okay, I will do that." He said, the guard bowed his head for him before turning back to leave Ngcebo... Ngcebo then turned to Dalingcebo who was still looking around the palace. "I will go to dad inside the house." He informed him and Dalingcebo nodded his head once without looking at him. Ngcebo then jogged to the house and he bumped to his mother who was walking out of the house followed by Njabulo and a little girl who resembled Happiness. Ngcebo was certain she was Happiness' daughter.

Thembelihle: "You came! I didn't think that you will come."

Ngcebo: "Why would I not come?"

Thembelihle: "Your wife called me telling me that I shouldn't let you inside the palace and I thought maybe you won't be coming."

Ngcebo: "Oh! I was called by father." He said and moved away from his mother to get to his father's office. He couldn't believe Nandipha called his mother. He didn't want to stand before his mother and discuss this further. It was best for him to move away from her.

"You won't even greet the children!" Thembelihle exclaimed and looked back at Ngcebo who was walking away without greeting the children who were following her. They've arrived at the palace in the morning with Thembelihle.

Ngcebo: "Children are not going anywhere mom I will see them." he replied and lifted his

feet, he sent his hand on to his pocket and he got back with his phone. He shook his head and sent the phone back on his pocket. He was going to speak to her when he got back home. Ngcebo told himself that as he stepped inside his father's office after being told to come in.

Dalису: "Oh! You've come." He pointed the chair opposite him and Ngcebo took the seat. He greeted his father and Dalису greeted him back.

Ngcebo: "What's wrong?"

Dalису: "I received a call that you shouldn't be here and I don't want to have a debate with you Ngcebo. You need to go back to your house."

Ngcebo: "Nandipha called you!" he exclaimed and widened his eyes as he didn't expect this one, not at all! She'd called his father!

Dalису: "Yes, and now, you must get up and go back to her and the children."

Ngcebo sighed. "Baba, Nandipha is worried about nothing, really. And in my vision I didn't see things as they are happening now. I saw a mess and right now, this fight is not a mess. What can possibly happen to me while I am seated down watching Dalingingcebo and Mnotho fight? A stick will fly from their hands and it will get to me and hurt me? Can you look into this closely?"

Dalису: "I hear your point Ngcebo but when it is said that you shouldn't be involved in something that means you shouldn't be involved and I ask that you go back to your house."

Ngcebo: "No, by being here that doesn't mean I am involved. Baba, you know how women exaggerate things and please, don't make it look like you don't see that there's no danger in here."

Dalису: "Yes, I see that there's no danger but let's not risk anything."

Ngcebo: "I want to be here and I will be here. Maybe if this fight was in grandfather's premises I would have stayed at home but I see nothing wrong. I wasn't even warned that I shouldn't be here."

Dalису sighed and saw that there was no use trying to convince Ngcebo. He then nodded his head and chose to trust that he knew what he was talking about... Ngcebo then got up from the chair and left the room to be with the rest of the men outside the house... He sat next to Mntwana and Ndabezihle when he got to the circle. He greeted them and joined in on the conversation they were holding together and the food they were eating...

"What will you choose? The stick fighting or hand?" Mlamuli asked Mnotho who was seated next to him. Mlamuli was seated on the chair and Mnotho was next to him on the bench.

They were also amongst the men who were inside the palace, the men who were now doing the Zulu dance for men...

They were having a conversation with Mnotho while looking at the men.

Mnotho: "I will choose stick fighting."

Mlamuli: "Why don't you fight him with your hands? And I still say you shouldn't have agreed to this Mnotho."

Mnotho: "It will put my heart at ease. And I felt so bad when I was trying to take Njabulo from mama's side and he refused to come to me, bluntly."

Mlamuli: “You need to put in a lot of effort because what you did is not just lightly and children notice these things. They say children pick up the negative energy coming from their parents.”

Mnotho: “Hey! I wish I can turn back the hands of time.”

Mlamuli: “But you can’t.”

Mnotho nodded his head and his eyes looked up at his father who was standing in the middle of the circle with the elder of the family. They were standing there after he’d gotten the men to keep still... Dalisu then greeted the men in his yard and he explained the purpose of the evening without revealing the reason behind his sons’ fight that the men were about to witness. Stick fighting was something that was normal and men would gather around to watch the fighting game.

Dalisu then looked back at Mnotho and then Dalingcebo. He didn’t need to tell them to stand up but they stood up automatically.

Dalisu: “What are you choosing? This is not a game and you better choose wisely because we will not change in the middle of the fight.” He said to Mnotho, he was facing him now and Dalingcebo was on his back.

Mnotho: “We will use sticks.”

Dalisu: “Okay, you are not fighting to kill him I will be over there watching you and don’t you dare provoke me.” he said to him his eyes widened. Mnotho nodded his head without breathing a word. Dalisu then turned to Dalingcebo he then shared the same words he shared with Mnotho that they were not fighting to kill each other... Dalisu then moved aside and they were given the stick and a small shield made of leopard skin not the bigger shield.

Mnotho was looking at Dalingcebo for the first time after that ‘night’ he hadn’t bumped into him and he hadn’t even seen him from afar. It was his first time seeing and the first thing that showed up to his mind when he looked at him was that ‘picture’ of Dalingcebo behind his wife. That picture fuelled up the greatest fury inside Mnotho and he didn’t even hesitate as the elder of the family announced that they could begin their fight...

The women were not around to see the fight, it would differ from village to village but stick fighting was a men’s sport and no women were allowed in there in most villages. Only men would be present to be spectators or to participate on the sport... Now, as Dalingcebo and Mnotho were busy beginning their fight. The men also began making cheering noises making it impossible for them to hear what the two brothers were saying to each other on the circle. That was not for them but what was for them, was to watch the fight, sing when necessary or cheer.

“Uyinja Dalingcebo, you disrespected me and slept with my wife! Why are you not fighting now!” Mnotho shouted at Dalingcebo and moved closer to him and he nailed his stick on Dalingcebo’s left rib side. They were both wearing tracksuit pants with leopard printed vests and they had traditional sandals on their feet. They’ve changed their sneakers/shoes for the fight... Mnotho was being angered now as Dalingcebo wasn’t fighting him as he wanted him to...

Dalingcebo: "I don't want to fight you because you are bigger brother."

Mnotho: "That's nonsense mgodoyi because you slept with my wife! Wasn't I your bigger brother then?" he asked and hit him on his left arm when he was trying to lift his shield... The crowds would make louder noise when the stick hit one's body and the cheering would be higher.

Dalingcebo: "I am sorry, bafo, won't you forgive me? I was wrong!"

Mnotho moved back and lifted his shield and stick up in the air while looking at his father. Dalisu stood on his feet and there was total silence.

Dalису: "WHAT'S WRONG?"

Mnotho: "HE'S PLAYING A GAME WITH ME, BABA. HE'S NOT FIGHTING ME!" He shouted for his father for him to hear clear and he looked back at Dalingcebo whom he was fighting with. He didn't want to keep playing this game but he wanted this fight to work and it was only going to work if Dalingcebo was fighting not letting him hit him...

Uncle elder: "DALINGCEBO! STOP THAT NONSENSE I AM WATCHING YOU HERE DOING THAT NONSENSE!" He shouted at him after Dalису had sat down. Dalingcebo then nodded his head and they proceeded with their stick fighting. Where they weren't playing but they were really fighting each other with Mnotho hitting Dalingcebo more than he did. He was angry with him and that anger gave him the greatest strength to fight with him, to hit whatever available, whatever visible part of his body. Dalingcebo wasn't playing too but he was hitting even though it was not like Mnotho was doing... Their fight went on and on until it was visible that Mnotho was winning and so, Dalису stopped the fight because he didn't want it go on any longer as Dalingcebo's forehead was bleeding from being hit on the forehead... The crowds were insane with cheering and the singing was on a higher level... "When are they going to end this nonsense, Nkosazana?" Thembelihle asked looking at Nkosazana. She was seated with her daughters' in-law inside her dining room and other women from the family. They've finished setting the table without putting the food on the table.

Nkosazana: "I did suggest that we shouldn't be here."

Candice: "And mama, said she was fine. I am suffering from culture shock right now. I can't believe they're really fighting." She commented and placed her hands on her face. The women in the room laughed... The children were playing together in the other room inside the house.

Aunt elder: "That's your welcome to family." She said and the others supported with laughter... Thembelihle shook her head and closed her eyes wondering what was going on outside the house...

"He wasn't supposed to hit you on the head." Ngcebo said and gave Dalingcebo the wet towel that he'd taken inside his mother's house for Dalingcebo... The fight was over and the men were leaving the palace discussing the fight amongst themselves as they left the palace.

Dalingcebo: "It's fine I will recover from it."

Ngcebo: "You really wanted him to beat you, neh?"

Dalingcebo: "I didn't want to defeat him."

“Bhuti Rambo Zulu!” Mntwana joined in, and Dalingcebo laughed at what he was calling him. They were standing by Dalingcebo’s car under the shelter of the palace’s parking lot... Mnotho had gone to one of guesthouse in the palace and the other brothers went inside their mother’s house.

Dalingcebo: “There’s no Rambo KwaZulu and why didn’t you join in?”

Mntwana: “Who? Me? Be beaten up? I still have a girl that I need to charm back in Cape Town.” He said and held his chin. Dalingcebo laughed.

Ngcebo: “I thought the girl doesn’t want you.”

Mntwana: “Has that ever stop me from going after any girl?”

Dalingcebo: “Ask him Mntwana and tell him you don’t have the spirit of igwababa!” (You are not scared of girls) he said and they laughed.

Ngcebo: “And growing up Dalingcebo had that spirit.” He teased him with the truth and the three of them laughed.

Dalingcebo: “I saw still a boy then but now, I don’t suffer from that shit.” He said and removed the towel from his forehead.

Mntwana: “You are staying over here?”

Dalingcebo: “I will go to the house and come back to eat. Ngcebo you are staying here or you are going now?”

Ngcebo: “Eish, I can’t stay. You’ll have to drop me home but I want to go to the bathroom before we leave.”

“Let’s drive up together. I am driving to MaNkosi’s house to get these things they asked me to get from her house.” Ndabezinhle informed his brothers whom he heard talking about leaving. He had Mnotho’s car keys in his hand and a piece of paper.

Mntwana: “Ey, I am very hungry and so, you’ll leave.”

Ndabezinhle: “Awu, Mntwana come on, drive with me. It’s not far.”

Mntwana: “No, bhuti, I am going to obey my stomach. I will see you tomorrow Ngcebo since the others are coming back.” he said and jogged back to the house after he’d heard a response from Ngcebo.

Ngcebo: “I want to use the bathroom.”

Ndabezinhle: “You’ll pee up the road ntwana. You’ll keep us waiting over here because the bathrooms are full. You know how it goes.”

Dalingcebo: “Yeah, Ngcebo, let’s go. I am hungry as well.” He encouraged and they all stepped inside the cars... Ndabezinhle drove Mnotho’s car out of the parking lot and Dalingcebo followed behind...

Ngcebo: “Did you manage to ask for forgiveness to him while you were fighting?” he asked and looked at Dalingcebo.

Dalingcebo: “Yes, but I don’t think he’ll forgive me.”

Ngcebo: “I don’t see that happening as well. This fight was just for him to release his anger and not to have you killed. I think he’s stopping.” he pointed Mnotho’s car that Ndabezinhle was driving.

They were up on the main road where they’ve decided they will stop the cars for Ngcebo to

pee. Ndabezinhle was the first to stop Mnotho's car as he was in front of them but he wasn't stopping it because he'd remembered Ngcebo wanted to pee but he was seeing a body lying on road. He looked back at Dalingcebo's car and it was stopping he looked back at the road the body he'd seen laying on the road was no longer there...

Ngcebo stepped out of Dalingcebo's car and he closed the door, he walked away from the car a short distance and it didn't take longer for gun shots to be fired at their direction. And it was too late for Ngcebo to run back to Dalingcebo's car as four bullets pierced through the different parts of his body... The people nearby their cars and those on the road ran for their lives.

Inside the car Dalingcebo panicked as Ndabezinhle was driving away and he couldn't drive away and leave Ngcebo who he'd seen falling on the ground when he was trying to find his gun...

"Aim at the car that's moving! That's the one we want the most!" The hitman in charge of the hitmen squad spoke to the others through the wireless communication device and they sent their attention to the car...

"Fuck!" Ndabezinhle swore holding his arm where he was shot which was the reason for him to drive the away but he didn't know he was driving to his dead end as he lost control of the car and it rolled over taking the route that was off the road. It reached it end when it bumped on the big rock on the far side of the road and the car blew up in flames with Ndabezinhle inside...

Dalingcebo held his chest as his eyes looked at the flames coming from the car that had blew off. He was out of his car now with his gun on his hand. He thought he could just vent the bullets in the dark but the gunshots stopped automatically when Mnotho's car was on fire... The hitmen in the bushes by the road where they were hiding ran away as their job had been done...

Dalingcebo's mind came back to him and he remembered his twin brother who'd fallen on the ground. He got up and ran to him.

"Ngcebo!" He called his name out and he sent his gun on his back. He then went down to lift Ngcebo off the ground without checking whether he was alive or not. That was not important for him now but getting his brother off that ground he'd fallen on was what was important...

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Mnotho was walking on the hallway to get to the children's room because he wanted to take Njabulo and Nonjabulo just to have a talk with them... He'd just finished up cleaning himself after the fight that he was satisfied about. The rush of anger that he had inside of him was decreased to a certain level by the fight that had just happened. And he understood why the elders had created this sport as type of confrontation of your anger if someone had wronged

you. He'd fought with Dalingcebo and yes, that didn't change the fact that he hated his brother for what he did to him but for now, he didn't have the fury that was consuming his whole being whenever he thought of Dalingcebo...

The supper that they were going to have as a family hadn't begun and he thought he could see Njabulo and Nonjabulo because when he tried to take Njabulo from his grandmother's side. He refused to go to Mnotho by shaking his head and holding on tightly to Thembelihle's skirt.

He was thinking of a way he was going to use to speak to Njabulo and his sister when he saw Nonjabulo coming out of the room running. She laughed running towards Mnotho's direction without looking back. And Mnotho couldn't see who she was running away from because there was nobody who was following her... Mnotho then moved forward and he catch Nonjabulo who hadn't stopped running while she was laughing loudly. Mnotho lifted Nonjabulo up holding her in the air and she, she was giggling looking down at Mnotho with her little feet kicking. That forced Mnotho to laugh.

Mnotho: "Why are you running? What if you fell?"

Nonjabulo: "Malume, I am running away from Calokuhle." (Qalokuhle) she called Mnotho uncle because the other brothers had introduced themselves to her as 'uncle' and she was calling all of them as uncle except for Dalisu who'd told her that she was her grandfather just like he was to Njabulo... The children didn't have a difficult time blending with Nonjabulo. They played together but they did ask Nonjabulo where she'd been because she was never with them. Thembelihle was there when they asked her that question and she answered them giving them a childlike answer... Happiness didn't come to the palace and she wasn't in Mnotho's house but she drove to her mother's home. She wasn't going to sleepover but she was going to return the same day.

Mnotho: "What is Qalokuhle doing?"

Nonjabulo: "I broke the arm of her doll and she told me to run."

Mnotho laughed, he lowered Nonjabulo to his arms and he walked forward with her. "Didn't you come here with your doll?" He asked her.

Nonjabulo: "Mama said we shouldn't bring our toys because we won't stay longer. Our other grandfather said we must come back early because he doesn't want to miss us when we are gone."

Mnotho: "But I don't want to miss you when you are gone too." He said and turned his lips down and Nonjabulo laughed shaking her head.

Nonjabulo: "E.eh, malume. Njiva!" she screamed Njabulo's name and she waved at him as Njabulo was leaving the children's playing room following Siphosami... Njabulo turned his head quickly as he heard his name being called by his sister but when he saw his sister up in his father's arms. He folded his lips and his face changed. Siphosami had stopped walking away and he held Njabulo's hand, he pulled him to their father.

Njabulo: "E.e! Angifuni!" (I don't want to go)

Siphosami: "We are going to dad, Njiva." He convinced Njabulo but Njabulo shook his head and pulled his hand away from Siphosami's hand... Siphosami looked back at his father who

was now standing before them with Nonjabulo still in his arms. She was quiet now looking at Njabulo. Mnotho didn't feel bad about Njabulo's reaction because he was expecting it and he knew that this was his doing. He'd done this to his son and further feeling sad and bad about isn't going to make things right. But he needed to be patient. He heard Nandipha very well and he was going to love these children and his love was going to break every yolk of hate and pain he created.

Mnotho went down to the children's level. "Awufuni ukuza kubaba wakho?" (You don't want to come to your father?) Mnotho asked softly and he pulled him to him by his hand. "Ngeke ngikwenze lutho." (I won't hurt you) he said to Njabulo as he could feel that his body was stiff.

Mnotho: "Go and play with the others Siphosami I will take Njabulo because he hasn't been home, okay?" He said taking Njabulo into his other arm and he got up with him in his left arm and Nonjabulo was in his right arm.

Siphosami: "Yebo, baba." He said and moved back to the room. Siphosami had been living with his grandmother since the death of his mother and he hadn't show any difficulties with the absence of his mother...

Mnotho then moved to the empty bedroom with Njabulo and Nonjabulo still in his arms. The children were looking at each other without speaking...

"Sanibona?" He greeted Njabulo and Nonjabulo, he'd just placed them on top of the bed and sat on the bed facing them. Njabulo had his hand holding Nonjabulo and his left hand in his mouth.

Nonjabulo: "You are Njabulo's father?" she asked without greeting back and she looked at Njabulo who was still quietly looking down now.

Mnotho: "Ehe. I am his father."

Nonjabulo: "Hhe! Njabulo said that you hit him and his mother. You won't hit us now? My father didn't hit us at home and do you know that my father went up to God like my grandmother?"

Mnotho closed his eyes shortly and he opened them again. "Njabulo's father won't hit you now. Do you know that adults also do bad things and they cry when they see that they've done bad things?" he asked looking at them both.

Nonjabulo: "Really?" She looked at Njabulo and he wasn't looking at them.

Mnotho: "Yes, and Njabulo's father did a very bad thing and he cried because he did a bad thing. And he will never do bad things again." He promised and held Njabulo's wrist to remove his fingers from his mouth and that was when the sounds of gunshots coming afar were heard by everyone in the palace. Mnotho pulled the two children to him and he looked back...

"What's happening?" Aunt elder was the first to ask the question as they all heard the gunshots noise from afar. The daughters' in-law was placing the food on the table when they heard these gunshots and everyone in the dining room stood on their feet... They moved out of the dining room but they met Uncle elder in the hallway followed by Mlamuli and Dalisu.

Uncle elder: "Where are you going?"

Thembelihle: "We want to know what's happening."

Dalису: "MaSthole, you can't be going outside and the gunshots we are hearing are not even near us."

Thembelihle: "And that means we can go outside."

Mlamuli: "No, mama, we don't know what's happening and it's better that you stay inside because it might be drunk people fighting."

Nkosazana: "Those gunshots are war not just people fighting, Ndabezitha."

Danielle: "I will go to the children." She said and ran away from the others because the children were crying from the room. Candice decided to follow her behind to assist her...

Mnotho gave both Njabulo and Nonjabulo to Danielle and Candice as he met up with them on the hallway...

Thembelihle: "Where are others? Mnotho? Mntwana? And the others, Banele? Hhaybo! Where are they." she looked around and she felt the paranoia as her head spin around and her heart was pumping hard because of the fear of the unknown. She wanted to believe that the gunshots they were hearing were not associated with them but she couldn't help but feel scared now as she couldn't see all her children.

Dalису: "MaSthole, calm down." He said and pulled her from the ladies. But Thembelihle didn't take any note of him she kept looking around.

Mnotho: "I am here."

Mntwana: "Ndabezinhle, Dalingcebo and Ngcebo left the palace."

Uncle elder: "Can we calm down because we don't know what's happening? Let's get inside the dining room and we will ask the men to go check what's happening out there." he encouraged them and they all moved...

After Dalingcebo had placed Ngcebo inside his car he placed his head on his steering as he felt his head spinning. What was he supposed to do now because Mnotho's car was still on fire with Ndabezinhle inside the car?

"I should drive to Nandipha's house." He decided that there and moved to his side of the door. He saw that it was better that he attends Ngcebo because it was obvious to him that Ndabezinhle was dead over there. There was no way he could survive the car exploding while he was inside the car. He held the steering and he speeded his car off on the highest speed... He couldn't believe what had just happened. He couldn't believe how life just flipped before his eyes and he witnessed his brother being shot and his other brother's car going up in flame while the other one was inside the car.

"Fuck! Fuck!" He swore repeatedly and he hit the steering again and again. He held on to the steering and he felt that Nandipha's house was too far. But he couldn't drive Ngcebo to the hospital without Nandipha. He couldn't do that!

His tire screeched as he stopped the car before the gate of Nandipha's house. He stepped out of the car and he ran to the front door. When he got to the front door he didn't knock but he budged inside the house and he shouted Nandipha's name from the minute he stepped his

feet inside the house...

Nandipha was seated on the lounge alone, her children were all sleeping and she was waiting for Ngcebo impatiently. She'd been staring at the door way now and again until hours passed and she figured that both Ngcebo's parents had failed her as Ngcebo wasn't coming back home. She couldn't sleep because she was scared that something might happen. She didn't know what was that, that might happen but she was scared. She would switch off the TV and pray asking God to protect Ngcebo and she would switch on the TV and try to convince herself nothing was going to happen to him. Her mother called and they spoke on the phone for a long time and Nandipha knew that her mother was just distracting her. She'd sent a WhatsApp voice note to her mother to tell her that she was worried and she asked that she prays...

Now, as she heard her name being roared out. Nandipha stood on her feet like a lightning stroke. She stood up without moving from her position and when her name was being called for the second time she began moving from her position to get to the door's way. She met up with Dalingcebo who was approaching the lounge and she stopped walking. She swallowed hard as she saw blood on Dalingcebo's leopard vest she didn't ask anything to him she picked up her feet to leave the room but Dalingcebo held her by her hand.

Dalingcebo: "Please, go and take your bag because we need to go to the hospital. Thula is here with the children, right?" he asked looking at her with his hand still holding Nandipha's wrist. Nandipha didn't answer him but she pulled her wrist from his hand and she ran to her bedroom... Dalingcebo then rushed to check the guest bedroom to find Thula and tell her that he was going to the hospital with Nandipha...

"Please, call her mother and tell her what has happened because right now it doesn't look like Nandipha wants to talk." Dalingcebo instructed Thula moving out of the house and she was following him behind with her heart racing.

Thula: "I will do that, prince. Nkosiyami please, drive safe on the road." She shouted that out as Dalingcebo was running to the gate seeing Nandipha who'd already left the house and she was running to the car...

Nandipha looked through the car's windows and she saw Ngcebo laying inside the car at the backseat. She moved around, by the back of the car to get to the other side of the door where his head was. She threw her bag on the front seat of the car standing from the back door. She then lifted Ngcebo's head and she stepped inside the car. She sat down and laid Ngcebo's head on her lap without any tears on her eyes. She pulled the door and the car began moving as Dalingcebo had hopped in on his side of the door...

Dalingcebo: "I don't know if we should just drive him to the local hospital or we can gamble and drive to Richards bay."

Nandipha: "You want to gamble with my husband's life. Can you hear yourself?" she asked raising her voice on him after she'd felt that Ngcebo had a pulse. She had her hands on his forehead when she heard Dalingcebo's words.

Dalingcebo: "The Bay has the best and fastest services Nandipha. Or we can get to the local hospital now and they can fly him to Richards bay with the patients' helicopter. I will follow

you behind.” He suggested quickly and he turned on the lights of the car to look back at her through the mirror.

At the presence of the light Nandipha sent her eyes on Ngcebo’s upper body and when she saw the blood. She began crying. “Ngcebo!” She cried and quickly took off the jersey that she was wearing. She could feel that her whole body was shaking and her hands were shaking as she placed the jersey where she saw the blood. As her hands shook violently her heart swelled with a sea of tears. She rested her forehead on his forehead and she cried...

Dalingcebo figured he was supposed to take decisions alone and he lifted his phone to call the local hospital to ask if the helicopter was available at the moment. He had no choice but to speak while Nandipha was crying...

“We didn’t find any bodies on the road but the car that exploded is still there by the road. It’s beyond recognition.” The guard informed the Zulu family, they were seated inside the dining room all together without the children. Danielle and Candice had managed to get the children to calm down and they came back to be amongst the others. The three younger kids, Njabulo, Nonjabulo and Pearl were asleep.

Uncle elder: “There was nobody walking around on the road?” he asked and didn’t ask about the neighbours because the main road had no houses nearby but he was certain that the men coming from the palace would still be on the road. It would be impossible that the road had no people passing by.

Guard: “People on the road told us that they heard the gunshots and they went into hiding but on our way back we met a man who told us that two cars stopped on the road and the shots were fired. The other car blew up in flames. That’s all we were able to find they didn’t tell if those cars were coming from the queen’s road or they were just on the road.”

Thembelihle: “What should we do now because Ndabezihle’s phone is off. Dalingcebo’s phone is off and Ngcebo’s phone rings without being answered.”

Mnotho: “I think we can go to that car that’s by the road and I can try to identify if the car’s structure is like my car or not.”

Mlamuli: “I think we should do that and someone can call Nandipha to ask if Ngcebo has gotten home.” he suggested before they got up.

Dalису: “No! Nobody must call her until we have identified that car. It hadn’t been long since they left the palace and by now, they haven’t reach enyokeni. She will be worried if we call her. Aunts please, let us go and you will stay here with the children.” he said standing on his feet and they got up after him. He saw it best that they don’t call her because she was worried when she called about Ngcebo and calling her might not be a good idea.

Thembelihle: “I am not gonna wait here while three of my sons are not here with me. I won’t wait here I am going with you.” she said and when the aunts tried to stop her from leaving Thembelihle didn’t listen to them but she followed Dalису and their four sons who were leaving the house with the two uncle elders. Nkosazana followed after them leaving the others behind...

Mnotho had a torch in his hand, Banele and Mntwana followed around him with torches

lighting the burnt car... Mnotho didn't breathe a word but he sat on the ground as he'd figured that this was his car.

"Mnotho! Speak!" Thembelihle screamed and she moved away from her husband. She rushed to Mnotho who was seated on the ground without telling his family what was going on.

"Mnotho!" she screamed and kneeled on the ground not minding the pieces of rocks that she'd kneeled on.

Mnotho: "It's my car, mama." He told his mother and he dropped his head as his mother's cry sounded painful in his ears.

Uncle elder: "No, let's not cry MaSthole because this doesn't mean anything. Dalingcebo's car is not around and maybe they might have taken Ndabezinhle and drove away. Maybe he fell off the car while it was taking on this direction and they took him. They might be in the hospital now. We need to drive there. That's the only option we have." He voiced out possibilities and his possibilities kept Thembelihle shut completely. She stopped crying.

"Mkhulu might be right. Let's go!" Thembelihle supported and she got up from the ground without waiting for them to start moving. Thembelihle walked away from them and they followed her behind...

Mnotho took out his phone from the pocket he was driving with Mlamuli and Nkosazana who were seated on the seats and Mnotho was with Banele on the backseat of the car. He then dialled Happiness's number.

"I am waiting for my children's return and your mother's phone is off." Happiness accepted Mnotho's phone call.

Mnotho: "MaMthimkhulu, the children are at the palace sleeping. We had to leave the palace because there's been a shoot and we found my car by the road burnt. Ndabezinhle was the one driving the car."

Happiness: "Jesu! I thought I was going crazy when I heard gunshots."

Mnotho: "Yeah, they were real and now, we are driving to the local hospital to look for answers maybe they will know something or maybe they're there if they were hurt. I am calling you to tell you that the children are at the palace and they're not alone. You can go and fetch them."

Happiness: "No, I want to come there because your mother is with you, guys, right?" She asked with a sudden panic on her voice.

Mnotho: "Yes, she's with us."

Happiness: "I am driving behind you. I want to be there with your mother."

Mnotho: "Alright, keep your phone closer I will call you to keep updating you."

Happiness: "Okay, thank you."

Mnotho sighed and hung up the call. He closed his eyes and laid his head back. There was total silence inside the car...

“Mama?” Nandipha answered her mother’s phone call. She was seated on the waiting area inside ‘The Bay hospital’ Dalingcebo managed to have them flown from Nongoma to Richards’ bay with the hospital helicopter. He wanted to drive behind her but Nandipha asked that he doesn’t let her go alone. Dalingcebo then left his car at the hospital and he flew with Nandipha and his brother... It’d been hours of waiting and Nandipha could feel that she was slowly losing her mind. Dalingcebo was seated next to her waiting...

Faith: “My child, where are you now? I am on the road driving down to KZN. Thula called me and told me what happened.”

Nandipha: “I am inside the hospital waiting mama. You are driving alone? Where’s Randall?” she asked and closed her eyes, she then cleared her throat as the big lump on her throat was making it difficult for her to speak freely... Dalingcebo got up from his seat and he left her.

Faith: “I am driving alone. I left your brother home.”

Nandipha: “But mama, you won’t come here? What will my children do when I am not there or you will go to them? But who should be here with me?” she asked and placed her hand on her eyes as if that was going to stop the tears from coming out of her eyes all over again.

Faith: “Okay, okay, I will call your brother and tell him that he must take a plane first thing in the morning. And when he comes to be with the girls I will come straight to you because Thula can’t be alone with the girls.”

Nandipha: “Okay, mama. Thank you.”

Faith: “You are still with his brother over there?”

Nandipha: “Yes-” she replied and she lifted her head as someone placed their hand on her shoulder. She stood on her feet quickly as it was the Doctor. “Mama, the Doctor is here. I will call you.”

Faith: “Okay, my child.” she hung up the call.

Nandipha removed the phone from her ear. “Doctor? What’s happening?” She asked and looked at the seat where Dalingcebo was seated. It was empty.

Doctor: “We have taken out the four bullets. He had two his stomach and the other almost broke his rib but I didn’t. Two others were on thigh and leg. We-”

Nandipha: “That means I can see him now, doctor? I will have the briefing after seeing him, please. I just want to see him.”

Doctor: “Okay but where’s his brother?”

Nandipha: “I don’t know I didn’t see him when he left.”

The Doctor then left the message for Dalingcebo with the person who was also seated at the waiting area. He then asked Nandipha to follow him. Nandipha grabbed her handbag and she followed the Doctor wiping her tears, she would smile a little as she felt hope creeping back into her life. She didn’t even care about being told whether he was in a good state or not but all she cared about now, was seeing Ngcebo. She wanted to see him!

“When you speak to him try and be positive because right now his life is not out of danger. I will give you a full brief once you are done.” He said to Nandipha who had her eyes looking at Ngcebo who was laying on the bed with a drip attached to him and a clear nasal mask.

Nandipha walked slowly towards the left side of the bed where there was a chair. She was

looking at Ngcebo who was laying on the bed lifelessly and she couldn't believe that she was here and Ngcebo was laying there. She sat down and her shaking hands moved forward to hold his hand... The Doctor left her...

"Ngcebo?" She called out his name and she held his hand tightly resting her forehead on their hands that were bonded together. "Mageba, please, please, don't leave me, don't leave the girls Zulu omnyama ondlela zimhlophe. What will I do without you, Ngcebo? Huh?" She opened her eyes to look at him as if Ngcebo was going to answer him... She exhaled and stood on her feet as she saw Ngcebo's head quiver from the left side to the right side. There was no response from the machines but his head kept doing the same thing.

Nandipha: "What's happening, Ngcebo?" she asked letting go of his hand Nandipha placed her hand on his head that was still quivering. "Ngcebo?" she called him out and pressed the buzzer to call the nurse...

"What's wrong? Why is his head moving like this?" Nandipha asked the nurse who'd entered the room in response of her buzz.

Nurse: "Don't worry, sis because he's been doing that even on the operation room. We don't know what does it mean but it doesn't look like it's showing that something is wrong. He might be having nightmares or something spiritual. Don't worry."

Nandipha: "He isn't in a comma, right? I didn't speak to the Doctor."

Nurse: "No, but you need to pray and hope that he pulls through." Nandipha nodded and looked at the door as it was being opened.

Dalingcebo walked through the door with two bottles of water in his hand. The nurse then excused herself... "I left to buy some water for you." He gave the bottle of water to Nandipha and she took it but she placed it aside after she'd thanked Dalingcebo. "What's wrong with his head?" He asked.

Nandipha: "They said we shouldn't worry about it. This happens when he's dreaming but I doubt he's dreaming now. He's been shot and..." She sat down and sent her head down she pressed her eyes harder.

Dalingcebo: "Nandipha don't cry. I bumped into the Doctor and he told me that we should be positive around him." he said and he didn't tell her the rest of the things that the Doctor said to him about Ngcebo...

Nandipha: "I am trying, okay? I am trying!" she raised her voice at him with her eye firm on his eye. She removed her eyes and looked at him. "Look, you promised the girls that you'll take them to Durban tomorrow to see the sea, Rasta. And that means you will have to wake up and fulfil your promise because I... don't want them to... to... be..." she laid her head on the free space of the bed. Dalingcebo decided that he needed to finish the talk on her behalf...

"Mnotho?" Danielle answered Mnotho's phone call and she left the children's room with her phone on her ear... They have waited until they saw it fit that they should go to sleep because they were tired. Danielle had woken up from the bedroom she was sleeping on because she heard a cry coming from the room where the children were sleeping. Nonjabulo

was the one who'd woken up crying and she'd just put her back to sleep.

Mnotho: "MaNkosi, is everyone sleeping?"

Danielle: "Yes, the elders complained that they were tired and so, they went to bed. I think that I am the only one up because Candice is sleeping as well. What's wrong? Did you identify the car?"

Mnotho sighed. "Ey, yes, it was my car but we drove to the hospital because we were not sure if the car being burnt meant that someone was inside when the car burnt down." He informed her.

Danielle: "Okay, and what did you find in the hospital?"

Mnotho: "They told us that Dalingcebo came along with Nandipha and Ngcebo and they were transported to Richards bay. I am inside Dalingcebo's car now that he left in the hospital and we are all driving to Richards bay."

Danielle: "Wait, Zulu, and what about Ndabezinhle?"

Mnotho: "Ndabezinhle was not with them and that means that he was inside... he was inside the car when it blew up." He revealed and there was total silence from Danielle's side as her hand was placed on her mouth. She had tears automatically coming out of her eyes and she could hear Mnotho crying on the other side of the line... Danielle sat down on the floor of the hallway.

Danielle: "How... are you? And how's your mother?"

Mnotho exhaled loudly and he replied. "Mama fainted when we were told that they didn't come here with Ndabezinhle but Ngcebo who was shot. We had to wait in the hospital worried about her now as they've taken her to give her medical attention-" He broke off as he was telling her what happened.

Danielle: "No, don't tell me that she's... I mean... no..."

Mnotho: "We've left the hospital about an hour ago and she's with dad in the car. They managed to help her but she's traumatised."

Danielle: "I am sorry, my love. What should I do? I should tell the elders?"

Mnotho: "Don't wake them if they're sleeping but when they wake up you can tell them because we don't know when we will be coming back. And if you tell them the elders will know what to do."

Danielle: "Okay, I will do that and your father's health wasn't affected? How are your brothers? I am so sorry for this but God is watching over us."

Mnotho: "Yeah, dad looks strong and I know he's being strong for mama's sake. And we are all just shocked that Ndabezinhle has died and Ngcebo is in the hospital. The children are sleeping?"

Danielle: "Yes, Nonjabulo is the one who'd woken me up because she was crying but I have sent her back to sleep."

Mnotho: "Thank you. I will keep in touch."

Danielle: "Okay, please, be safe." She said before Mnotho could hang up the call. Danielle then got up from the floor and the old pain of losing a loved one was renewed by the news she'd just received. She went to the bathroom to cry freely because she couldn't suppress her

emotions...

The family quietly followed one another to Ngcebo's room... They've had the drive in separate cars that they were driving on but what was common was that. In each other car there was total silence. They were commonly debating within themselves, shouting within themselves and screaming to God for what was happening to them was not fair. They've just buried two important people who were members of the family and now, they've lost the prince of the family... Why? Why? They've cried...

The nurse was leading them. Dalisu was walking with Thembelihle holding her hand. He was scared when they were waiting for Thembelihle in the hospital back home. He was scared that she wasn't going to come back to him. He was scared that Thembelihle was going to leave him all alone in this turmoil. He'd waited impatiently for her return and he felt his strength slipping away from his body but when Thembelihle appeared before his eyes. He felt his strength being restored even though they've lost a son but he felt his grip tightening because his wife was alive... She wasn't too strong and he didn't want her to come to the hospital now but Thembelihle refused to stay behind...

They entered Ngcebo's room and Dalingcebo stood up from the chair that he had got for himself. They were still inside Ngcebo's room with Nandipha. Nandipha was just holding Ngcebo's hand with both her hands and her forehead was stamped on that bondage. She lifted her head when she heard the sound of the door being opened. And when she saw who was at the door, she sent her forehead back to its position. Ngcebo's head had stopped quivering but he didn't wake up to speak to them...

"Mama?" Dalingcebo called out his mother and Thembelihle opened her arms for Dalingcebo. They hugged each other tightly and Dalingcebo cried the tears that he never cried since the shoot. He was crying now as he was inside his mother's chest. It was painful and he couldn't hold his tears. Thembelihle kept brushing Dalingcebo's back softly without speaking... Nkosazana moved to Nandipha's side and she placed her hand on Nandipha's shoulder. Nandipha didn't react to that but she kept still on the same position...

Dalingcebo: "We left home with Ngcebo wanting to use the bathroom but we told him that he was going to keep us waiting and so, it was best that he will pee up on the main road." He introduced what happened after he'd moved away from his mother. He removed his eyes and he looked at the rest of the family, his father who was next to his mother, all his brothers, the two uncle elders, Nkosazana and Happiness. They were inside the room. "We stopped on the main road and Ngcebo stepped out of the car to pee. A minute didn't even pass after Ngcebo had exited the car. Gunshots were fired coming from left side of the road and I saw Ngcebo falling on the ground while I was looking for my gun in my car. While I was panicking from that, Ndabezinhle drove away on a high speed but I think he lost control of the vehicle and blew it up. I wasn't shot because my car's windows are bulletproof and the minute Mnotho's car blew off the gunshots stopped. I then took Ngcebo and I drove to Nandipha's house. We came here with him." he finished up and he pushed the chair for his mother to sit down because she was crying all over again...

Mlamuli: “And you didn’t even call us Dalingcebo. We were worried and we didn’t even know what was happening.”

Dalingcebo: “I was traumatised and the first person that I thought of was Nandipha because Ngcebo was rushing to get to them.”

Thembelihle: “I am his mother! And you were supposed to drive back to tell us what happened, Dalingcebo. I nearly died.”

Dalису: “MaSthole, calm down because Dalingcebo did what came over his mother that time and we are here now.”

Happiness: “And mama, we shouldn’t argue while Ngcebo is lying over there.”

Dalingcebo: “I am sorry for worrying you.”

Uncle elder: “You didn’t see these people.”

Dalingcebo: “No.”

Banele: “They might have been hiding on the bush if the shots were coming from the left side of the road because the right side doesn’t have a bush.”

“I have failed my son. I shouldn’t have let him stay in the palace for that fight because he wasn’t supposed to be there. But he was certain that nothing will happen to him and I allowed him to do what he wanted to do. I have failed his children because I was supposed to force him to leave the palace.” Dalису reflected realising his mistake as he looked at Ngcebo’s body laying down on the hospital bed and he didn’t know if there was hope.

Nkosazana: “Don’t speak like that baba because we need to be positive.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, we need to be positive. Ngcebo will pull through.” She nodded and wiped her tears, she then looked up at Dalису who was standing next to her. She then sent her eyes to Ngcebo from his face they moved down and she couldn’t help but feel uncomfortable with the way Nandipha had her forehead stamped on her hands that were holding Ngcebo’s hand. She didn’t have his hand laying on the bed but it was held up and Thembelihle felt that she might be straining. “Nandipha, remove your head from Ngcebo’s hand. You are straining him. He won’t have a good blood flow if his arm is pointed up like that and you have your head on it.” She voiced out her concern and she tried to stand up but Dalису held her from getting up.

Mlamuli: “Mama, just calm down.”

Thembelihle: “No, can’t you see what I am talking about?” She asked and pointed Ngcebo’s arm with her hand. She was worried and she didn’t want not even a single thing that was going to put Ngcebo’s life in danger.

Nkosazana: “Nandipha?” She held Nandipha’s shoulders.

Nandipha let go of Ngcebo’s hand and she pushed Nkosazana’s hands from her shoulders. She stamped her forehead on the bed and she cried silently as the presence of Ngcebo’s family upset her whole being. She wished she could have the power to tell them that they should just leave! She knew she could do it because she was his wife and if she didn’t want them she could just say it that she didn’t want them. But she didn’t have the strength for all that.

Nkosazana: “I think we should pray. We just have to do it for Ngcebo even though right now we don’t have the strength.” She suggested and looked at Happiness shortly. Happiness

started a worship song and they sang together but they didn't reach the part where they had to pray because that long one-way screech of a machine brought their world into a stand still...

"CALL THE DOCTOR!" Dalisu shouted and looked back at his sons, Banele rushed out of the room to call the Doctor while Dalisu was holding Thembelihle who was wailing now because this sound can only mean one thing or the other... Everyone in the room kept still...

Nandipha's chest was rising and falling beneath the black shirt she was wearing and her eyes were fixed on Ngcebo's face with no tears coming out of her eyes. They only turned their heads to the Doctor except Nandipha. The Doctor did a few routine check-up and he turned to the family. "I am sorry but his heart has stopped beating. He is gone." The Doctor confirmed and none of them didn't cry. They cried as they've lost another son in one day, one night.

Thembelihle: "What did I do to deserve this? My two precious sons? Jesu!" she cried without listening to the words of condolences that the Doctor was sharing with them, none of them was listening to him at this stage... Dalingcebo went down to sit on the floor as he didn't trust himself with standing on his feet. Ngcebo? He couldn't die!

Nandipha could hear them all crying but she wasn't crying. She was looking at Ngcebo with her hands holding his hand. Her whole body was shaking as if she'd been swimming in ice cold water. She removed her right hand from his hand and she sent it to his chest... She stood on her feet and she shook her head. She laid her head down on his chest and closed her eyes while her ears were listening to the cries that were around her...

"You are not dead, Ngcebo and you can't die. No. Doctor?" Nandipha raised her head and she looked at the Doctor who was still with them. The two nurses had come inside the room. The Doctor looked at Nandipha as she'd called him out. "Look at him his body is still hot and that means he's not dead."

Doctor: "No, mam, his heart has stopped and his body being hot doesn't mean that he's not dead. We will have to take his body when the family-"

Nandipha: "NO!" She held on tight to Ngcebo's hand and she pressed her thighs on the hospital bed because her knees were shaking.

Doctor: "What do you mean-"

Nandipha: "I will not leave his side until his body turns cold. I refuse to believe that Ngcebo has died and left me." she raised her voice for the Doctor.

Mlamuli: "Nandipha, his heart-"

Nandipha: "I said 'no!' and please, I don't any of your opinions or inputs. There's nobody who'll take my husband from this bed because I want to stay with him until his body turns cold."

Doctor: "Mrs Zulu, we can't keep a dead body in the room. We must take him to the mortuary and have this room prepared for other patients who might need to use the private room."

Nandipha: "I will be paying okay! I am a client and I will pay the same amount he was going

to pay to stay here over night and the night to come until he's fine. I want to stay with him and you can't stop me from doing that."

Happiness: "Nandipha, you are still in denial right now-"

Nandipha: "JUST SHUT UP! PLEASE!" She shouted and looked at Mntwana to gain some support from him because amongst the people who were inside this room. Mntwana was the only person she trusted and now, looking at him she was wondering why she didn't call him instead of Ngcebo's parents. This was all her fault. She was supposed to call Mntwana and Ngcebo would be alive if she had called Mntwana.

Mntwana: "Can we let her do what she wants?" he suggested and looked at the Doctor because he could see the pleading in her eyes.

Thembelihle: "My child's body cannot stay in this room to rot. That will never happen, Ndabezitha? Please, don't let this to happen." She looked up at Dalisu with tears rolling down her eyes. She was crying but she could hear what was happening in the room now.

Dalisu: "We can't allow his body to stay here, Doctor. We will call the insurance company and his body must be removed from this room."

Nandipha: "I am Ngcebo's wife. We are legally married and I say I don't want my husband to be taken away. I will stay with him here until his body turns cold. Doctor, I don't want to fight with his family and so, please!" she let go of Ngcebo's hand and she placed her shaking hands together as a gesture of begging the Doctor to do what she wanted.

Doctor: "I am afraid we will have to do what his wife wants."

Uncle elder: "Hhayi! That can't happen. Why do you want to stay with Ngcebo's dead body? What do you want to do with his body?"

Mlamuli: "Mkhulu refrain from asking such questions."

Uncle elder2: "No, Ngonyama, Ngcebo is one of our own and we should ensure his body is kept safe and nobody steals anything from his body."

Banele: "Nandipha is Ngcebo's wife she would never do what you are thinking now, mkhulu. It's wrong to think such things."

Thembelihle: "What should old people think as Nandipha doesn't want to let go of their grandson's body? What should they think?"

Nandipha: "I don't care what they think about me and now, I want every one of you to get out of here!" she exclaimed and moved away from Ngcebo's side.

"HHAYBO!" Thembelihle exclaimed along with the elders, her tears were dry now because of this debate. Dalisu also raised his voice as Nandipha raised her voice telling them to leave. They looked at her as she marched to the door of the hospital room.

Nandipha opened the door and she held it open. "Please, get out. Just leave me alone. I don't care what you think of me I have long stopped caring what you think about me and now, I am telling you to leave." She instructed clearly.

Dalisu: "This girl can't do this, Doctor. We are traditional people and we can't just leave the body of our son here. We can't trust her."

Doctor: "I am afraid what she wants should happen because she's the wife. And as his wife she has all the rights to do whatever she wants. I would ask that you leave the room for her

peace.”

Thembelihle: “No, I am Ngcebo’s mother. I gave birth to him.”

Nandipha: “Yes! And when I needed your help you didn’t help me. Uzibuke ngami ngicela ukuthi ungisize. I want you to leave now!”

Mlamuli: “Don’t speak like that with my mother.”

Mntwana: “Kanti, what’s so difficult for all of you to leave Nandipha alone with Ngcebo? Mom and dad, you both, failed Nandipha and her children. You kept Ngcebo at home knowing that he might be in danger. Can you at least do one thing right since you failed? Can you leave his wife in peace, please?”

Happiness: “Mama, let’s leave.” She said holding Thembelihle’s hand as Thembelihle was looking at Nandipha with anger written on her face and Nandipha didn’t have her eyes on Thembelihle. She wasn’t looking at any of them but Ngcebo’s way... Thembelihle then left the room along with Dalisu and they all followed. Nandipha was left alone in the room. She let go of the door and she ran back to Ngcebo’s side. She held his hand.

Nandipha: “I will stay here until your body turns cold I won’t let go of you that easily Ngcebo. What if your ancestors are just punishing you and you are not really dead? What if your spirit is somewhere – I mean you didn’t listen to them and maybe they’re just punishing you. And maybe God is showing me a sign as your body is still hot. Rasta, you can’t leave me and I will hold on to you as long as your body is hot I will know that on the seventh day, that day is for perfection right? Maybe you’ll wake up then. Or third day for oneness you’ll wake up, Ngcebo yami. You’ll come back to me and our girls. I won’t face Buhle and her sisters, I won’t tell them that you are gone because you are not. I know that you are not. And I will stay here with you. I am not going anywhere.” She spoke to Ngcebo looking at his face with her hand holding his hand tightly. She wasn’t about to let go and she didn’t care what they were going to say about her. She didn’t care, it wouldn’t be something new...

S5 >> EPISODE 31

“What are we going to do about this?” Uncle elder asked the family, they were seated on the lounge of Dalisu and Thembelihle’s beach house. They have been seated inside the lounge quietly and they were all replaying what had just happened and most of them were in disbelief. They couldn’t believe how the night had ended... Thembelihle couldn’t believe she had to leave her son’s body behind because his wife wanted that. She’d given birth to Ngcebo, why didn’t she have the right to do what she wanted? Why was her word not heard? Thembelihle looked at Dalisu and he opened up his arms to make her lie on his chest. He’d given her a drink that had a drug that was going to make her sleep. He saw Thembelihle was very upset when they left the hospital and he was afraid she wasn’t going to be able to sleep. And with everything that had been going on. He wanted her to sleep peacefully. He asked for the pills to the Doctor and he gave the pills to him...

Mlamuli was seated with them with his phone on his hands he'd just called other family members from home to have Ndabezinhle's possible remains guarded for the night until they do the ritual to take his spirit home.

Daliso: "What happened? That's what on my mind right now."

Dalingcebo: "I think those people were already waiting for us. But I couldn't even see not even one of them because it was already dark. The only thing that I can say that can be a clue to this mess is that the minute the car went up in flames the gunshots stopped automatically." He revealed and everyone in the house looked at him with a different eye as this was a big clue to this shoot.

Mlamuli: "Wait, do you think that-"

Dalingcebo: "Yes, I think whoever had planned this shoot thought that bhuti Mnotho was one driving the car because why would they stop shooting the minute his car blows up? I was still inside the car and Ngcebo didn't get out of the car on the driver seat. That would show that he wasn't driving."

Mnotho: "They were aiming for me and I wasn't the one inside the car. That means..." he couldn't finish that off but he got up to leave them.

Banele: "Where are you going now, bhuti?" He asked and stood on his feet but his father told him to let Mnotho be...

Mntwana: "Baba, I don't think it's a good idea that he must be alone now because we don't know what he wanted to say and what's in his mind."

Dalingcebo looked at his mother and he saw that she was sleeping inside his father's arms: "And Ngcebo told me that Saturday morning when Mnotho got home to confront Elena about the affair he saw a vision where Mnotho was inside his car before the river he was trying to kill himself with his gun but Ngcebo woke up and called him, he spoke sense into his head."

"HHAYI/HHAYBO!" Everyone in the house chanted as they were shocked by what was revealed to them now. None of them knew about this.

Daliso: "He mustn't be alone."

Happiness: "I will go to him!" she unexpectedly announced and she stood on her feet without waiting for them to tell her it was appropriate for her to do that or it wasn't. She moved out of the house to speak to him...

Mlamuli: "Okay, we don't have to worry about Mnotho now but we must talk about Ngcebo's body. We can't leave it in the hospital and we must go back home as in like tomorrow morning."

Uncle elder2: "What are we going to do about this?"

Nkosazana: "I think that Nandipha is still in denial that Ngcebo had just left her and what she needs is time to be with his body until it turns cold. I really don't see any harm in doing that."

Uncle elder1: "We understand but we can't just trust her with our son's body."

Dalingcebo: "Why are you speaking as if Nandipha didn't love Ngcebo, mkhulu? I think we all know that they were happy together and I doubt Nandipha wants to keep Ngcebo's body

for other reasons either than being satisfied that Ngcebo is really dead.”

Daliso: “Nkosazana call someone back home who will gather just three women who will come here tomorrow morning to convince Ngcebo’s wife that she must let go of Ngcebo because he has left us.”

Nkosazana: “Yebo, baba, I will do that.” She said and stood up with her handbag but her husband stopped her from leaving.

Mlamuli: “Let’s just leave once because I don’t think that there’s something else that we need to discuss.”

Daliso: “You are right. We have one two guestrooms here. I think that Mnotho will take that room with Mntwana and Happiness the other. That will mean Mlamuli, you will go with the elders to the hotel and in the morning you will come back here. Banele you will also go with your brother and Dalingcebo.”

Mlamuli: “Yebo, baba. Let’s go, Zulu.” He said standing up and the others stood up after him. They followed each other to the door...

When she left the house to get to Mnotho, Happiness called out his name and she was walking around the house looking for him telling herself that she was only doing this for Mnotho’s mother. She was going to speak to Mnotho because she didn’t want him to do something that was going to hurt his mother who’d lost two sons in one night. She wasn’t doing this for Mnotho she would leave him on the road to die if she could but now, she needed to save him from himself just for his mother not for him... She stood a little bit far from Mnotho as she could hear him cry...

He was seated on the sand behind the beach house and he was crying because he felt Ndabezihle’s death was on him. It was clear to him that he was the one who was supposed to die. Why would the gunshots stop the minute his car blew up? That can only mean that he was targeted on the shoot and they’ve seen that the car was his. Or maybe someone was by his mother’s gate to tip the hitman that his car was driving out since it was dark. But he was the one who was supposed to die. Why was God punishing him this way? He’d had it now and it was straining him big time. How was he supposed continue living freely knowing that his brother was dead because of him?

“Crying won’t help you right now.” Happiness and she sat down next to Mnotho on the sand... Mnotho turned his head quickly the minute he heard Happiness speaking he sent his head back down when she sat next to him.

Mnotho: “I didn’t know it was wrong.”

Happiness: “I never said it was wrong but now, you are here crying and maybe you are blaming yourself that your brother died.” she guessed exactly what Mnotho was battling about. She looked at him and Mnotho didn’t say anything to Happiness. “You didn’t know he was going to be killed.” She added.

Mnotho: “That won’t change the fact that he died in my place. It would have been better if I died. I mean I am the liability in their lives and everything that’s wrong now is connected to me. People are dying because of me and I am here alive feeling all the guilty and pain. The pain is not that worst and Ngcebo’s wife made me see that guilt is the worst thing. I don’t

know what to do, Happiness. I started this when I failed to appreciate you and I admit that I was wrong I know that I was wrong. I allowed my evil side to take the best of me because for every person there's a good and bad side."

Happiness: "Just forgive your brother first and everything will be alright." She said to him and she felt this was even hard, sitting here with him. She was listening to him speak and the sadness around the family was forcing her to feel his pain instead of rejoicing on it. She was supposed to dance now that Mnotho was feeling pain but she was rather feeling sorry for him. No, hell! Something was wrong with her. She looked back to check if someone from the family was coming to check on them or not. But nobody was coming, that meant she was supposed to stay! She was supposed to stay only because his mother was going to die with him should Mnotho kill himself.

Mnotho: "It can never be alright I tried holding my son today and he refused to come to me. He's still scared of me and tonight-" he chuckled and shook his head thinking about the time he was trying to speak to Njabulo. "His sister called him out and when he saw me he changed - I wish-" he kept quiet as he realised that he was burdening Happiness with his problems and that was not what she needed. He didn't know why she was here but it was wrong of him to offload his worries and pain on her because she had her own pain.

Mnotho: "Look, at me speaking about my burdens to you. Please, go back inside the house and this breeze is a little cold. You don't want to catch the cold. I don't want to-"

Happiness: "I didn't come here because you invited me I am here because I want to be here and hey, I won't do what you want. I am not your wife."

Mnotho: "Do you know that there's nothing like divorce in tradition? And that cow bile they poured on you symbolised the eternal unity between you and I. You are still my wife and you can't change that."

Happiness: "Can you not speak Mnotho? Can we rather speak about you forgiving your brother because it will be for your own?"

Mnotho: "Can you forgive me for what I did to you for your own good?"

Happiness: "Huh? You can't possibly compare the abuse that you did to me to what your brother did. And are you really going to allow a woman come between you and your brother?"

Mnotho: "You are right we can't compare because you and I, we are not feeling the same pain and I am also feeling pain for everything I did to you and Njabulo. Dalingcebo is my brother and betrayal by blood is - I won't forgive Dalingcebo for what he did to me."

Happiness: "You won't forgive him but you expect forgiveness from me. And you want me to believe that you are changing your ways. What kind of a man are you, Mnotho? You haven't changed." She raised her voice on him because she was angered by the fact that Mnotho didn't want to forgive his brother. But he was expecting forgiveness from her. How could he be so evil?

Mnotho kept quiet after Happiness had shouted at him. There was total silence between them and Mnotho felt that Happiness was right but he wasn't ready to forgive Dalingcebo. He wasn't about to forgive him.

Happiness: “And forgiving him doesn’t really mean that you’ll be friends and you’ll be laughing together.” She preached what she knew that she was far from practicing. She couldn’t see herself forgiving Mnotho for what he’d done to her. Mnotho had hurt more than enough, the slaps were nothing and that one time where he beat her to a pulp was nothing and even that rape it was nothing compared to the emotional abuse. It was nothing compared to the pain of having to watch her son being scared of his own father. And how was she supposed to forgive that? She wasn’t going to forgive him! “And you two should forgive each other for the sake of your two dead brothers. I might have cheated on you and even on that I respect you because I chose someone who was very far from your eyes. I chose someone who wasn’t your brother and he loved me. And you killed him, Mnotho.” She shouted further and Mnotho took all the shouting he was getting from her.

Mnotho: “I am sorry but I was angry that he killed my uncle and people were injured at my wedding. And honestly speaking him and I are just the same but you won’t take that because you loved him and he loved you. I was wrong to kill him, yes but I know that I wouldn’t have done what he did.”

Happiness: “And he wouldn’t have done what you did to me.”

Mnotho: “Yes, and that makes us the same!” he exclaimed and looked at her. Happiness clicked her tongue and she stood on her feet.

Happiness: “Just stand up and we will go back in the house because staying over here won’t help. Just stand up, Mnotho.”

Mnotho: “You can go I want to feel this breeze and quietness. You can go.” He encouraged her and looked up at her... Happiness clicked her tongue and she sat back down because she wasn’t going to leave him here to kill himself...

“Your father and I warned you about these animals but no, you didn’t listen to us. You chose ‘love’ and look where love got you my child?” Mrs Whitmore, Elena’s mother was seated on top of her daughter’s grave with white roses on her hands... She was hurt when she was told that her daughter was dead. Nkosazana was the one who was given a responsibility to call Mrs Whitmore and inform her about Elena’s death. She was told not to tell her mother the truth about her death, the truth that she was killed by her husband. Nkosazana told her the story Ntanzi had about Elena’s death that she was killed by thugs. But Mrs Whitmore didn’t accept that truth as Elena had always praised that her husband had them protected. She had a guard who was ensuring her safety and her child, she assured her mother not to worry because the guard was trustworthy and he knew boundaries. Mrs Whitmore came to South Africa, she landed in Johannesburg and moved to land in Durban and she went KwaNongoma with the information she needed about the guard from the PI she hired... She had suspicions that the guard was the one who killed her daughter and he covered that he killed her but she was proved wrong when she had the guard kidnapped and tortured the truth out of him. Ntanzi confessed the whole truth and Mrs Whitmore, the 60 years old woman worked on killing Mnotho, easily using Apps for ordering the shoot...

Mrs Whitmore: “You are dead now and the child that you loved so much is left without a

mother. And how can I take your children because your father despises these animals you chose to get married to-” she wiped her tears and placed the flowers on her daughter’s grave to take her phone that was ringing from her bag. Mrs Whitmore didn’t come to Elena’s funeral but when Elena was buried she’d already landed in South Africa. She only read about the dignified funeral on the newspapers and Mnotho was there as a husband who’d lost his wife... Mlamuli was able to convince Mnotho to attend his wife’s funeral because his absence was going to raise a number of questions and he listened to his brother... Mrs Whitmore was more disgusted after she learnt that Mnotho was the one who killed her daughter she didn’t want Mnotho in prison but she wanted Mnotho to be killed.

Mrs Whitmore: “How did it go?” she asked the hitman had she’d hired to do the job for her, to have Mnotho killed without hesitation.

Hitman: “Yes, we did the job last night. I tried to call you mam and your phone was off when I called you.”

Mrs Whitmore: “I wasn’t in the right state last night.”

Hitman: “The Prince’s car blew up in flame and his other brother was shot. He wasn’t driving alone and it looks like the royal family will mourn two sons.”

Mrs Whitmore: “Are you sure that it’s my daughter’s husband who died? I want to leave this place tonight in peace that my daughter’s murder has met his own fate. These people covered up murder.”

Hitman: “Yes, we had someone hiding by the exit of the palace and he tipped us when your daughter’s husband was leaving the palace and when we were shooting at him, his car lost control and it blew.”

Mrs Whitmore held her chest. “That’s the most painful thing for your kind to bury ashes. You’ve done me the greater honour.” She said.

Hitman: “It was nice doing business with you, mam.” He admitted and they hung up the phone with Mrs Whitmore. She smiled looking at Elena’s tombstone, daughter, wife and friend, she was smiling because she’d avenge her daughter.

Mrs Whitmore: “You will rest in peace now my Elena.” She said placing her hand on Elena’s name. She sighed and got up to leave this filthy place that she’d landed her feet on... She was going back home with peace...

S5 >> EPISODE 32

“Did you manage to get the women?” Dalisu asked Nkosazana, they were all seated around the dinner table in the morning. Happiness had woken up first and she drove to the mall to buy groceries just for breakfast. She made the breakfast for everyone after she’d confirmed with Nkosazana that they were coming to the beach house.

Nkosazana: “Yebo, baba, when I called they said they were in the car being driven by the guard to get here. I asked that aunt come along as well.”

Daliso: "That's better." He said and looked around the table, he noticed that his sons were just quiet and toying with their food instead of eating it.

Daliso: "We will need to eat and leave because Ndabezinhle is deserted over there and now, it doesn't seem like we will be able to leave in time as you are not eating your food but you are playing with it."

Mntwana: "Do you think mama will leave?" he asked and looked at his father, their mother was still sleeping in her room as they were having breakfast.

Daliso: "Yes, she will leave with us."

Mlamuli: "I don't think she will leave and leave Ngcebo behind." He guessed and they all looked back at Thembelihle who was entering the kitchen quietly. Thembelihle's sons greeted her but she didn't greet them back, she marched up to the sink to get a glass of water... She then exited the room without saying a word to them. Daliso sighed and he got up from his chair and he followed his wife... Thembelihle was going back to her room to get her handbag...

"We are not leaving yet. Why are you taking your bag while you haven't eaten anything? You know that you should eat and take your medication." Daliso spoke to Thembelihle who was closing the zip of her bag and she placed the bag on her shoulder. Daliso stood before her.

Thembelihle: "I need to go to the hospital and take my son from that girl." She said and pushed Daliso slightly she managed to get away from him. Daliso followed her and he managed to hold her hand.

"MLAMULI, COME HERE, ALL OF YOU!" Daliso shouted for them and he made Thembelihle sit down on the couch because he didn't want her to go the hospital. He didn't want her to go there and fight with Ngcebo's wife because they didn't need to fight with her but women needed to speak to her.

"What's wrong?" Mlamuli asked his father being followed by the rest of the family. They sat down and looked at Thembelihle and Daliso.

Daliso: "Your mother wants to go to the hospital now."

Mlamuli: "What's wrong if she goes there, baba?"

Daliso: "She mustn't go there because Ngcebo's wife need people who will talk to her and tell her that she needs to let go of Ngcebo. Your mother will be going to there to fight with her because she's hurting."

Thembelihle: "I am not leaving without my son's body, Ndabezitha. Dalingcebo which insurance policy did Ngcebo use? Do you know that? We should call them and they will come take my son because I won't even see my other son's body. They should take Ngcebo." She said quickly and she opened her handbag to take out her phone as means to call the insurance company.

Dalingcebo: "No, I don't know but I think Nandipha will know that."

Nkosazana: "Mama, I think you need to listen to baba because I have already called aunt to come with two other women and they will talk to Nandipha."

Thembelihle: "I DON'T WANT TO TALK I WANT MY SON!"

Daliso: “MaSthole, you need to calm down for your health’s sake and don’t forget that Ngcebo’s wife just lost her husband and as Ngcebo’s family we shouldn’t be making things hard for her. It’s the least we could do after we have failed to forced Ngcebo out of the palace.”

Mnotho: “Mama, you need to trust aunt and the other women to do their best because fighting won’t help us. But we need to stand together.”

Thembelihle: “I have just lost two sons last night and it seems like you don’t care about that. And in here it’s like nobody cares about what I want but you all care about is what Nandipha wants. She chased us out of Ngcebo’s hospital room last night like we were nobody to Ngcebo and now, you want me to think for her. I want my son and I will go take my son.”

Uncle elder: “We care about our grandson mama’ undlunkulu but we are against fighting over Ngcebo’s body because that’s not the right thing.”

Uncle elder2: “I did say that we shouldn’t leave his body with that girl but you didn’t fight enough last night. What if she uses Ngcebo’s body parts to gain wealth? What’s the need for her to keep Ngcebo in the hospital because the Doctor said it clearly that he’s dead?”

Dalingcebo: “Can we stop thinking such things mkhulu because they will not help us and what we need now is to go back home.”

Thembelihle: “I said I am not going home without my son.”

Happiness: “Can we let mama do what she wants because Ngcebo is her son? I am not saying she must go there alone but she can wait for the women who are coming to speak to Nandipha and she will be with them.”

Daliso: “We need to do the ritual back home for Ndabezihle’s spirit and you won’t be there for that MaSthole?”

Thembelihle: “I want my son’s body, Ndabezitha.” She insisted without answering Daliso’s question. She’d decided that she was not going to leave Richards’ bay without Ngcebo’s body being placed in a mortuary. It was painful enough that she was going to bury her third’s son’s ashes. She didn’t want to fight longer with Nandipha because today she was going to get her son.

Mlamuli: “Baba, just let mama do what she wants to do and the rest of us will go home because we must not delay things.”

Daliso: “Alright, she will stay and Nkosazana you should stay behind with your mother. You will go with her in the hospital and ensure that things are done the right way not by anger. Do you understand?”

Nkosazana: “Yebo, baba. I will do that.”

Uncle elder2: “I think we need to go now because time will be against us sooner. We should do things accordingly.”

Daliso: “You are right.”

Thembelihle: “I have a request that my sons should be buried on the same day and that day should be on Wednesday.” She requested and closed her eyes shut as her heart felt the pain that she was going to bury two sons in one day. She couldn’t believe what happened to her and it was painful beyond measure. She was surprised that she was able to sleep the previous

night because she could feel that she was losing a grip on her emotions and what Nandipha had done to them was adding anger to the pain that she was feeling. She was hoping that today they were going to do what was best for Ngcebo...

“HAWU!” They all exclaimed and looked at Thembelihle as they were not expecting that decision that she’d just voiced out to them.

Uncle elder1: “Why would you want that, MaSthole? The funeral should be on Sunday so that everyone can come.”

Thembelihle: “I want to be able to be part of the Easter gathering because it will help me heal from this pain I am feeling. I need to be around other women not inside my house grieving but that weekend at church will make a huge difference-” she broke off without finishing her sentence. She cried the tears of agony as her words were blocked on her throat by pain. The pain consumed her whole being as tears didn’t stop falling, she wailed out an unending pain. Dalisu had his head looking down without holding his wife because he was also feeling the pain X3 as he didn’t know how to give deliverance to his wife. “Oh! Jesu! I struggled with Ndabezihle, giving birth to him almost costed me my life but God refused to separate us and now, my son is gone. Ngcebo – hooo!” Dalisu pulled her to him and he held her tight into his arms. He looked at Nkosazana and he mumbled water. Nkosazana got up quickly and wiped her tears, she marched to the kitchen to get a glass of water for her mother in-law.

Dalisu: “I will grant you anything you want MaSthole. We will have the funeral on Wednesday, everyone will know that Wednesday is a funeral day and on the weekend you will go to church as you wish.” He said softly and looked at his sons who were also crying. Happiness had her head looking down and she was feeling the wounds she thought she was trying to heal being poked by these deaths that had befallen the royal family... This was the darkest hour for the family and all Dalisu was hoping for was that they would get to see the light after this dark hour of their lives...

Nkosazana came back with a glass of water and she tried to give it to Thembelihle who was no longer crying now but she was quiet staring at the coffee table. Dalisu took the glass and he helped his wife drink water...

Dalisu: “You need to get something in your stomach that way you’ll be able to take your medication. You don’t need to neglect your health problems because of what has happened. You still have a family to look after.” He tried to convince his wife and Thembelihle nodded... Nkosazana then stood up to get food for Thembelihle. She was feeling a sense of relief as she was going to give her mother in-law food. She didn’t think that she was going to be able to eat...

“You will wake your mother when aunt and the women get here. We will be leaving now, MaMkhwanazi.” Dalisu said to Nkosazana who they were leaving her behind the beach house with Thembelihle who was in her room sleeping.

Nkosazana: “Yes, I will do that, baba.”

Dalisu nodded his head and he left the house to get to the others who were already out of the house waiting for Dalisu to come out of the house and they would leave Richards bay for

Nongoma...

“I want to pass by the toy shop.” Mnotho told Mlamuli, they were driving together back to Nongoma. Mnotho was the one who was on the driver seat. They were not talking inside the car but they were quiet with music playing and their thoughts were above the music...

Mlamuli: “What’s there at a toy shop?” He looked at him shortly as Mnotho stopped the car at the parking lot. They were still in Richards’ bay.

Mnotho: “Njabulo and Nonjabulo didn’t come here with their toys and I want to buy them toys because yesterday she told me she broke Qalokuhle’s doll.” He replied opening the door of the car and Mlamuli stepped out of the car with him. They walked together to buy toys.

Mlamuli: “Did you manage to speak to them?”

Mnotho: “I was trying to speak to them and Njabulo is still scared of me. I tried holding him and he didn’t even want to look at me. I was trying but the sounds of gunshots disturbed us because they were scared and surprisingly, Njabulo held on to me when I pulled them to me because of the gunshots.”

Mlamuli: “You must not give up and more especially now, because their mother is here. I don’t think she’ll be leaving anytime soon.”

Mnotho: “I don’t think so too because she said she was here for mother and now, that mama is in pain. She won’t leave her.”

Mlamuli: “That will give you a chance with the children and by the time they leave this place you’ll be friends with them. Children forget easily when they’re loved and happy. You must not allow this death to destruct you from mending things with the children. That will also help you with healing.”

Mnotho: “Ey, I called the police this morning and they told me that they will go to the crime scene after we’ve taken Ndabezinhle’s remaining. They will investigate the case.”

Mlamuli: “And do you know who might be on to kill you?”

Mnotho: “I don’t even have a clue bhuti and I don’t want to make up theories in my head because it has been proven to me that I have made more enemies for myself.” He said looking at the girls’ toys and Mlamuli was looking with him. Mnotho looked around to see if there was someone who could help him.

Mlamuli: “Our two brothers died and it will only be fair that you and Dalingcebo forgive each other for their sake.”

Mnotho: “How did that fit in this conversation?” he asked and called the girl who was working at the shop. She moved closer to them.

Mlamuli: “It fit because you are talking about enemies.”

“I want to buy a doll for an almost three years old girl and I don’t want to buy a doll alone. Can you help me choose?” Mnotho requested looking at the girl and she nodded. She then chose the doll for Mnotho and she chose out the tea party utensils for girls. Mnotho thanked her and they moved to the boys’ toys.

Mnotho: “Can we not talk about Dalingcebo?” he requested as Mlamuli was looking at him with an eye that reminded him of what they were discussing.

Mlamuli: "Alright, do you even know what type of toys Njabulo likes?"

Mnotho: "In the house he had more trucks and soccer balls. I will buy one truck for him the truck that will be bigger and I will buy a small sport car something that would be different maybe he will love it because he has bigger cars."

Mlamuli: "He's in for bigger things."

Mnotho chuckled. "He wouldn't be my son if he wasn't." he said and they laughed with Mlamuli for the first time after he'd learnt the truth about the injustice he'd done to Happiness. "And I hope he will accept the toys even though he has others back in the house that he left." He voiced out his hopes as they moved to the cash register.

Mlamuli: "Just be positive." He encouraged and they followed each other to the exit of the shop. They marched to the car and from there they drove straight home without stopping along the way...

"Why have you park your car here? You are not going inside." Mnotho asked Happiness who was seated inside her car near the palace premises. They've just drove through the palace with Mlamuli and he saw Happiness's car with her inside the car when he was driving through. He moved back after he'd parked the car inside the palace.

Happiness: "I was waiting for you to give me my kids and I will drive down to the house. I actually wanted to stay behind with mama but I didn't want to go against your father's word as he chose Nkosazana."

Mnotho: "Hawu, you were supposed to stay if you wanted to stay he wasn't going to stop you from doing that and there's no need for you to be scared to enter the palace. Apart from being my wife traditionally you are still Njabulo's mother and you should go inside because nobody said you are not welcomed."

Happiness: "I just don't think it's appropriate."

Mnotho opened the door of Happiness's car. "I am not saying it in a rude way but when you were still seeing your boyfriend you did enter the palace and now, that everybody knows about him you don't want to enter? There's no difference here so just get off the car and get inside." He said clearly and Happiness stepped out of the car. Mnotho closed the door and they followed each other to the palace. Mnotho had the plastic bag of toys in his hand.

Mnotho: "You can go greet the elders I will go look for the children." He said as they enter the house through the kitchen entrance. They greeted the ladies who were inside the kitchen and Mnotho left Happiness talking to the ones she knew... Mnotho walked through the hallway following the noise of the children. They were all inside the house as they didn't go to school.

"Sanibona." Mnotho greeted the eight children who were seated together playing inside the playing room. The girls were alone and the boys were also alone in different spaces of the room... The children greeted back and Mnotho's eyes look for Njabulo and Nonjabulo while he asked the children how they were doing and they answered him at once.

Mnotho: "Pearl, where's your mother?"

Pearl: "I don't know daddy but mommy is sick."

Mnotho: "She's sick?"

Children: “YES!”

Qalokuhle: “Baba omdala, we saw her behind the house when we were playing in the morning she was there vomiting and Pearl cried because her mother is sick. But aunt Candice told her not to worry.”

Mnotho: “Oh! I will go check on your mother. Nonjabulo and Njabulo come to me. I have something for you and your mother is here.” He requested looking at Nonjabulo once and his eyes moved to Njabulo who wasn’t looking at him but he was looking at Siphosami’s toy gun that was on his hands.

Nonjabulo: “Yebo! Njiva!” she exclaimed and got off the floor letting go of Qalokuhle’s doll cups. She marched to her brother who wasn’t standing up after being told to stand up.

Nonjabulo held Njabulo’s hand. “Your father is calling us and mama is here, come.” She pulled her brother up and Njabulo stood up with the help of Prince. Nonjabulo pulled her brother to the door.

Mnotho: “Proceed and play, we will see you later, okay?” he said to the rest of the children and they chanted ‘Yes’

Pearl: “Baba, Nonjabulo won’t come back?”

Mnotho: “They will come back after they’ve seen their mother.” He replied looking at her and Pearl nodded with a smile on her face. Mnotho then closed the door and he turned to the children who were standing behind him with Njabulo looking down and Nonjabulo was looking up at him. “Come!” he gave Nonjabulo his hand and she held it. He then led them to his mother’s sewing room because he wanted to give them their toys there...

Mnotho sat on the chair and the children stood in between his thighs. He then opened the plastic bag that he’d placed on the floor.

Mnotho: “I bought you two some toys that you will use to play when you are playing with the others and that way, Nonjabulo, you won’t break Qalokuhle’s doll. Would you love the toys?” he looked at Nonjabulo with a smile.

Nonjabulo giggled and nodded. “Ewe, malume.” She said delightedly and Mnotho gave her the doll and the tea party utensils. Nonjabulo smiled with her eyes concentrated on the toys on her hands. She looked up at Mnotho. “Enkosi. Can I go and show them to mama?” she asked nicely and Mnotho nodded freely as he wanted to tell her that she must go show them to her mother. That was going to be his way for Njabulo to stay behind.

Nonjabulo: “Njiva has his toys too, right?”

Mnotho: “Yes, go. I will give them to him and he come to you as well. Your mother is inside the kitchen if she’s not there ask the aunts inside the kitchen they will tell you where she is.” He instructed and Nonjabulo nodded with a smile. She left the house after looking at Njabulo who was looking at her toys.

Mnotho then lifted his son from the floor he placed him on his lap. “Sawubona, Njabulo Zulu.” He greeted him and held his hand that was in his mouth.

Njabulo: “Yebo.” He mumbled.

Mnotho: “Uyamsaba namanje ubaba wakho?” (Are you scared of me even now?) he asked and hoped that he would say ‘No’ but Njabulo nodded his head as an answer that he was

scared of him. Mnotho sighed, he didn't know how to give Njabulo an apology that was his age. "Uyaxolisa ubaba, Mageba. Futhi ngeke aphinde akuphathe kabi ngoba ubonile ukuthi imbi kakhulu lento ayenza. Ngiyaxolisa mfana wami yezwa?" (Dad is sorry, Njabulo. And he will never treat you bad because he has seen that what he did was very. I am sorry, my son, okay?) he spoke to him looking at his face with Mnotho's head bent down because Njabulo wasn't looking at him.

Njabulo: "Neke ushangishaya kabi? Futh uzodlala nami ngoba uyadlala no Siphosami kubo? Washo yena ukuthi uyadlala naye kodwa awudlali nje nami." (You will no longer hit me bad? And you'll play with me because you play with Siphosami in his mother's house. He said that you play with him but you don't play with me.) he spoke with his father without looking at him but he was looking at Mnotho's hand that was holding his hand.

Mnotho closed his eyes shortly as he realised how deeply he has hurt his child. He'd been so evil and he was so arrogant about it. "Ehe, ngeke ngiphinde nje ngikushaye kabi no mama wakho futhi. Sizodlala sonke noma usuhambile waya kumkhulu ubaba uzokuvakashela noNonjabulo, yezwa?" (Yes, I will never hit you bad again and your mother. We will play together and even when you've gone back to your grandfather I will visit you and Nonjabulo, okay?)

Njabulo nodded and looked at his father. "Ubaba kaNonjanja yena wathi ningambizi nomalume nimbize no baba uzosho nakuNonjanja njengo baba wakhe ukuthi naye akubize nobaba ubaba wakhe neke aphinde abuye nami nifuna uNonjanja athi baba kubaba wami." (Nonjabulo's father said I must not call him uncle but dad. Will you tell Nonjabulo to call you her father? Her father will never come back I want her to call my father her father.) he asked his father a longer question with a request without any breath intake. He only exhaled when he was done.

Mnotho smiled as Njabulo was done speaking without any comma. "Yes, she will also call me her father and we won't leave her aside when we play." He promised Njabulo bumping his hand that was on his hand on his lap.

Njabulo nodded. Mnotho noted that there was no smile on his face yet and he was hoping that by the time he leaves there would be a smile. He then took the truck and the car that he bought for him. "I bought you this and you will leave it in grandma's house because you have other toys down at home. Nonjabulo will carry hers when she's coming here." Mnotho said giving the toys to Njabulo and he had his eyes widened on the bigger truck.

Njabulo: "E.eh! Nizohamba nalo nami nizodlala nalo futhi ekhaya. Anisalifuni lela lincane. Nizodlala naleli." (No, I will also go home with it. I no longer want that smaller truck I will play with this one.) he told his father still looking at the truck... Mnotho stood up with Njabulo after he'd placed the sport car at the back of the truck. Njabulo laughed as he looked at the smaller car. Mnotho looked at him as he didn't get why he was laughing but he was pleased that he was laughing. "Incu le moto!" (This car is smaller!) he exclaimed and laughed.

Mnotho laughed exiting the door with him. "Ehe, yabo le moto encane igijima kakhulu! Iyayidlula le enkulu." (The sport car has the fastest speed compare to the bigger cars.) he

informed Njabulo walking through the hallway with him. He was supporting the truck with his other hand for it not to fall.

Njabulo: “Hawu! Nampela? Unamaphosiso, baba.” (Really? You are lying, dad.)

Mnotho: “Your father won’t lie to you. I am telling you the truth and I will show you with your brother, the car race at night.” He promised.

Njabulo: “Nampela?” (Really?)

Mnotho: “Yes, now go to your mother because you haven’t seen her.” he placed Njabulo on the kitchen entrance as he’d seen Happiness inside the kitchen seated on the chair opening Nonjabulo’s toys for her while Nonjabulo was standing before her looking at her mother...

Njabulo then placed his toy truck down once he was on the floor and he pushed it inside the kitchen...

Mnotho then turned to search for Ntandokazi and he was told where she was... He opened the door to the bedroom where Ntandokazi was sleeping.

Mnotho sat on the bed and looked at her placing his hand on her cheek. He called out her name and she didn’t wake up. He figured he must let her rest since she was sleeping because she was sick... Mnotho left the room feeling the peace of mind that he hadn’t have in a long time...

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She jumped her head up from the edge of the bed where she’d placed it. She woke up as someone who was waking up from a bad dream and she held her chest as she could feel her heart hardening... She’d been seated on the chair all night inside Ngcebo’s private room in the hospital. She would fall asleep and wake up in a fright as her intention was not to sleep. Nandipha looked at Ngcebo’s face with little fear as she was scared to touch Ngcebo’s body. She was scared that she was going to touch him and learn that his body was cold and all her hopes would be washed away from her life... She sighed and closed her eyes, she then placed her hand on his stomach and she quickly got up from the chair. She smiled and touched his whole body from his head to his toe. She felt her hope being tightened as his whole body was normally hot like a living human being. She placed her hands on her mouth and removed them, she covered his body.

Nandipha: “Good morning, Rasta. It’s me, your wife Nandipha. I have been here all night hoping you wouldn’t be cold and now, you are not.” She spoke to him and sat down on the chair to think. She made up ideas in her head and subtracted them. She built up other ideas until she found the suitable one.

“Yeah, I don’t need prayer now but I need to consult.” She concluded and grabbed her handbag to get her phone and that way she was going to make a phone call. She placed her phone on her ear.

“Nandipha?” Dalingcebo answered Nandipha’s phone call.

Nandipha: “Dalingcebo, are you still in Richards bay? I need your help.”

Dalingcebo: “No, I am on the road back home. What’s wrong?”

Nandipha: “Ngcebo is not cold yet-”

Dalingcebo: “Hawu! Really?”

Nandipha: “Yes, I have been thinking and thinking and I came up with a conclusion that I must consult. But I don’t know who to go to because the family doesn’t have a traditional healer at the moment. I want to go to someone I can trust and I am asking that you come with me because you are his twin brother. I am begging you to help me Dalingcebo I won’t just let him go like that.”

Dalingcebo sighed. “Okay, I will drive back to you now. I know someone we can go to, Empangeni.” he promised without telling her that his mother was coming to the hospital to take Ngcebo.

Nandipha: “Thank you.” she said and removed the phone from her ear. She placed the phone down and held his hand. “There’s hope for us.” she told Ngcebo and looked at the door that was being opened, a nurse came through.

Nurse: “How are you, mam? I am in here to check on you and see if you are ready to let your husband go?”

Nandipha: “No, I am not ready because he’s not cold yet and I will make the payment when his brother gets here. I don’t want him to be taken away.”

The nurse nodded and touched Ngcebo’s body to verify what Nandipha was saying to her. She knew a person’s mind can play tricks with them when they’re in denial to an extent that she would feel his body is hot while it wasn’t. “Oh!” The nurse exclaimed and looked at Ngcebo’s face. She nodded and left Nandipha. She felt his body was hot but it was normal for other people she didn’t want to believe what Nandipha believed because the patient’s heart had stopped and that meant nothing but death. She hoped that his wife would be able to accept his death sooner...

>>>> “Mama! Mama! Vuka!” (Mom! Mom! Wake up!) a voice of a child spoke to Nandipha who was sleeping alone in her bedroom back in her house KwaNongoma. >>>> Nandipha woke up and realise that she was dreaming because she was still inside the hospital with Ngcebo laying on the bed. She’d fallen asleep about 30 minutes after her phone call with her mother who’d promised that she was on the road to the hospital. And she was woken up by the Doctor who had the documents that authorised Nandipha to take Ngcebo’s body. Faith was the one who called her contact to organise the documents for her daughter early in the morning. They helped Nandipha read through the document and she signed it. She asked the Doctor to keep it.

Nandipha sighed and thought of calling back home because this dream made her think that maybe her children were crying back home. But before she could place her phone on her ear, the door was opened and she saw Nkosazana being followed by aunt elder Nomkhosi, the aunt who’d been to Nandipha’s house in Johannesburg. The two women from the village and Thembelihle... Nandipha placed her phone inside her bag and looked at them.

Aunt Nomkosi: “Sawubona, MaZondi.”

Nandipha: “Sawubona, aunt. Sanibonani.” She greeted them all and she held Ngcebo’s hand tightly while her eyes were looking at aunt Nomkhosi... Thembelihle sat down on the available chair on the opposite side of Nandipha. The rest of the women in the room greeted Nandipha back... The Doctor joined them inside the room because Nandipha had asked earlier that should his family come back. She would need support because her mother wasn’t with her. She knew that they were not going to let this go that easily and she wasn’t willing to let go of Ngcebo too...

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Awu, we have heard that your husband has left us and you are having a difficult time letting him go because his body hasn’t turn cold.”

Nandipha: “Aunty, that was last night and today, is a new day but his body is still hot aunty. Ngcebo is not dead, please believe in me.”

Woman1: “MaZondi, the Doctors wouldn’t lie to us and his body being hot doesn’t mean that he is not dead but the minute his breathing stops that means that a human being is no more.”

Nandipha: “No, not my husband.”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “You need to let him go, MaZondi and it can be possible that his body is still hot because you are still holding on to him. You need to let him go so that he will rest in peace and we will begin preparing for his funeral.”

Nkosazana: “Yes, Nandipha, if you are holding on to someone who has left the face of the earth. You are not making his way easy for him to find peace but he’ll keep looking back because you’ll be holding on to him.”

Nandipha: “It’s okay, I will hold on to him.”

Thembelihle: “Can you please let my son rest in peace! There’s absolutely no need for you to block his path by refusing to let him go. Why can’t you let Ngcebo go if you love him so much? Don’t you want peace for him?”

Nandipha: “Ngcebo is not dead.”

Thembelihle: “HE’S DEAD! OKAY! HE’S DEAD!” She shouted at Nandipha and she cried as aunt Nomkhosi held her and told her not to cry. Aunt Nomkhosi brushed Thembelihle’s back and looked at Nandipha.

Aunt Nomkhosi: “MaZondi, this is hard for us as much as it’s hard for you. And now, you are making it even more difficult as you want to keep Ngcebo’s body while it shouldn’t be here.”

Nkosazana: “They’re preparing for Ndabezinhle’s ritual back home to bring his spirit home where it belongs and the same thing should be done for Ngcebo. His spirit must be taken home.”

Nandipha: “Home, where? Where I am not welcomed?”

Thembelihle: “You are not Ngcebo’s wife traditionally and that means his spirit will be laid in my house not in your house. The ancestors don’t know you as his wife because you didn’t get married traditionally.”

Nandipha: “But I am his legal wife and that means I have a right to his body and I am not changing my word. I will let Ngcebo go only when his body has turned cold and I won’t change my mind.” She insisted and raised her head as the door was being opened. She stood

up immediately without leaving Ngcebo's side of the bed she opened her arms for her mother who was followed by MaNtombela and they hugged each other tightly. "Mama! You are finally, here." She closed her eyes and felt strengthened now because she was certain that her mother was going to let her do what she wanted.

Faith: "Yes, I wanted MaNtombela and I to come together that's why I am late." She told Nandipha and let go of her. Nandipha then hugged MaNtombela who was having small talks with the family after she'd hugged Thembelihle...

Nandipha: "Thank you for coming, mama."

MaNtombela: "Don't say that." She said and shook her head while she was still inside her arms. She was heartbroken when she received a call that Ngcebo and his brother had died. Her heart went all out for Nandipha and the children.

Aunt Nomkhosi: "You arrived at the right time because we are trying to tell Nandipha that she must let Ngcebo go and that way his body will be taken to the mortuary and we can do a ritual to take his spirit home."

Faith: "But she doesn't want that."

Thembelihle: "This is not about what we want but it's about laying my son's spirit at rest. The spirit that she doesn't want to let go."

MaNtombela: "Nandipha is too young Mama' ndlunkulu to go through this and if she wants more time to accept this situation. Why don't you grant that for her? She'd shared life with Ngcebo since 19 years and he's the only man she'd ever known. Please, let her hold on until she's ready to let go."

Faith: "And she wants to hold on until the 7th day that's not too much."

"HAWU!" the other women chanted and Thembelihle clapped her hands once.

Thembelihle: "That will not happen because I want my sons to be buried on the same day and that would be on Wednesday. I have decided on that day and my husband supported me. I will not have Nandipha change things."

Faith: "You will prepare the funeral for your other son and he'll be buried on Wednesday and Ngcebo will follow after him-"

Nandipha: "No, mama, don't speak like that because Ngcebo will wake up. Ngcebo will wake up on that day if he didn't wake up on the third day. I have faith that my husband will come back to me. There won't be a funeral for him." she insisted talking to her mother with tears running down her cheeks. Faith looked down at her and she wiped her tears.

Thembelihle: "I thought we could solve this fairly but you are being stubborn. Nkosazana go call the insurance people to come and take Ngcebo." She instructed Nkosazana and she nodded before leaving.

Faith: "Hhayi! You can't do that. Can you tell her that, Doctor? Maybe she doesn't understand that she can't do this."

Doctor: "Yes, you can't do that because his wife has a custody and control of remains of her husband meaning that she will handle all the remains in this matter his body." He told Thembelihle and gave her the documents. Thembelihle took it and read through, she couldn't believe everything that was happening. She couldn't believe that Nandipha had

changed this much to an extent that she could serve her with a legal document giving her rights over Ngcebo. She looked at Nandipha with tears coming from her eyes as she was out of words. She'd given birth to Ngcebo and now, she had no rights? She felt that this was the last nail that Nandipha had to stamp on her heart...

Thembelihle: "I curse the day you came into my son's life. I curse it! Ngcebo made a mistake by marrying you and you have disappointed me over and over again. Tsk!" she spat out the words and clicked her tongue lastly. She placed the paper on the bed and she got up from the chair. "Let's go." She said and left the hospital room. The two women followed her and Thembelihle stopped the people from her insurance company that she'd called.

Aunt Nomkhosi: "Awu, kodwa MaZondi. Why would hurt your mother in-law like this? Why are you doing this to your husband's family?"

Nandipha: "I don't want to let him go." she told her and the aunt left the room feeling defeated completely. "Thank you." She said to the Doctor. The Doctor nodded and he left the room feeling sorry for this girl who had so much hope that a dead person was going to wake up and come back to her...

MaNtombela: "I don't like how things were done, Faith."

Faith: "What were we supposed to do, MaNtombela? We can't just allow the royal family to have their way always. How can we support them and neglect our daughter? Nandipha will always look at me and you, and she'll say we didn't give her a chance to listen to her heart."

MaNtombela sighed. "I understand. It's just that I understand the queen mother's pain as a mother to Ngcebo." She said and moved to sit on the chair.

Faith: "I am a mother to a son as well and if Randall's wife would want to wait for a few days I can give her a benefit of a doubt even if I have accepted my son's death. Nandipha will hold on until she's ready."

MaNtombela: "Don't forget to pray, Nandipha. Don't just hold his hand and cry that he's laying here but pray."

Nandipha: "Yebo, mama. But I have asked his brother to come back and we will go consult a traditional healer. He said he knows the one we can go to since their family's healer is no more and his son hasn't come back. I will ask some advice there because I want to take him home."

MaNtombela: "Okay, that's progress. Your mother and I will stay here and watch over Ngcebo. You can go."

Faith: "Yes, we will stay here and there's nobody who'll take him."

Nandipha: "Thank you." she said and looked at MaNtombela then her mother. MaNtombela suggested that they pray and they began the prayer...

"You are giving me hope, now." Dalingcebo admitted to Nandipha, they were inside the car driving to Empangeni at an outskirt of Ngwelezane township, embovini. They've left Faith and MaNtombela with Ngcebo.

Nandipha: "Your hope can boost things for us. But you didn't feel anything when he died? I don't know what I am saying but shouldn't you feel something because you are his twin brother?"

Dalingcebo: “No, I didn’t feel anything and I don’t think I should feel something. I don’t know anything about that.”

Nandipha: “Okay.” She said and drank the juice that was on her hands.

Dalingcebo: “Your mother said you should eat.”

Nandipha: “I will. They didn’t call you home?” She closed her eyes and leaned back on the seat without opening her eyes.

Dalingcebo: “I told dad I have to drive back.” he replied... They had the rest of the drive quietly... until they reached their destination...

Dalingcebo and Nandipha were seated back on their position after they’ve blown on the bones’ bag of the traditional healer. They were inside the hut and they’ve informed the healer why they were inside his hut... The incense was burning before them and the healer scattered the bone on to the animal skin. He groaned as he tried to read the bones... but...

Healer: “I see nothing.” He announced the truth to them as he saw nothing concerning Ngcebo but there were other things concerning the woman before him. He wondered if she was strong enough for things coming her way but it wasn’t his place to tell her anything as she’d come here with a heavy heart that he sensed the minute Nandipha entered the gates with Dalingcebo.

“HAWU!” Dalingcebo and Nandipha exclaimed, they looked at each other as they were not expecting such a response. They looked back at the healer.

Healer: “Does the prince have some special gift or he has a calling?”

Nandipha: “Yes, he sees visions of the future events. And like I said he wasn’t supposed to go to the fight because he was told not to be involved. But he didn’t listen at all. It’s not the first time that he refuses to do what his ancestors told him to do and I think that they’re punishing him.”

Healer: “He’s a seer?”

Dalingcebo: “Yes.”

Healer: “I hear you, nkosazana. It can be possibly that his spirit is trapped somewhere. A sangoma or traditional healer can visit a spiritual world but this case is different because he’s not a sangoma and it doesn’t look like he is visiting the spiritual world willingly.”

Dalingcebo: “What can we do then because you don’t see anything concerning him and his wife doesn’t want to let him go?”

Nandipha: “And I want to move him back home. I am afraid that to use umlahlankosi because I believe he’s not dead.”

The healer sighed as he felt this situation was confusing because nothing was coming through about Ngcebo. And all he was thinking now, was to use knowledge that he wasn’t sure about. “You can hold on to him because it might be possible for his spirit to be trapped somewhere and he might be alone there. I don’t think that would take longer but what you can do now as his brother Dalingcebo you’ll burn incense and speak to him without umlahlankosi. Seeing nothing is something.” He advised...

Nandipha: “Do you really think there’s a possibility he might come back?”

Healer: “From what you’ve told me there might be a possibility but if his body turns cold

that will only mean he's gone. You have children, right?"

Nandipha: "Yes, we do have children."

Healer: "If his spirit is trapped by his ancestors as means of punishment. He must have something to hold on to in the lands of living that means the children should speak to him and you should speak to him. I am not giving you a guarantee but do what your heart tells you, Nkosazana. There's nothing left for me to say you should be on the road now."

Nandipha and Dalingcebo: "Thokoza mkhulu." They clapped and got up.

The healer looked at Nandipha. "Don't visit any traditional healers from this day but should you need any traditional help in future just go to the royal family healer. Not any healer or sangoma." The healer told Nandipha looking at her in the eye as Dalingcebo was covering the incense with a newspaper.

Nandipha: "Can I know the reason?"

Healer: "No, but do as I say." He told her. Nandipha nodded...

Dalingcebo and Nandipha left the hut with incense they were given by the healer and the instructions that he'd given them clearly...

"You shouldn't tell anyone that we went to see a traditional healer that's not ours. You must tell your mothers not to tell anyone too. This should stay between us because should the family know they will be angry and make a big deal out this but I trust that man."

Dalingcebo told Nandipha as they drove back to Richards bay.

Nandipha: "Okay, I will do that and I will tell mom about it. And thank you for everything." She said and Dalingcebo nodded his head...

"Nandipha, we need to get the kids out of the way before we take their father inside the house. You can hear their noise." Faith told Nandipha who was seated at the back seat of Dalingcebo's car with Ngcebo's body, his head laying on her lap... They've driven from Richards' bay and Dalingcebo led the procedures that they were told by the traditional healer to carry out...

Nandipha: "Okay, but how are we going to carry him inside the house?"

Dalingcebo: "We will carry him inside with your brother. I should be heading home now before they worry about my whereabouts." He said standing outside the car by Nandipha's side of the door. He opened the door.

Nandipha: "Okay." She removed the blanket that covered Ngcebo's body. He was bandaged where he was shot and she'd bought medication and more bandages for her to look after his injuries. She laid his head on the car seat and closed the door. "I know that Ngcebo is prominent beside being a prince I would like that you request to your parents that they don't report him dead to the journalists and the public." She told Dalingcebo.

Dalingcebo: "I will try my best."

Nandipha: "Thank you. And you should put some plaster on that forehead injury. Where did you get it?" she asked.

Dalingcebo: "I got it from the fight. Argh, I even forgot about it. I will do that when I get home." he said. Nandipha nodded and she followed her mother to the house...

The children were playing with Randall inside the lounge. They were laughing and running

around the couches to hide from Randall.

“Mama!” Buhle was the first one to see Nandipha and she ran up to her, her sisters followed behind and they neglected their uncle.

Nandipha: “Buhlezi!” she smiled genuinely for the first time after long hours of being worried. She laughed as she carried Buhle into her arms. “Wozani kimi.” Nandipha told the rest of her children and they followed her behind giggling.

Randall: “Sis!”

Nandipha: “Hey, brother. Please, go to his brother outside. I will come to you when you have brought him inside.”

Randall: “Alright.”

Nandipha went to the guestroom with the girls... She placed them on the bed and she sat down with them. They looked at her with smiles on their faces.

Similo: “Sheshiyahamba mama? Phela, ubaba uthe shoya olwandle, eThekwini.” (We are leaving now? Dad said we will go to Durban)

Nongcebo: “Ehe, lokhu shimlindile, shimlindile!” (We’ve waited and waited.)

Thando: “Ade nikuphi nobaba wethu? Muphi yena, mama?” (Where were you with our father? And where is he, mom?)

Ntokomalo: “Shikhalile thina shivuka ningekho kodwa shathi shiya ekhishini. Hawu!

Ukhona, yena ugogo. Shathula, shaya kuye, anithi?” (We cried when we woke up and you were not home but when we went to the kitchen we saw grandma and we stopped crying.)

Nandipha was smiling as her children were speaking one after the other. She widened her eyes and looked up to stop tears from falling. She held her breath and blinked the tears away. She looked back at her children who were patiently waiting for her to speak.

Nandipha: “Your father is sick and that means we are not going to Durban.”

“HAWU!” They all disappointed not just from the mouth but all the smiles on their faces were washed away by the news of their father being sick.

Buhle: “Where’s daddy?”

Nandipha: “Your father will be sleeping in our room but every time before we sleep and in the morning, you will go talk to him and tell him to come back to us. He won’t speak to you because he’s sleeping.”

Nongcebo: “He will come back to us when we tell him?” she asked the question that Nandipha didn’t know how to answer because she was taking a gamble that she was hoping would pay out. And it was even more difficult now that she’d been told not to go to any other traditional healer...

“Mama!” Thando exclaimed and she hit her mother’s thigh repeatedly because she wasn’t answering them... Nandipha pulled her babies one by one, she placed the four sister’s heads on her thighs and Nongcebo’s head inside her wing on to her breast... She rubbed the four heads on her thighs with her fingers.

Nandipha: “Your father will come back to us.” she prophesied her faith and her words came out with pain from deep in her heart. She closed her eyes and held her teeth together not to make sounds. Her children were not speaking but she could feel them moving with their

heads still on her thighs and her fingers rubbing their scalps one by one... There was silence in the room for a few minutes with her crying silently... She opened her eyes as a tiny hand wiped her tears. Nandipha smiled...

Nandipha: “Buhlezi? Lala kimi, anikaze nilale angithi?” (Sleep on me. You haven’t taken your day nap, right?) she asked in a whisper as she saw the others were asleep now except Buhle. Nandipha laid Nongcebo on the bed removing her from her arm because she was sleeping. She looked back at Buhle after wiping her tears...

Buhle shook her head. “Mama, uyagula nawe?” (Are you alright?)

Nandipha: “Cha, akaguli umama. But she’s not happy that your father is sick. Let’s sleep, okay?” she requested removing the others from thighs. She got up to put them on the bed in a comfortable manner.

“How’s everyone in here?” MaNtombela showed her head on the door and she walked inside the bedroom. “They’re sleeping already?” she asked.

Nandipha: “Yes, I am pretty sure they were tired from playing.”

Buhle: “Gogo!” she smiled and pouted at MaNtombela, they kissed ‘Mncwa!’ Buhle giggled and raised her arms for MaNtombela to take her.

MaNtombela: “Why don’t you take them to their room?”

Nandipha: “I want to rest here with them, mama.”

MaNtombela: “Hhayi, go and rest in your room. And let the children sleep in their cots because you have been sleeping on the chair, Nandipha.”

Nandipha: “Yebo.” She said and took Similo first. She met up with her mother on her way to the children’s room. “Dalingcebo, has left?” she asked.

Faith: “Yes, he said he will tell his family that Ngcebo is here, now.”

Nandipha: “Ey, okay.”

Faith: “They didn’t cry?”

Nandipha: “No, but they were disappointed and sad, I sent them to sleep.”

Faith: “Everything will be alright. I will tell Thula to help you. I will take the others.” She said and let Nandipha proceed with her way... She walked away hoping that Nandipha wouldn’t be disappointed. She didn’t trust that Ngcebo would wake up but all she was going to do was support Nandipha until she realises that she needed to let go... Three days/seven days were nothing...

S5 >> EPISODE 34

“How are you feeling now?” Sheila asked Danielle on the phone. It was a Friday morning and Danielle was seated on the bed inside Thembelihle’s house... The family was together in Thembelihle’s palace but the others didn’t sleep in the palace they would drive back to their homes. Danielle shared the bed with Mnotho but the previous night she fell asleep without Mnotho on the bed.

Now, she was talking to her mother on the phone after she'd taken a shower and she had dressed up for the day. She was the last one to wake up and they didn't wake her up because they knew she was sick.

Danielle: "I am fine, mama." She lied and looked up at the door, Mnotho walked through and Danielle sent her head down.

Sheila: "You don't sound fine. Are you sure that you are not pregnant? You can't be vomiting none stop and having a headache."

Danielle: "No, mama. I am not pregnant and please, stop worrying yourself about a big person who can look after herself. I am fine, really." She said and smiled as Mnotho was taking her hand into his hand. She looked at him and Mnotho pecked her lips softly. Danielle rested her head on his shoulder.

Sheila: "You are my child and I should worry about you. You didn't even tell me that you went to the Doctor. Did you visit the Doctor?"

Danielle: "No, I haven't. Mama, when are you coming, here?" she lied to her and moved from the topic by asking her a question unrelated to what they were talking about. She didn't want to keep talking to her worried mother.

Sheila: "I will come on Tuesday but I will sleep in your house."

Danielle: "Okay, I love you, okay?"

Sheila: "I love you, too." She said and they hung up the call after saying goodbyes to each other... Danielle placed her phone aside and she looked at her husband who was looking at her now.

Mnotho: "How are you? I didn't see you last night." He asked and they said a brief emotions revoking kiss. Danielle was the first to pull out.

Danielle: "I am fine and how are you?"

Mnotho: "I am alive and what's making you sick because I have heard you telling your mother that you are not pregnant?" he asked and placed his hand on Danielle's forehead to feel her temperature.

Danielle: "I just have a minor headache. Look, I am the last one to wake up and now, I should go help where I can help. What's happening? I heard Nandipha doesn't want to let Ngcebo go?"

Mnotho: "Yes, she said she's holding on to him. Dad managed to convince mama that we should focus on planning the funeral without telling people that we will have two funerals just in case Nandipha would still be holding on to him by Wednesday."

Danielle: "But don't you think if he's still hot by today that means Ngcebo is still alive somewhere I don't know. But you are traditional people."

Mnotho: "If a human's being heart stops that means nothing but death. And we can't consult to other people. That's not how we do things."

Danielle sighed. "The family will get through this. I saw it with my father's death. It's not easy to accept it but as time passes by you learn to live with it." She reflected and held Mnotho's hand tightly.

Mnotho: "Yes, and we will get through it."

Danielle: "I haven't seen you since the fight. How's your body? How are you, really? And did you manage to speak to the children?" she asked moving her hands on Mnotho's chest down to his lower abs.

Mnotho was looking at her with beautiful smile on his face. He held her hands. "What's up with so many questions? How am I supposed to answer them?" he asked.

Danielle: "I haven't been seeing you, Mnotho."

Mnotho: "And I am here now, my body is still a tight painful from the fight. I am also tired and I can feel that I need some deep sleep."

Danielle: "Then you should sleep because you can't work properly while you are feeling pains and while you are sleepy."

Mnotho: "I will sleep. And yes, I did speak to the children. Njabulo is loosening up. I haven't seen them today."

Danielle: "Okay, and now, please, sleep." She said getting up from the bed and she fixed the bed for him while telling him to take off his shoes. Mnotho did what Danielle was telling him and he got on the bed... Danielle left him, she'd hope that they would spend time together more than before but a lot of things had happened that made it impossible for them to spend time together...

"Kodwa, nathi akashizwanga ubaba, mama." (But, it's like daddy didn't hear us, mom.) Ntokomalo told her mother and she looked up at her... They were following Nandipha out of her room after they've greeted their father on a Friday morning which was the 2nd day since the accident.

Nandipha: "No, he heard you, Ntoko." She assured her and she looked at the rest of the children. They were quietly following her to the kitchen and now, Nandipha didn't understand if they were grumpy or just sad.

Thando: "Ay! Neke! Akashizwanga!" (No, he didn't hear us) she said loudly supporting Ntokomalo and the rest of the sisters chanted 'Yes!'

Nandipha shook her head as she realised they were grumpy because they thought their father didn't hear them. "But I told you that your father won't speak back to you and now, we will eat, okay?" She said placing the blanket on the floor. The children sat down on their blanket without saying anything to their mother... MaNtombela and Faith were inside the kitchen. They have given Thula time off just to go home until they need her.

Faith: "How did it go?" She asked giving her the children's dishes of breakfast.

Nandipha: "They say he didn't hear them and they're upset." She replied and turned to the children to give them their food.

MaNtombela: "Awu, bakithi. They will get used to it and I am also starting to really believe that their father's spirit is somewhere. It's the second day now."

Faith: "And tomorrow is the third day, Nandipha."

Nandipha swallowed hard and turned to her mother as she was done giving her children food. "Yes, and if he doesn't come back tomorrow. He will definitely come back next week on the 7th day or after it." She said.

MaNtombela and Faith looked at one another as she was talking about after the 7th day now. She wasn't talking about after, before... Nandipha sat down on the chair to have her food without looking at her mothers who were quiet.

MaNtombela: "I will go to the palace to check on your mother in-law. You'll stay here with your mother. I won't stay longer over there."

Nandipha: "Okay, I have been reading online newspaper reports and they didn't include that Ngcebo is dead." She announced.

"HAWU! WHAT DID THEY SAY?" Faith and MaNtombela asked at the same time. They went to bed discussing their worries that the royal family wasn't going to stop informing the public that Ngcebo was also dead. And now, they were surprised to hear such news.

Nandipha: "They said he's fighting for his life and there isn't hope." She told them sadly without looking at them.

Faith looked and MaNtombela, she shook her head. "But that's better than saying he's dead my child." Faith said to Nandipha.

Nandipha: "Yes, but his phone has been ringing none stop."

MaNtombela: "You should switch it off."

Nandipha: "I won't switch it off because there's an important call that he was hoping to receive this week or next week. And I hope they will call just to ask about him. That's why I won't switch off his phone." she said and looked at her children. They were eating quietly without bothering each other.

MaNtombela and Faith: "Okay."

Faith: "Did someone from his brothers call?"

Nandipha: "Mntwana called to ask about him and I told him."

"Okay," Faith said and they had the rest of their breakfast quietly. Randall was not with them. He had to go back to Johannesburg the previous night because of the test he had but he was going to come back for the weekend...

Nandipha was seated on her bed untying Ngcebo's bandages to wash his wounds and tie him with the clean ones. She looked at the inner cotton that was placed beneath the bandage and the blood stain on the inner cotton was pure red as the blood of someone who was still alive not a corpse.

"Okay, I won't tell anyone about this because they keep looking at one another as if I am crazy if I talk about the fact that you are not dead. I saw them this morning but they thought I wasn't seeing them. They're pretending to believe me but I know they don't believe me they're trying to support me. But that's better than being the alone in this fight. I know they're both behind me even though they don't believe that you will come back. Look, if you are a corpse you wouldn't have blood on these wounds-" She conversed with Ngcebo and stopped when she heard the knock on the door. She placed the cotton aside and got up from her bed. "I will come back." she informed him and marched to the door. The children were taking their day nap and she was certain that her mother was seated on the couch sleeping with a book or phone on her hands... She shook her head as Faith had her body curled up on the couch...

Nandipha opened the door and she smiled at the teenage girl who was light skinned and tall, she was wearing a long sleeve cream dress that was beneath the knees. She had red and white beads on her ankles, and on her wrists. She had shot dreadlocks on her head. And she was walking barefoot.

Nandipha: "Sawubona, sis."

Girl: "Sawubona, nkosazana." She greeted Nandipha and bowed her head a little. Nandipha smiled at the gesture.

Nandipha: "How can I help you?"

Girl: "I was sent by my mother to give you this ointment. She told me you must apply it on the prince's wounds." She informed Nandipha giving her the ointment that was on a transparent small container. The ointment was greenish in colour. Nandipha took the ointment.

Nandipha: "Who's your mother?"

Girl: "My mother is the late Gobela's wife."

Nandipha: "Oh! Ayi, awubongwa ke sis. But you can come in and I will pour some juice for you. You are even walking barefoot." (We don't gratitude traditional medication/ointments) she said to the girl.

Girl: "No, nkosazana. I should head back home."

Nandipha: "But wait, your mother doesn't-" she stopped herself from asking as she had thought that maybe the royal family didn't tell her. "Okay, never mind. You can go, sis, uhambe kahle." She said to the girl.

"Nkosazana!" The girl exclaimed bowing her head to Nandipha once more and she turned to leave the premises walking fast to the gate... Nandipha then turned back to the house. She ran to Ngcebo's room with her heart jumping as she was going to apply this ointment she'd been given...

"Nontobeko, it's the second day since the accident happened and you haven't come back to be with the family." MaNtombela spoke to Nontobeko on the phone. She was being driven to the palace by a guy that lived nearby. Nandipha asked him to drive MaNtombela to the palace using her mother's car because MaNtombela's nephew was only going to come to Nongoma to fetch her...

Nontobeko: "I am still busy at work mama and when I come there I will be coming for Nandipha not the family."

MaNtombela: "Hhaybo! Things are not done like that, my child. You are still a wife to the family because you are not yet divorced."

Nontobeko: "No, mama. Dalingcebo and I are no longer together. I don't even want to see him now because I will have to commiserate to him since his two brothers are dead. I can't do that while I still hate him for what he did to me, mama. He broke my heart."

MaNtombela: "I know my child but death bring people together."

Nontobeko: "I don't want to be with Dalingcebo anymore. I will only come over there on Monday or Tuesday for Nandipha. And I will ask my daughter to come to Nandipha's house."

She's not with you?"

MaNtombela sighed. "No, but I will ask to go back to the house with her because it'd been long since I last saw her properly." She said.

Nontobeko: "Okay, who's with Nandipha there? I mean the women from the family? Who's there?"

MaNtombela: "Hhayi, Faith and I were talking about that before I left the house. It's just me and Nandipha's mother. They didn't bring anyone to the house but maybe they will bring someone."

Nontobeko: "Let's hope they do. I have to run now, mama."

MaNtombela: "Okay, don't make a mistake of not coming back."

Nontobeko: "I will come back." she promised and hung up the call... MaNtombela looked at her phone and she shook her head before placing her phone inside the bag...

She stepped out of the car. They didn't even drive through the palace because of the number of cars that were inside the palace and people were going up and down doing different tasks... MaNtombela walked through the gates with the guy who drove her following her behind after he'd given her the car keys.

"I will find you around when I am leaving." MaNtombela told the boy who was making his way to the men who were together.

"Yebo, gogo." He said to MaNtombela...

She entered the lounge where Thembelihle was seated on the mattress with other mourners... The couches and the rest of the furniture pieces that made the lounge were moved to the other room inside the house... There were three mattresses on the lounge and two candles were light up next to an Urn with Ndabezinhle's ashes, his shirt and pants were folded and placed next to the urn... Thembelihle was talking to her sons about the programme of the funeral day that they needed to send for printing. The brothers were hands on with the preparations of their brothers' funeral.

Thembelihle looked at MaNtombela once as she was greeting the family and she looked back at the paper that Mntwana had on his hands. He was writing what they were planning together with the aunts inside the lounge.

Aunt Nomkhosi: "MaSthole, our king is right, it's better that we print two programmes just in case Ngcebo's wife would still be holding on to him by the time the funeral day comes."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, mama and we must not even print two programmes but we must print one for Ndabezinhle's funeral. Dad said we must do that last night so that we won't keep fighting for no reason."

Mntwana: "Yes, he changed the idea of planning two funerals."

Thembelihle: "What I want doesn't matter here but what Nandipha wants is what matters and your father has agreed to that." She raised her voice as she was further angered that what she wanted wasn't happening. And she hadn't had peace since the day Nandipha showed them the custody and control documents... The whole family was angry about it but Mlamuli and Mntwana managed to get their father to keep the peace by letting Nandipha have her way...

Mlamuli: “Mama, it’s not about you but it’s about us having peace in the family because fighting against Ngcebo’s wife won’t help us. People will only laugh at us and gossip about us. Why can’t you understand that?” he tried to reason with his mother... And MaNtombela felt that she came at the wrong time...

Mnotho: “We will print Ndabezinhle’s funeral programme and we should just accept that we will begin planning Ngcebo’s funeral after you have gotten back from the Easter service.”

Thembelihle: “I can’t go to the Easter service without my other son being buried.” She shouted at him and held her chest. Banele passed the glass of water to his mother and she accepted the glass.

Mlamuli: “What must we do then? We must go fight Nandipha now while Ngcebo’s children would be there to watch us? Do you really want to put his children through because now, it’s clear that you don’t care about his wife?” He asked his mother feeling that he was losing his cool because his mother was being unreasonable and she wanted to control the situation they had no control over. She didn’t want to listen to any of them not even their father...

Banele: “We will not do that, mama.” He said lastly and Thembelihle ignored them. She encouraged them wrap up the programme...

The brothers left their mother’s side after they’ve finished writing down the funeral programme... Mnotho walked to the kitchen to get something to eat because he was hungry and everyone was busy.

He found Happiness seated on chair inside the kitchen. She was busy double checking on the list of the things they’ve gone to Richards bay to buy with Nkosazana. It was just a few things for the memorial service not the funeral was going to be on Saturday. She’d been busy with the family and now, she was no longer scared of their judgement because when she first greeted the rest of the aunts they didn’t dwell on her case but they only told her they were disappointed of the things that were revealed about her marriage but they were not going to talk much about that now. She knew that meant they were still going to discuss her matter after the funeral because both families owed each other. She was hands on helping where she was needed to help as they were told they were the ones who were going to plan the funeral along with the brothers. Being busy helped her live by the day without thinking about Lonwabo and being active helped her...

“Sawubona.” Mnotho greeted Happiness and he marched to the fridge to check if there was something he could eat. He was greeting her because he hadn’t seen her since morning.

Happiness: “Yebo, unjani?” she asked and looked back at him shortly.

Mnotho: “I am fine and how are you?” he placed the food on the microwave.

Happiness: “I am fine.”

Mnotho: “Where are the rest of ladies as you are seated alone?”

Happiness: “They’re outside the house. I forgot to thank you for the toys that you bought Nonjabulo. I didn’t think I should bring her toys along.” She said counting Nonjabulo alone on purpose because she wasn’t about to thank him for buying toys for his son. That was something he was supposed to have been doing long ago but he failed...

Mnotho: “There’s no need to thank me.”

Happiness: “And they told me that you said Nonjabulo should call you ‘dad’ Do you think that’s a good thing?” she asked and looked at him as he sat down with his food opposite her on the table...

Mnotho: “What is it that they didn’t tell you about me? I didn’t think they can’t keep secrets?” he commented and sent the spoon on his mouth.

Happiness: “Are you really eating without praying?”

Mnotho: “You prayed for me when you were eating.” he replied.

“Mxm!” She exclaimed and proceeded doing what she was doing without speaking to Mnotho further but she was hoping he would answer her question. The question she’d asked earlier...

Mnotho: “And to answer your question, it’s a good thing that I am building a relationship with my children. I don’t think there’s something that you need to worry yourself about. Njabulo and I spoke like men-”

Happiness: “Njabulo is a boy not a man.”

Mnotho: “He’s a boy but I can’t say we spoke like boys because I am not a boy. It’s better if I say ‘men’ because one day he’ll be a man.”

Happiness: “Oh, I see.”

Mnotho: “And I have been meaning to tell you that you and the children shouldn’t be alone down there. You need to come up today. I will go down with them to take your things and you will sleep here.”

Happiness: “The palace is full.”

Mnotho: “Mama, sleeps alone on her mattress and the children’s room can never be full. You won’t sleep with the children alone while everyone is here. It’s not right at all. I don’t even want to forget I will go down to get your things with them.” he insisted without looking at her.

Happiness: “I can do that for myself.”

Mnotho: “Yes, you can but I will do it with the children.”

Happiness: “And how will you know where everything is?”

Mnotho: “Nonjabulo talks a lot more than her brother and that means she’ll know where everything is.” He replied and he heard a chuckle from Happiness. He raised his head to look at her but he didn’t meet her gaze. Mnotho finished up his food with the silence between the two of them...

He stood up when he was done the kitchen was full again. He then left the kitchen without informing Happiness that he was going to her house. He went outside the house to look for the children.

“Where are your siblings?” Mnotho asked Siphosami who was drinking water on the tap that was closer to the kitchen.

Siphosami: “We are playing at the back, baba.”

Mnotho: “Go and call, the three of them, Njabulo, Nonjabulo and Pearl. Come back with them to my car I will be waiting for you over there. You’ll tell the others that you are coming back soon.” He instructed and Siphosami ran... Mnotho then sent his hands inside his

pants' pocket and he came back with his car keys... He stepped inside the car and he waited for the children... He stepped out of the car as he saw them running following each other. Mnotho: "Stop running!" exclaimed looking at them as he was standing by the back door of the car. The little ones giggled and stood before him. "Siphosami sit on the front seat because you are older." He instructed.

Pearl: "Where are we going daddy?"

Mnotho lifted Njabulo first. "We are driving down to Njabulo's house to get their bags so that they will sleep here with everyone." He replied and fastened the belt on Njabulo who was looking at the movement of his hands.

The girls: "OH!"

Siphosami: "Njabulo will sleep with us, the boys, dad?"

Mnotho: "Yes, and Nonjabulo will sleep with the girls." He replied lifting Nonjabulo and he placed her on the middle. And he lifted Pearl last...

He then marched to his side of the door and he stepped inside. "You know how to fasten your belt Siphosami. I shouldn't teach you the same thing." He said pointing the belt for Siphosami and he did what he was told... Mnotho then drove his car out of the premises, driving down to Happiness's house just to get their luggage. He was having a conversation with the children... They were just children they were happy to be together even though they didn't realise that they were together because of death...

S5 >> EPISODE 35

"How are you?" Thembelihle asked Dalingcebo and she took his hand into her hand. It was a Sunday morning, the 4th day. Thembelihle was alone inside the lounge, the aunts had gone to shower and others went to their houses. Thembelihle had asked Happiness to call Dalingcebo for her... Now, Dalingcebo was seated down on the mattress with his mother.

Dalingcebo: "I am fine, mama."

Thembelihle: "No, I am not talking about that but I am asking deeply, your twin brother was shot before you while your other brother burnt while you were watching. And your twin brother died the same night. How are you?"

Dalingcebo sighed and saw an opportunity to open up to his mother. "I am not fine at all mama. I have been having nightmares of the incident for the past four days-" he told his mother and Thembelihle broke him off.

Thembelihle: "Nightmares? Why didn't you tell us? Did you tell your father?"

Dalingcebo: "No, I didn't tell him. Mama, everyone is busy and they have their minds on the funeral plans. I can't just bother them with my nightmares and feelings. And not after what I have done to my brother. If I haven't cheated with Elena none of this would have happened because there wasn't going to be any fight to begin with."

Thembelihle: "Don't let guilt make you think that the family doesn't care about you. You are

still their son and Mnotho has also done bad things but that doesn't change the fact he's still a son of the family."

Dalingcebo: "Yes, but I have lost someone who had my back fully. Ngcebo didn't even judge me but he showed me that he was angry and disappointed. Who will I call when I want to talk and have a good laugh?"

Thembelihle: "You still have your other brothers. Mntwana and Banele."

Dalingcebo: "I know but mama, they aren't like Ngcebo. And it's amazing how he was able to get along with everyone without taking sides. Even before having Nandipha in his life he'd always been like that."

Thembelihle: "We will get through it."

Dalingcebo: "And what will happen with Nhlakanipho? I was looking at him play with other children, he doesn't even know what's happening and last night he asked me about his father. He asked where he was because everyone was home. I just had to lie to him."

Thembelihle wiped her tears and looked at Dalingcebo. "We will tell him on Tuesday what's really going on and his mother would be here as well. She said she will come here on Tuesday before the vigil." She told him.

Dalingcebo: "That's better."

Thembelihle: "Have you been going to the hospital to check on Qhawe? Who named him Qhawe?"

Dalingcebo: "Ngcebo gave him the name-" Thembelihle cried fresh tears as Dalingcebo answered her. Dalingcebo held his mother into his arms and he closed his eyes, pressing them tight. "Don't cry mama. Everything will pass."

Thembelihle: "My children Dalingcebo."

Dalingcebo: "Their memories will always be with us."

Thembelihle: "It doesn't make it any better but rather difficult." She commented and Dalingcebo let her cry until she was quiet. She backed away from her son and wiped her tears with the scarf on her shoulders. "How's Qhawe? When last did you see him?" she repeated her question.

Dalingcebo: "He's doing well and I went there yesterday. I will go tomorrow when I find time because I don't think I will find time."

Thembelihle: "Okay, when all this has passed. You'll have to tell Qalokuhle about her brother."

Dalingcebo: "I think it will be better if I tell her when he comes home and I will live with Qhawe mama. I don't want him to stay here because bhuti Mnotho will be coming here more often and I don't want the child to keep reminding him what happened."

Thembelihle: "Ayi, Dalingcebo, who'll look after him?"

Dalingcebo: "I will hire someone who will do that." He replied and got up from the floor as aunts walked inside the lounge. "I will go now." he added. Thembelihle nodded and she looked at him as he left...

"Can I sit?" Dalingcebo asked Mnotho who was seated alone on the chair outside the house. He had food before him and he was eating. He was thinking while eating when Dalingcebo

came to stand behind the chair that was opposite him... It was in the afternoon now and most people had gone back to their homes. Only the family was left in the palace...

Mnotho looked at Dalingcebo for a few seconds and he tormented his jaw. "Yeah, sit." He allowed him to sit and he took a piece of meat from his plate. "What do you want?" he asked and looked at him, he sent the meat in his mouth.

Dalingcebo: "I haven't really spoken to you since you learnt about the affair."

Mnotho: "And there's absolutely nothing to talk about Dalingcebo."

Dalingcebo: "I just want to say sorry."

Mnotho: "How long were you having sex with my wife?"

Dalingcebo: "Bhuti-"

Mnotho: "Just answer me! You want to talk, right? Talk then!"

Dalingcebo sent his head down and he vowed he wasn't going to tell him the real truth because it was going to kill him. He was never going to find out the term of their affair because only Ngcebo know about it. "It only started that time when MaNkosi lost her baby." he lied, how was he supposed to tell him they've been sleeping together for three? Who would tell that truth?

Mnotho: "Oh, and how did it happen? She came to you and asked you to have sex with her? Just tell me!"

Dalingcebo: "How will that help, bhuti?"

Mnotho: "I want to know!"

He tried to think... and he revamped a possible event inside his head. He knew he would also want to know what happened and how it happened so that he would find closure even though it wouldn't be closure. But those questions that would rise they were going to be answered. "If I remember well I was driving to town and I was asked to give the meat that had been slaughtered, I was supposed to give her portion to her because I was already going there. It was in the afternoon and I am the one who made the first move on her because I found her half naked in the house." He figured he needed to say that truth because he was the one who made the first move not Elena.

Mnotho: "Did she resist you in any way?"

Dalingcebo: "No, she didn't and I was expecting that but she didn't."

Mnotho: "Tsk! You took advantage of my wife's loneliness to cure your loneliness

Dalingcebo, right?"

Dalingcebo: "No, but-"

Mnotho: "DON'T EVEN THINKK OF LYING!"

Dalingcebo: "Yes, that's what I did and I am sorry, bhuti. I know I would comfort myself with nonsense when I was doing this but it wasn't my intention to hurt you. Please, forgive me."

Mnotho: "Get the fuck out my face, Dalingcebo!" he exclaimed and Dalingcebo got up quickly. He left Mnotho feeling a little lighter that at least they've had a dialogue even though it wasn't good but he was going to keep apologising...

“Mama, mugcokise, phela.” (Mom, dress her) Ntokomalo gave her mother her doll and its clothes... Nandipha was in the lounge seated with Ntokomalo, her sisters had gone to town with their two grandmothers. Ntokomalo was sleeping when they left. It'd been a few minutes since she woke up.

Nandipha: “Okay.” She took the doll and her clothes, she placed the doll aside and she lifted her daughter. She placed her next to her on the couch. Nandipha then dressed the doll while Ntokomalo was looking at her. “You are full now? Mama, doesn't want you to starve.” She said and looked at Ntokomalo, she didn't eat as she wanted her to eat.

Ntokomalo: “Mama, uNtoko lo!” (I am Ntokomalo!) she told her mother and pat her chest repeatedly for her mother to look at her.

Nandipha laughed. “You are clever my baby. Come kiss mama.” She pouted at her and Ntokomalo gave her lips to Nandipha, they shared a baby kiss. Ntokomalo giggled...

Nandipha smiled as her daughter showed her cleverness, as Nandipha was asking her if she was full. Ntokomalo didn't eat larger portions of food but she ate smaller portion, it was like she ate a lot than the others because she would request food now and again but she didn't consume larger portions at once like Similo did. And now, the child noted her mother was mistaking her with her identical sister who ate a lot more than she did... Nandipha realised she was just stressed she'd never made a mistake of mixing up their likes. She knew them from Buhle down to Nongcebo. She was stressed as she didn't sleep on Friday she was waiting for midnight of Saturday thinking Ngcebo was going to wake up but he didn't. And the whole Saturday ended without him waking up. But she was still holding on because his body was still the same and she'd been applying the ointment on his wounds. She didn't want to despair...

“I will go check the door.” Nandipha told her daughter and she got up from the couch. She gave Ntokomalo her doll, she'd changed the doll's clothes as Ntokomalo wanted her to do...

“Mngani wami!” Palesa exclaimed and she placed her bags down. She then opened up her arms and they hugged each other tightly. “I am sorry for coming this late but I have been busy.” She said to Nandipha.

Nandipha: “Don't apologise. You are here now.” she said and they backed away from each other. Nandipha looked around as she'd seen Phemelo she looked at Palesa and they laughed as they heard the children laughing back inside the house. Nandipha took one of Palesa's bag and they followed each other inside “You didn't even tell me that you are coming. How are you?” she asked taking her to the last free guestroom.

Palesa: “I didn't want to tell you I am coming while I wasn't sure about it. I managed to get a two days leave at work. I will leave Tuesday afternoon.”

Nandipha: “As long as you are here even if it's for hours.”

Palesa: “How are you though?” she asked and placed the bag on the bed as they were inside the guestroom. She looked at Nandipha.

Nandipha: “Ey, Palesa. I don't know how I am but I am still breathing that's what important. Come, we will prepare food for you and Phemelo.” She led Palesa out of the lounge to get to the kitchen.

Palesa: “And what is his family saying? And where are they?” she asked opening the fridge after they’ve passed by the lounge and Nandipha greeted Phemelo. They left the children alone...

Nandipha: “The legal document that I gave them kept them shut and I am here with my mother and Mama’ MaNtombela. His family is not here.”

Palesa: “Eh! You should be alone without any of them?”

Nandipha: “I don’t know but maybe that’s how it should be. Don’t worry about that because I am not alone.”

Palesa: “Okay, I just didn’t expect this and I was reluctant to come here because I thought I was going to find the house full. And I didn’t want to have to intrude into the family.”

Nandipha: “They are not here. Dalingcebo is the one who usually comes here and Mntwana usually calls to ask how things are.”

Palesa: “Yoh! And the people from the sneaker line. Did they call?”

Nandipha: “Yes, they called late Friday and I told them they shouldn’t keep him out of their lists because he was getting better.”

Palesa: “Do you really hope he will wake up?”

Nandipha: “I know that he will, Palesa and I don’t want to keep convincing you or anyone because every time when I do that. I sound like a crazy person.”

Palesa looked at her and she saw she wasn’t herself. She’d been praying and hoping that Nandipha’s wishes and hopes are granted because she didn’t want to see her friend in pain. She didn’t know what losing Ngcebo to death would do to her. It was going to break her beyond her imagination... And all she wanted to do was to be there for her because that’s what they did for each other. Nandipha was more than a friend to her and she didn’t like seeing her in any type of pain...

“Come, why are you staying behind?” Dalingcebo told Phemelo pulling him to the couch where he was seated with the girls and Qalokuhle. Dalingcebo had come to the house to check on the girls and their mother. He first went to his brother’s bedroom to speak to him and he felt he was still hot as usual. He felt his hope strengthening now because it was the fourth day and he was still the same. He was the same and that was better than nothing...

Dalingcebo: “How are you and what’s your name?”

Phemelo: “I am Phemelo and what’s your name?”

Dalingcebo chuckled. “I am uncle.” He replied and the six girls laughed along with Phemelo. “What’s funny?” he asked and looked at them.

Qalokuhle: “Baba, that’s not your name.”

Dalingcebo: “What’s my name, then?”

Qalokuhle giggled and shook her head. “Alishiwo igama lomuntu omdala.” (A child shouldn’t call out an adult’s name.)

Quintuplets: “EHE, BABA!”

Dalingcebo clapped hands for the children. “That’s a good thing. Did you hear that then, Phemelo?” he asked to the little boy who was standing between his legs. Phemelo smiled and nodded his head.

“Children, go to the kitchen and you’ll get your food.” Nandipha told the children and placed the tray of food on the table for Dalingcebo. The children then left Dalingcebo’s side to get to the kitchen. Nandipha sat down.

Nandipha: “How are you?”

Dalingcebo: “We are all trying, isn’t?”

Nandipha: “Yeah, that’s all we can do and I forgot to tell you something the other day when you were here.”

Dalingcebo took the plate of food and looked at her. “What is it?” He asked.

Nandipha: “There’s a teenage girl who came here to give me an ointment, she said she was sent by her mother. Gobela’s wife, she said I must apply it on Ngcebo’s wounds. I took it.”

Dalingcebo: “Hhayi? A girl? Gobela has two sons and his wife doesn’t have children outside marriage. Can you describe that girl?”

Nandipha: “Hhaybo! Are you trying to say I have given Ngcebo something that might kill him? No! I must-” she tried to stand up as fear consumed her within a few seconds of receiving Dalingcebo’s response.

Dalingcebo: “No, calm down. Describe the girl.”

Nandipha: “She has short dreadlocks on her head and she’s light skinned and tall. She’s slim and she was wearing a cream dress walking barefoot, she had white and red beads on her ankles and wrist.” Dalingcebo kept quiet for a while and he looked at Nandipha. “What are you thinking?” she asked.

Dalingcebo: “Maybe she’s with Gobela’s son and he might have sent her. Maybe uthwasa naye and he sent her.”

Nandipha: “Yes, you might be right. So, I shouldn’t stop applying it?”

Dalingcebo: “Yes, even if it’s not Gobela’s son maybe someone sent her. Someone with good intentions for Ngcebo. But don’t tell anyone about it just in case it’s not what we are thinking.”

Nandipha: “Okay, I will do that.” She nodded her and she smiled. She looked at Dalingcebo. “How’s the family?” she asked.

Dalingcebo: “Eish, they’re trying to pull each other together but they are always taken back by the fact that Ngcebo is still here and they don’t have the power to take him. But don’t worry about everyone else. Don’t stress yourself about the family because dad said we should let Ngcebo be. We will see things about him after Ndabezinhle’s funeral.”

Nandipha: “Okay.”

Dalingcebo: “You’ll come to the funeral?”

Nandipha: “No, I won’t but mama will come with the children and mama’ MaNtombela will come along.” She replied and Dalingcebo nodded...

“Hawu, I am seeing you once again, ntokazi.” Dalingcebo said to Palesa who was on the tap rinsing her shirt that she had to take off because it was stained.

Palesa: “Oh, hey, what’s your name again?” she looked at him shortly.

Dalingcebo chuckled. “I am Dalingcebo and I don’t think it’s a difficult name that you can even forget it. I haven’t forgotten that you are Palesa.” He informed her and he followed her

as she moved to the washing line... He was leaving the house driving back home. He was leaving Qalokuhle...

Palesa: "Oh. I have a lot of things going on and work is stressing me and I am not good when it comes to memorising people's names."

Dalingcebo: "How about I become your friend and I will help you offload those things you have going on?"

Palesa laughed. "No, I have Nandipha as my friend and it's never good to be friends with married men. I don't want to be crucified." She replied.

Dalingcebo: "But I don't even have the ring with me anymore. I am under the process of divorce and nobody can even think of crucifying you."

Palesa: "I think I will hold on to my friendship with Nandipha." She told him without looking at him and she walked a few steps to pass him but Dalingcebo held her hand. Palesa looked at him and she quickly moved her away from him.

Dalingcebo: "What do you do for a living as you have work stress?"

Palesa: "I am a bank manager at Nedbank. You are making me uncomfortable as you are holding my hand."

Dalingcebo looked at their hands. "But you were walking away from me."

Palesa: "I should head back to the house." She said and moved her hand, Dalingcebo let go of her hand. "Drive safe home." she said.

Dalingcebo: "Thanks and I hope I will see you again." He raised his voice and he didn't get a response from Palesa. He shook his head and jogged to his car...

"They said you were looking for me, baba." Mlamuli told his father who was sitting on the couch inside his bedroom. He was laying back with his eyes closed and he opened them when he heard Mlamuli's voice.

Dalisu: "Yes, we need to talk." He pointed the couch. Mlamuli sat down opposite his father and he looked at him waiting for him to talk. "I have been thinking about Ngcebo's wife and her children." He introduced.

Mlamuli: "What about them, baba?"

Dalisu: "I fear we will never see Ngcebo's children after burying him. His wife will take her children, she'll leave and never look back. You saw how she used the law on her favour to keep Ngcebo's body."

Mlamuli: "Yes, baba. I have saw that but we can talk to her about that. I don't think she will be that cruel not to let the children come here."

Dalisu: "Ngcebo said his children won't come here even when he's dead. He said my exact words and don't you think his wife will want to honour his word? I don't trust that she can allow the children to visit because their father is no longer with us. But she will take them and leave, that's what she will do."

Mlamuli: "Our elders will have to speak to her."

Dalisu: "That girl is stubborn Mlamuli."

Mlamuli: "So, baba, what do you suggest we do?"

Dalisu: “We should let her know that she will get married to Ngcebo’s twin brother. That’s the only thing we can do to keep her as our daughter in-law and keep the children here.”

Mlamuli: “Hhayi! Hhayi! Hhayi, baba. We can’t do that and remember they were not married traditionally. How can we do that?”

Dalisu: “She’s a mother to our grandchildren and Ngcebo paid ilobolo for her. That means the ancestors knows about her existence in the family. And Dalingcebo will have to take her as his wife for his brother’s house not to perish.” He said straight forwardly.

Mlamuli: “But baba, Dalingcebo is married to her sister.”

Dalisu: “Yes, and they’re getting divorced. They’ve both lost their partners and it will only make sense that we get them married. Ngcebo’s wife will then come back here with her children she will share her life Ngcebo’s brother.”

Mlamuli: “This is wrong.”

Dalisu: “What do you think should happen, huh? She must go with five girls and down the line she will meet a man, that man will have to father your brother’s children?”

Mlamuli: “We will take them.”

Dalisu: “How? Because this girl will serve us with court papers like she did with my son’s body? And you know how cruel the world is now. What if that man will see women in my granddaughters and he’ll molest them changing them as if she’s changing girlfriends. Is that what you want?”

Mlamuli: “No, it’s not what I want, baba and nobody would want that-”

Dalisu: “You’ll call the elders then and tomorrow we will go to Ngcebo’s house with Dalingcebo. We will inform them there.”

Mlamuli: “Hawu! So, soon? What’s the rush, baba? We haven’t even buried not even one of them and we should not do this. Isn’t said that must be done after the funeral of the husband?”

Dalisu: “In this case we will do it before the funeral because we can’t trust Ngcebo’s wife. She might take her things and leave immediately after the funeral. But if she knows what will happen she will have to stay here.”

Mlamuli: “Baba, we can talk to her about the children-”

Dalisu: “I SAID WE SHOULD ALSO KEEP HER AS OUR DAUGHTER IN-LAW AS WELL. DIDN’T YOU HEAR THAT? AND WHY ARE FIGHTING MY DECISION?”

Mlamuli: “I am sorry Ndabezitha.”

Dalisu: “Gather the elders and we will talk about this. But don’t include the women yet. I will do this and nobody will stop me. Do you understand?”

Mlamuli: “Yebo, Ndabezitha.” He said and stood up to leave the room. He wasn’t in support of what his father wanted to do but he had no power to change it because his father was still in control of his family...

5th day was on a Monday and the older children had gone to school. Their grandmother was the one who encouraged that they go to school. Nhlakanipho, Pearl, Nonjabulo and Njabulo were home. The family had worked together in planning the funeral and it was a few things that were left for them to carry out... Thembelihle didn't have the moment of feeling alone because of the support she was getting from women around the village and the women in other kingdoms. They would come from different places to pray and give her comforting words, they would give condolences and strength that she was going to be able to carry on the next day. And others would share their experiences on how they learnt to live with the death of their children...

"Where are you going?" Mnotho asked Danielle meeting up with her by the back kitchen exit. Danielle had her bag on her hand and she was on her way to her car when they met up with Mnotho.

Danielle: "I am going to town and there are things that I will need to check up in our house." She lied straight to his face. Mnotho held free hand and he placed his right hand on her forehead. "I am fine now you don't have to keep checking me up." She told him before he could even ask what was wrong.

Mnotho: "I wouldn't know because every time when I ask you how you are feeling now. You just tell me that you are fine."

Danielle: "That's because I am really fine and tomorrow we will go back to the house with Pearl because mom and my sisters are coming."

Mnotho: "Okay, I will come with you then."

Danielle: "No, you'll stay here with the family. I have to go now, Mnotho. The children are coming this side." She told Mnotho while she pulled her hand from his hand. She walked away from him without waiting for his response. Mnotho turned to utter some words to her but he stopped when he saw Happiness coming at the direction that he was on. Mnotho removed his eyes from her and he laid them on the children, Nonjabulo, Njabulo, Pearl and Nhlakanipho who were following each other whispering to one another. They passed Mnotho as if he wasn't there and he turned to trace their direction.

"Where are they going?" Mnotho asked Happiness who was approaching him to get inside the kitchen.

Happiness: "How should I know?" she asked and sent her hand on her pocket to get her ringing phone.

Mnotho: "You are their mother you should know and you were following them." he replied looking at her face as she was reading the caller ID.

"Why don't you follow them?" She asked and turned back to answer her father's phone call. She inhaled deeply before swiping green. "Baba?"

Mthimkhulu: "How are you, MaMthimkhulu?"

Happiness: "I am fine and how are you, baba?"

Mthimkhulu: "I am fine and when are you coming back home?"

Happiness: "Hawu, baba but you know what happened over here. I told you."

Mthimkhulu: "Yes, you told me and you should come back home. Njabulo can stay behind

with his family but you should come back.”

Happiness: “I don’t want to come back yet baba because I am here for my mother in-law who’s going through a rough time.”

Mthimkhulu: “You went there because she was going to help you heal but how can she help you heal while she’s also hurting? When are you going to mourn the father of your child?”

Happiness: “I don’t want to be alone.”

Mthimkhulu: “You are ignoring your own pain by being there and there’s absolutely no reason for you to be there because you are no longer married to Mnotho. You should come home with Nonjabulo.”

Happiness: “I am Njabulo’s mother, baba and I won’t leave my son here. You can think being here doesn’t help me but it does. Because I keep active and I am around people who are grieving that it gives me time to grieve as well.”

Mthimkhulu: “I feel like you are making excuses now. Do you want Njabulo’s father back in your life? Is that what you want?”

Happiness: “What! How can you even ask me that question, baba? I can never go back to him not after everything that he has put me through.”

Mthimkhulu: “That doesn’t show.”

Happiness: “I am not here for him! Can you please believe me? And I am too old now that I can even explain myself to you, baba. You should be having faith in me and you should trust me but it seems like you don’t.”

Mthimkhulu: “I don’t want them to bully you over there.”

Happiness: “This is not about me but their two dead sons.”

Mthimkhulu sighed. “You must come back after the funeral.” He said clearly.

Happiness: “Yes, I will come back.”

Mthimkhulu: “Good, I will come to the funeral.”

Happiness: “Okay, I will see you then.” She said and they hung up the call after they’ve shared their goodbyes. Happiness sighed and shook her head. She closed her eyes, it’d been long five days since the accident and seeing the pain in Thembelihle’s eyes made her wish she could make things easier for her. She’d lost her sons and she had the unending worry about Ngcebo’s body. And it wasn’t good to Happiness to see her helpless the way she was because her husband had made a decision without considering Thembelihle’s feelings as a mother. She couldn’t even speak to Nkosazana because she was distant from her even when they would be alone in a room. Nkosazana would be quiet and speak only when Happiness initiate a conversation. She didn’t know what was wrong with her or maybe she had a lot on her shoulders. She really didn’t know what was happening with her because she wasn’t welcoming at all and that made Happiness feel uncomfortable. But maybe she didn’t need to worry at lot. She didn’t need to stress herself about everyone else...

She looked at her phone and she wished her father could understand why she was here. She got up to proceed with her journey.

“Happiness, come here.” Thembelihle called out Happiness, they’ve just served them their lunch and she was reminded that it’d been a long while since she had a talk with Happiness

and she didn't know how she was taking all this... Happiness wasn't sleeping with Thembelihle like Mnotho had suggested but she was sleeping with her children in the guestroom located outside the main house because the guest bedrooms inside the house were full...

Thembelihle wasn't alone in the lounge now but she wanted to talk to Happiness. Aunts were having their own conversation and she wanted to have one with Happiness...

Happiness: "Mama?"

Thembelihle: "Sit here." She pointed the free space on the mattress and Happiness sat down on the free space. "How are you? You are here and you came here for a different reason but we just received this turn of events."

Happiness: "I am trying mama but I am sad that you are in this pain."

Thembelihle: "Look at you, what are you made of? You are worried about me and you have your own pain that you must be dealing with. It's like God created you differently from us."

Happiness: "I don't like to see you unhappy and I can see that beside the grieve that you are dealing with you are worried. You have a lot of things on your shoulders and it hurts me that I can't make things easier for you."

Thembelihle: "Oh! My child, I don't want you to forget yourself through everything that's going on. You must remember that you also need to face your loss because it was a traumatic one. Don't let what we are going through as a family stop you from facing your pain because you came here to heal."

Happiness smiled. "I supposed you and I are the same because look now you are worried about me but you are also feeling pain double." She commented.

Thembelihle: "Well, you are like me in one way or the other. I had a difficult time growing up as a young girl but that never changed me because I have always thought about other people's feelings and needs. And I am happy to see in you that we still have people who are like that."

Happiness: "I am just happy that I have you."

Thembelihle: "And you'll have me forever. Don't worry about tomorrow because God will take care of tomorrow's troubles."

Happiness: "Thank you, mama and now, please eat."

Thembelihle: "I will do that." She nodded once with a smile on her face and Happiness got up to leave Thembelihle. Thembelihle sighed and she lifted the plate from the floor. She closed her eyes to bless her food...

"They're cold and are need of a bath." Mnotho told Happiness who was seated on the bed after she'd taken a shower and dressed up in the evening. She was thinking and having a time to herself after a long day. And she was disturbed by Mnotho's voice. She looked at him and stood up.

Happiness: "Why didn't you knock, Mnotho? What if you found me here naked? You can't just budge in."

Mnotho: "I knocked on the door-"

Nonjabulo: "And I told dad that he must open the door because you are sleeping mama." She

finished the sentence for Mnotho with a high tone and Mnotho chuckled. Mnotho placed them down and he went down to the children's level. He held Njabulo and Nonjabulo's hands.

Mnotho: "Ehe, but when your father is speaking you must let him speak and when he's done you will then speak after him. Okay?" he lectured and looked at both of them but making a stop at Nonjabulo.

Children: "Yebo!"

Happiness: "Okay, now, that's out of the way. Why are you not dressed?" she asked and took their hands as Mnotho was giving them over to Happiness. They were not dressed up they were only on their diapers.

Njabulo: "Ubaba nje ushikhumulile." (Daddy undressed us.) he told his mother and he looked back at his father who was still in the room.

Nonjabulo: "Ehe, mama."

Mnotho: "Are you going to tell your mother why your father undressed you?" Nonjabulo and Njabulo looked at one another and they shook their heads. Mnotho laughed. "If you don't tell your mother I won't take you to see lions."

Children: "HAWU!"

Njabulo: "We will ask ubaba omdala." (We will ask Mlamuli)

Mnotho: "No, he won't take you there."

Nonjabulo: "Why?" She looked back at him and then her brother... Happiness was just looking at the three of them having a conversation as if she wasn't in the room with them. The children were holding her hands but their eyes were not on her. They were looking at Mnotho...

Mnotho: "He won't because he's scared of lions." He revealed and the children laughed loudly... Happiness smiled. "Why are you laughing at an elder?"

Njabulo: "Ay! Baba, uyaphoshisha!" (You are lying)

Mnotho: "No! Just tell your mother why you are not dressed."

Happiness: "Yes, I am waiting for an answer and now, you are looking at me."

Nonjabulo: "We were still speaking to our father, mama!" She exclaimed and nodded her head repeatedly with her words.

Happiness: "Okay, okay, but my answer."

Mnotho: "They were playing with water since they won't answer you. They need a bath now because they will catch the cold." he told Happiness and he moved to the door to leave them. "I will see you later." He told the children looking at them but they were looking at their mother. He left...

Happiness: "What should I do to you, now?"

Njabulo: "Bath us because daddy said you should bath us."

"Yeah, I can see what your father says goes now." She mumbled and she lifted her children to give them a bath...

"Ntandokazi, what's really bothering you? Why are you sick?" Nkosazana asked Ntandokazi

who was kneeling before the toilet seat. She was vomiting. Nkosazana had seen her running out of the bedroom she was using she had a brown paper bag on her hands. Nkosazana followed her to the bathroom to get what was really going on with Ntandokazi.

Danielle: "There's nothing to worry yourself about."

Nkosazana: "Don't tell me that!" she shouted and she took the paper bag that Ntandokazi had placed down on the floor because she was vomiting. She opened the bag and moved back as Ntandokazi was trying to take the bag from her but she was stopped by the vomiting that didn't want to end.

Nkosazana took out her phone from the pocket of her kitchen apron. She googled the tablets that she found on the paper bag. She looked at Ntandokazi as she didn't understand what was really going on. Ntandokazi was before the bathroom sink rinsing her mouth.

Nkosazana: "What's this illness you have?" she asked and looked at Ntandokazi as she sat on top of the toilet seat after she'd closed it. Ntandokazi didn't answer Nkosazana but she cried placing her hand on her face. Nkosazana kneeled before her and she hugged her. "Hey, what's wrong talk to me?"

Danielle: "I am sick, Nkosazana."

Nkosazana: "What do you have?"

Danielle: "I have been having a headache for a while now and then the vomiting began. I went to the Doctor before we went to Johannesburg with Mnotho when his first wife was back. I was told to wait for the result-"

Nkosazana: "Don't cry like this." she held her tighter and brushed her back because Ntandokazi was crying woefully. And Nkosazana saw by that cry that she was going through a painful situation.

Danielle: "I went to the Doctor when I got back and she told me that I have a brain tumour. I am so scared that I will die soon."

Nkosazana: "Oh! Jesu! Did you tell your husband?" she asked and backed away from her. She looked at Danielle's eyes. She didn't want to look at her with a face that showed that she was feeling pity for her. But she was feeling sorry for her even though this may not be the end of the road. She didn't have a clue if the Doctor told her how long she had or there was hope but she was feeling sorry for her because now, she was scared and she could see it.

Danielle: "No, I didn't tell him. I have been calling him on the past weeks when he wasn't here. I wanted him to come back home because I needed him but he was too busy for me."

Nkosazana: "But you didn't tell him what was going on with you. And I am sure that if you have told him he was going to come back."

Danielle: "I couldn't tell him over the phone. And he was angry with me because I wanted him to come back. I figured I will go through this alone. I have given him much stress already."

Nkosazana: "No! He's your husband because everything that you go through he must share it with you and there's nothing wrong with wanting his support. You need to tell him about this."

Danielle: "No! I won't tell him because now, he will stop trying to fix his relationship with

his kids just to have his focus on me. I will get through this. I am scared but I will get through it. And please, don't tell him."

Nkosazana: "You won't go through it alone because I will be there for you and tell me, what did the Doctor say about medication?"

Danielle: "I went to the Doctor today because my vomiting doesn't stop and I haven't really chosen a type of treatment."

Nkosazana: "How big is the tumour?"

Danielle: "She said it's not spreading fast but I will have to make up my mind pretty fast before it's too late. I don't want to die and leave my child, I don't want to lose my hair. Ndlovukazi, I just want to be alright-" she cried and Nkosazana got up from the floor she pulled Danielle with her.

Nkosazana: "None of that will happen because you take your medication and you will live to see another day. You will see your child grow." She promised her and she hugged her tightly.

Ntandokazi: "Thank you. I didn't even tell my mother and I won't tell her because she'll be stressing about me. We've been through enough already."

Nkosazana: "You are right about that and we will have our happy times back into our lives." she promised her and she wiped her tears.

Danielle giggled as Nkosazana was wiping her tears. "Thank you." Danielle said to Nkosazana with a beautiful smile on her face.

Nkosazana: "You are family and that makes us sisters. Now, let's go. You haven't even eaten you can't take this medication." She said leading Ntandokazi out of the bathroom. Danielle followed after her rubbing her cheeks that she was certain they were pink now because of crying.

Danielle: "I was just desperate because vomiting creeps the hell out of me."

Nkosazana laughed. "I would cry when I was carrying Prince. The morning sickness I would vomit and cry." She narrated and they laughed.

Danielle: "And what did your husband say?"

"What did her husband say about what?" Mlamuli asked Danielle, he was coming from his father's office when he heard them talking. He was walking behind them and he could see they didn't feel him.

The two ladies looked back at him, Nkosazana smiled while Danielle placed her hand on her mouth. "Why are you eavesdropping because that's not for man?" Nkosazana asked him and she gave the paper bag to Ntandokazi.

Mlamuli: "But she's talking about your husband sthandwa sami. I shouldn't know what she's saying about him?"

Nkosazana: "No, because we are not gossiping about you."

Mlamuli chuckled. "Okay, I won't come back here. I want you home because we won't sleep here tonight." He told Nkosazana standing with her by the kitchen entrance... Danielle had long left them...

Nkosazana: "Alright, should I come down with the boys?"

Mlamuli: “No, you’ll leave them here. Come, here, you’ve been working very hard over here let your husband hug you.” Nkosazana laughed and she squeezed herself onto her husband’s arms. They both released a long sigh as holding each other made them realise they were very tired. “I love you and when you are tired, do rest, okay?” He lectured, looking at her.

Nkosazana: “Yes, I will and now, go.” She let go of his hand and Mlamuli walked away from her... Nkosazana proceeded to the kitchen...

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“Who is it? Don’t come in!” Nandipha shouted at the person at the door as she was on her feet inside her bedroom she was cleaning Ngcebo’s body. It was a Monday night and Ngcebo was still the same but Nandipha could see the difference on his wounds since she’d began applying the ointment... Nandipha woke up nervous because the time she’d set up for them was nearing and she’d gotten use to holding on to the hope she had that Ngcebo was going to wake up. She was used to holding on to the hope that Ngcebo was coming back to her but the fact that tomorrow was the last day of her wait made her feel nervous...

Palesa: “Your in-laws are here for you.”

Nandipha: “Ah! I am still busy here is it someone who can’t wait?”

Palesa: “Some old men, your father in-law and brothers’ in-law. I don’t think those people can wait, madam.” She whispered and Nandipha heard her.

Nandipha: “Okay, I am coming.” She said and threw the wet towel back on the basin that had hot water. “This means I will have to start afresh when I am done listening to them. Ah! I will come back, Rasta.” She spoke to Ngcebo and she covered his bod. She placed her hand on his forehead and she sighed. She placed her lips on his warm lips and she turned to the wardrobe to search for a doek to cover her head. She covered her head and placed a scarf on her shoulders. She then left the room...

“Sanibona.” Nandipha greeted the family and she sat down on the straw mat next to her mother who was seated with MaNtombela. She lifted her head as they greeted her back and her children were all on their grandfather’s side along with Phemelo. He had his focus on them.

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Dalisu let the children go to MaZondi’s friend and that way we will talk about our presence in her house.” She told Dalisu... She was the only woman who was among the six man who were in the house... Dalisu had spoken with the elders about Dalingcebo getting married to Nandipha, the elders didn’t turn down the idea but they turned down the fact that he wanted to tell Dalingcebo and Nandipha before they could even bury Ndabezihle and Ngcebo, before Nandipha could even let go of Ngcebo. They advised him to wait and don’t talk about this because it was still early. And they were supposed to wait until Nandipha has finished her mourning period to have her married to Ngcebo’s brother. Dalisu didn’t want to listen to them because he had reasons that Nandipha was

going to disappear with the children after the funeral and it was better she knows now! That she was going to have Dalingcebo take her husband's place in her life. The elders fought with Dalisu until he had to remind them that 'he was the head of his family and all he wanted was them to support his decisions not to question them.' They were then forced to do what he wanted because he was stubborn about it.

Dalису: "Go to Melo's mother now because adults want to talk." He told the children and he placed Nongcebo down.

Buhle: "Shokubona mkhulu mashe uhamba?" (We will see when you leave?)

Dalису: "Yes, you will."

Nongcebo: "Mkhulu, mina nifuna ukhulume no baba umtshela yena ukuthi akavuke. Ubaba yena akashilaleli thina ulokhu elele." (Grandpa, I want you to speak to dad and tell him that he must wake up. Dad is sleeping and he doesn't listen to us when we tell him that he must wake up.)

"HAWU, BAKITHI!" The elders chanted as Nongcebo spoke to her grandfather. And the four sisters supported their sister loudly.

Dalису sighed and promised to the children. "Okay, Nongcebo mkhulu will speak to your father, okay?"

Girls: "YEBO!"

Similo: "Shohamba nawe mkhulu!" (We will take you to him)

Dalису: "Okay, go now I will call you when we are done." He said and pointed the exit of the lounge, the girls then turned to leave the lounge...

Aunt Nomkhosi: "Awu! Kodwa MaZondi, what you are putting your children through is very wrong. Now, you have given the children hope that their father will wake up. Why don't you let go?" she asked and looked at Nandipha's head because she had her face looking down.

Nandipha had her eyes looking down because her children's words were breaking her heart. They haven't been fully happy and Nandipha had seen that they were not completely happy.

Faith: "Nandipha?" She called out her name and placed her hand on her shoulder as Nandipha wasn't breathing a word.

Nandipha: "He will... come back aunty."

Aunt Nomkhosi looked at the elders who were shaking their heads and she looked at Dalису last. "This is not the right time, Mageba." She told him.

Dalису: "There'll never be a better time for this and you know it."

She looked at Mlamuli and Mnotho, they shook their heads because they were not in support of what their father was doing and he didn't even tell their mother that he'd taken this decision. Dalingcebo was with them and he was in the dark about the purpose of the meeting. And when the elders told Dalису that they should speak to Dalingcebo before going to Nandipha he refused...

Aunt Nomkhosi: "How are you, mntanami? How are you coping?"

Nandipha: "I have better moments and the worst but I still have hope."

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Even in the past my child we didn’t have these things called mortuary and we would stay with dead bodies placed on the floor until burial. The body being hot doesn’t mean that your husband is still alive.”

Elders: “Yes!”

Daliso: “And we have decided that it’s alright we won’t fight you. You will stay with his body until you want to let him go. We don’t want to fight but we should talk about what will happen after the funeral.”

Faith: “After the funeral?” she looked at MaNtombela and aunt Nomkhosi.

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Yes, it’s important that we state things clear from the word go because we don’t want to have to argue after the funeral.”

Uncle elder1: “MaZondi will be expected to mourn her husband like every woman does. I think we know the process, she’ll have to cut her hair and wear black clothes to mourn her husband.”

Faith: “But is it necessary for her to do that since they were not married traditionally? I would like to know.”

Uncle elder2: “Yes, it’s necessary because Ngcebo had paid ilobolo for her and that makes her our bride traditionally and by law she’s the wife.”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “We want MaZondi to remain in her husband’s house for the entire mourning period until we wed her to Ngcebo’s twin brother.”

“WHAT!” Dalingcebo was the first to exclaim that and he moved forward from his position. He looked at his father as this news came as a shock to him. He wasn’t expecting this at all and it didn’t take minutes for it to leave an unsettling feeling. He was supposed to marry Ngcebo’s wife? Never!

Faith and MaNtombela looked at each other as they receive the unexpected news. They were looking at one other with their eyes widened. Faith turned to looked at her daughter and she had her head looking down with her chest rising and falling beneath the blue dress she was wearing. Nandipha was angry that they have come into her house to tell her such nonsense. It’s not even once that they came to check on her and her children but now, they had the nerve to come into her house to give her orders.

MaNtombela: “Why would you want to do that?”

Faith: “And Dalingcebo is married to Nandipha’s cousin. How can you possibly request that Nandipha marries Dalingcebo?”

Dalingcebo: “And I don’t want to take my brother’s wife. I won’t!”

Daliso: “Wena! Shut up because nobody asked you to speak.” He shouted and pointed Dalingcebo with his forefinger.

Dalingcebo: “I am sorry.”

Daliso: “Dalingcebo will be divorcing his wife. MaZondi and him have lost their partners and they should be married to each other. That’s tradition. Dalingcebo should take his brother’s wife and be a father to his children to secure his house.”

MaNtombela: “But Ndabezitha, it seems as if Dalingcebo didn’t know about this. And I don’t think it would be a good idea to get them married because there’s no affection between

them.”

Faith: “And this is not how tradition is done. How will you force your son to marry my daughter while he doesn’t love her? And she loves her husband.”

Dalису: “Dalingcebo doesn’t have a choice in this case.”

Dalingcebo: “Why don’t I have a choice, baba?”

Dalису: “You don’t have a choice because Ngcebo is dead today because of you. Your brother is not with his family today because of your actions. What will become of his children now that he’s no more? If their mother chooses to move on in future, can we trust another man around our five granddaughters? If you haven’t done what you did there wasn’t going to be a fight to begin with and Ngcebo would still be here with his family.” He shouted at Dalingcebo.

Mnotho: “Baba, don’t speak like that.”

Dalису: “No, don’t tell me how to speak. It’s my responsibility to think about the wellbeing of my family and I am worried about the future of my son’s daughters who will be in that big dirty city without their father.”

Nandipha laid in her mother’s shoulder and she cried feeling defeated as if Ngcebo was really dead. Dalису’s words were scaring her now and her mind wasn’t in what he was talking about ‘her marrying Dalingcebo’ Her mind was in his words and she screamed within herself, why did Ngcebo do this to her? What if her faith doesn’t produce actions and bring back her husband? She hadn’t think this far that she was going to be a single mother. She felt that Ngcebo’s father was upsetting her and he was disturbing her peace and focus.

Faith: “Ndabezitha, I understand your intentions are entirely pure and you have every right to worry about your son’s daughters. I think as parents we all think about the future as I have also tried to imagine my daughter’s future without her husband. But as Nandipha’s mother, can we not talk about this now because my daughter is still in pain. She can’t accept this. And I don’t think it’s respecting your son’s memory to suggest this while he’s still here. We haven’t buried him.”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Dalису, she’s right. Let’s not burden the child like this. Why don’t you listen to us?”

Mlamuli: “You are scared baba and we are all scared but this is not the right time. And I think you should stop burdening yourself with things but let’s rather focus on one thing which is grief.”

Uncle elder2: “Yes, they’re right. Ndabezitha.”

Dalису sighed and placed his hands at the back of his neck. He’d been carrying this worry about Ngcebo’s children and he didn’t see any way better than this. Nhlakanipho was used to living with his mother and he visited them now and again. Yes, he was worried about him as well as he’d just gotten back his father but with Ngcebo’s girls he saw a different case that stressed him big time...

Dalису: “Get the girls for me and I will talk to their father with them as they wished.” He said without admitting that they were right...

Faith stood up and she pulled Nandipha up by her arms. “Don’t cry like this. Please.” She

pleaded with her as they walked away.

Nandipha: "I don't want them... to see me... like this..."

Faith: "Okay, I will put you in my room." she walked with her to her room holding her tightly... She left Nandipha laying on the bed...

MaNtombela and Faith opened the door to Nandipha's bedroom, they were followed by Dalisu and the girls. Faith marched to remove the basin that had water... Dalisu sat down on the chair he was given by MaNtombela.

Similo: "Nangu ke mkhulu, ubaba!" (Here's dad)

Thando: "Ulele!" (He's sleeping)

Dalisu looked at the medical ointments and the greenish traditional ointment that was on the bedside drawer along with the bloody bandages. "Hawu, Buhlezi, go and call ubaba omdala wakho." He instructed her and Buhle ran off to call Mlamuli. Dalisu looked at Faith and MaNtombela as they were leaving. "She was washing him as there was a basin here?" Dalisu asked the ladies.

Faith: "Yes, she does every day." She replied and closed the door as Dalisu nodded his head...

Dalisu removed the blanket not entirely but he revealed only Ngcebo's upper body to see his wounds without showing it to the children. The children were looking at their grandfather waiting for him to speak to their father whom they were hoping he was going to listen.

"What's wrong, baba?" Mlamuli asked and placed Buhle down.

Dalisu: "Look." He took the bandages and gave them to Mlamuli.

Mlamuli: "Hawu!"

Dalisu: "What do you think?"

Mlamuli: "Maybe it's because he isn't in the mortuary."

Dalisu: "Even if so his wounds are still not rotten."

Mlamuli: "What can we do? Why is it like this?"

Dalisu: "I don't know because Ngcebo has a heart problem but his arrhythmias' type is the one that makes his heart beats faster than normal not beating lower than usual. I can't say it his heart."

Mlamuli: "I didn't know about that."

Dalisu: "We didn't tell any of you. We will not plan his funeral but we will wait for Gobela's son. We are going to his initiation ceremony this weekend. But your mother shouldn't know about this just in case it's not what we think."

Mlamuli: "Yes, we won't tell her." Dalisu nodded and placed his hand on Ntokomalo's head and he looked at the rest of the girls who were quiet.

Dalisu: "We need to go now, bo MaZulu."

Buhle: "Uzovuka ubaba, mkhulu?" (Dad, will wake up?)

Dalisu: "I don't know, Buhlezi but don't stop speaking to him." he replied without giving her an answer he didn't trust. Dalisu stood up and placed the bandages back where they were. He looked at Ngcebo and he hoped he would come back... He led the children out of the room...

“I need my comfort shoes. Where’s Happiness, Mnotho?” Thembelihle asked Mnotho, she was meeting up with him on the hallway... It was a Tuesday night and they were getting ready for the vigil. The palace was full of family, relatives, community members and people from other kingdoms.

Mnotho: “She left the house and she had the shoes in her hands.”

Thembelihle: “She left to warm them with a hairdryer but if she’s out of the house she will come here with them-”

Mnotho: “Calm down I will go call her. You stood up because you want her?”

Thembelihle: “No, but yes I want my shoes. I am going to my room.”

Mnotho: “Okay. When are you telling Nhlakanipho about his father?”

Thembelihle: “We will tell him before going to the vigil. How’s your wife?”

Mnotho: “She looks much better and she told me she’s fine.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, I was happy when Njabulo was crying for you this morning. Their mother told me that you are including them both in your life.” she told Mnotho with a smile on her face. Njabulo had walked inside the lounge crying for his grandmother because his father had left the palace and he told him he wasn’t going to leave with him. Thembelihle was happy instead of being comforting to Njabulo she showed a happy face and comforted him after she’d had her moment of happiness. She then asked Happiness about Mnotho and Njabulo, she then informed her that Mnotho was bonding with both her children not just Njabulo. That made Thembelihle happier.

Mnotho: “Yes, they’re both my children. I should leave now, mama.” He said and left his mother because he was rushing to get to his brothers outside the house. They were busy outside and they were not going to be part of the vigil.

“You shouldn’t stay there until midnight. It’s cold today and you shouldn’t be out in the cold for a long time.” Dalisu told Thembelihle who was seated on her bed wearing the shoes that Qalokuhle had given her from Happiness.

Thembelihle: “I will come back before 11pm. We planned that with aunt. You didn’t tell me why you went to Ngcebo’s house last night. I heard from Mntwana that you went to his house with the elders but when I ask why you went there. He didn’t know about it.”

Dalisu: “We went there to see Ngcebo’s family. Is there something wrong with that? No, there’s nothing wrong.”

Thembelihle: “You are asking and answering yourself.”

Dalisu chuckled. “I will be on my way out.” He commented and left the room.

Thembelihle then closed her eyes and took a deep breath. She then got up and marched to the door to get someone who was going to get her Nhlakanipho and his mother because they needed to speak to Nhlakanipho...

“Gogo? Bengidla inyama mina phandle.” (Grandma, I was eating meat outside.) Nhlakanipho told his grandmother. He was seated on Thembelihle’s bed facing Thembelihle and his mother, Naledi arrived in KZN on the present morning.

Thembelihle: “Yes, Zulu and I am sorry to disturb you but you will go back to eating.” he told her and looked at Naledi, they were both seated on the edge of the bed facing

Nhlakanipho.

Naledi looked down, she was no longer seeing Ndabezinhle but she cried when she was told that Ndabezinhle was dead. She couldn't believe it she didn't want to believe that her son had lost his father. Nhlakanipho was very happy when his father came back and when he told him they were going to live together was he was over the moon. And even though Naledi was against it in the beginning she allowed it because she could see that her son was happy. She allowed Nhlakanipho to live with his father and whenever he was with his mother, all he spoke about were things he did with his father...

Naledi: "Please, be the one to tell him."

Thembelihle: "Nhlakanipho, you can see that your father is not here, right?" she asked and held Nhlakanipho's hand. She placed the other hand above her grandson's hand. She looked at him.

Nhlakanipho: "Yes, grandma, where's my father? He left again?"

Thembelihle sighed. "Do you know that people sleep and they never wake up because God from above takes them?" She asked Nhlakanipho.

Nhlakanipho: "They die and they go underground?" Thembelihle and Naledi looked at one another as they were not expecting that Nhlakanipho would say such a thing. "Ehe! In movies they shoot people and put them on a box and put them underground. It's God who takes them?" he asked.

Thembelihle: "Yes, God gives parents a child and when he needs that child he takes the child back. And God has taken my child, your father."

Nhlakanipho didn't say anything for a few minutes but he looked at his mother. "That means we will never see your father because he has gone back to God." Naledi told her son and she pressed her teeth together. They looked at Nhlakanipho and he had his lips pressed together into a sulk.

Thembelihle: "Please, cry my boy." She said and pulled Nhlakanipho to her, she placed Nhlakanipho on her lap and she brushed his head.

Naledi: "Maybe he doesn't understand it yet."

Thembelihle: "Children understand death these days, Naledi. I saw it with Siphosami and he's younger than Nhlakanipho. He must cry."

Nhlakanipho: "Mina ngifuna ubaba." (I want my father) he said and he cried now.

Thembelihle sighed silently as she felt her heart rest now because her grandson was crying for his father. It was important that he cries, Thembelihle knew that it was important...

"Baba, how are you?" Mntwana asked his father who was seated inside the car at the backseat. He had his eyes closed and his head leaning on the window. He was listening to the singing that was proceeding from the main house. He was going to bury his son today and he was reflecting on Ndabezinhle's life. How they fought about his football passion and Ndabezinhle was determined that he wanted nothing but football. They would disagree about a number of things and Ndabezinhle would always run to his grandmother... He'd made a name for himself and even the national football team was present to bury him and

the football club he'd been playing for before going overseas. They were present along with some business delegates he worked with. He was proud of him and he knew that his son would know about his great father!

Daliso: "Mntwana?"

Mntwana: "You are worrying me you've been here for a long time."

Daliso: "I am listening to the women sing. Get inside. You'll drive with me." he said pointing the free seat and Mntwana hopped in on the car...

Wednesday, the 7th day, Thembelihle was laying on the mattress in the morning she was crying as the women were singing inside the lounge. She was dressed up in a straight cut skirt that was beneath her knee, a black shirt with a black pantyhose underneath and black coat with a black scarf and a doek. She was wailing because she didn't have the chance to perform her last rights to her son. She was supposed to wash Ndabezinhle's body for the last time as his mother but she couldn't do that because all she had was the ashes of her son. Those last rights meant everything and it was greatest closure. She was hurting that she wasn't going to see her son's body but all she had was ashes...

"We need to go now, MaSthole." Aunt Nomkhosi said softly kneeling on the mattress as she was still wailing. She looked back and called Nkosazana. They then held Thembelihle and got up with her. She was weak but they held her...

They have shared all words of comfort and that didn't ease the pain for Thembelihle and the rest of the family.

"Hamba nhliziyo yami uye ezulwini, akukho ukuphumula lapha emhlabeni" They sang the song, one song as they walked out of the palace to lay Ndabezinhle on his last place of rest... Where he came from, the soil...

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The girls were seated on the floor of the lounge and they had their food before them. Faith, MaNtombela and Nandipha were seated on the couches having their breakfast quietly. It was the following day after the meeting...

Phemelo and Palesa had left the house the previous night. Palesa didn't want to leave Nandipha because she was angry and had a lot of emotions showing through her face after the meeting. But Faith told her not to worry she must go back to work. She left the house at night while Nandipha was sleeping after a long time of crying inside the guestroom used by her mother. Nandipha didn't sleep with Ngcebo that night but she slept with her mother who didn't want to wake her...

The TV was on and nobody was talking in the room... Nandipha wasn't eating but she was thinking about the meeting they had the previous night. She couldn't believe how Ngcebo's family entered her house just to tell her that she was going to marry Ngcebo's brother. Just two people had been asking about her wellbeing and her children, it was just Dalingcebo and

Mntwana. The rest of them didn't even bother not even once but the head of the family had already decided she was going to marry the other son. Her father in-law hated her but he wanted her to marry his son? Never! She was never going to do that. She fell asleep angry and she woke up even angrier, she was angry with herself, angry with Ngcebo and everything that was going on...

Nandipha: "I am leaving tomorrow." She announced the unexpected and her two mothers gasped. Nandipha looked at them with a firm eye... She'd made a decision and she was no going back on her decision...

Faith: "What do you mean you are leaving?"

Nandipha: "I mean I will take my children and leave this place."

MaNtombela: "And what about your husband, Nandipha?"

Faith: "Yes, tomorrow is the last day of your waiting and you can't just give up because tomorrow it's the seventh day. And even if you have to let him go after tomorrow you'll have to bury him."

MaNtombela: "Your children will have to bury their father."

Nandipha: "He chose not to listen to me, mama! And I have been holding on to him for what exactly?"

Faith: "You've been holding on to him because you love him and he's the father of your children. It was unbelievable to you that he has passed on."

MaNtombela: "And that's just the depth of your faith and strength, Nandipha. You can't give up now because that's not the reason you started this."

Nandipha: "No, mama, I have seen that you don't believe any of this and you've been looking at each other whenever I talk. You've been looking at me as if I am just crazy. You didn't believe in my faith." She raised her voice at her mothers and tears rolled down her eyes... The children were no longer eating now but their sad faces were looking at the elders and the last two were panting because they were at the edge of letting their tears free. They didn't understand why the adults were arguing...

Faith: "It's not like that, Nandipha but we were feeling your pain. We were just worried about you because this isn't easy."

MaNtombela: "And it was clear to us that you were having a difficult time accepting what had happened. While dealing with that we were shocked by the lack of support from your husband's family. It was wrong of them not to bring not even one woman to be here with you."

Faith: "We didn't see you as crazy my child but we were stressed that maybe our support alone won't be enough for you because what you are going through is difficult, we are still stressed and as if all that's not enough, your in-laws had to come here last night and tell us that kind of nonsense."

Nandipha: "Yes, and that's the other reason I will leave this place."

Faith: "And what about Ngcebo?"

Nandipha: "I will go give him back to his family. He left here telling me he was going to his family to support his brother. He pushed me as if I wasn't his wife when I tried to stop him

from leaving, he did that because staying here with us wasn't enough for him. I will give him back to his family, his mother has been desperately needing his body. I will take his body to his mother and I will leave. I am tired of all this and now, they want me to marry his brother. Nontobeko's husband? I will not do that. I am leaving tomorrow."

Faith: "You will do no such thing!" she shouted and stood on her feet she moved to the children because now, they were crying. "Get up now my babies." She encouraged and the children got up but their eyes were looking at their mother as they walked away from her...

MaNtombela: "Nandipha, you are angry that Ngcebo's family want you to marry his brother but you are not angry with your husband because deep down you love him and you won't let him go."

Nandipha: "I will do it because I want to go. I will send a text to Dalingcebo and tell him that he must come take his brother's body to his mother's house."

MaNtombela: "And you won't bury him?"

Nandipha: "No, I won't. I will just bury him in my heart and proceed living without him because that's what he wanted from the beginning." She replied and stood up from the couch to leave the house...

Nandipha sat on the wooden chairs outside her house and she stamped her forehead on the table. She wept a sea of tears... She needed to go and that was the only way she was going to find peace. She was going to raise her children holding them with her teeth while her hands hustle for them. What other choice did she have? She had no choice because she had children who had no father, he chose to gamble with his life like he wanted to gamble with Buhle's life. "Look, now, he's dead and if I sat back and waited for him. I would have long buried my child. Why did you do this to me, Ngcebo?" She spoke alone while her eyes were closed and she was still crying... How on earth was she going to marry Ngcebo's brother? She was never going to do that!

MaNtombela sighed and shook her head. She placed the plate down and she laid her head back. "Where's she now?" Faith asked MaNtombela and she looked around the lounge. She'd managed to calm the children down and they were back on the lounge before their food.

MaNtombela: "She left the house. Please, talk to her because we both know that she doesn't mean everything that she'd just said now. She can't give up now because she'd come too far."

Faith: "Ey, these people had to come here and disturb my daughter's peace. They have messed up her head with this nonsense of marrying Dalingcebo. I understood the fears of Ngcebo's father but couldn't he have waited? I won't allow Nandipha to marry Ngcebo's brother but he was supposed to wait."

MaNtombela: "He didn't do the right thing and he saw it."

Faith shook her head and she moved away from the couch. "Gogo, uyaphi? Uphi yena umama?" (Where are you going granny and where's mommy?) Buhle asked her grandmother as she was leaving...

Faith: "Eat your food I am going to your mother. Okay?" she smiled at them and the girls nodded their heads. Faith moved out of the house to get to her daughter... She spotted Nandipha on the yard and she walked towards her.

“You can’t just let your perseverance and faith go down the drain by letting go, Nandipha. I understand you are angry but can you let your anger go for your children’s sake not for your own sake. Yes, you are angry that Ngcebo gambled with his life but you are not angry at your children, you are not angry at his children. And one thing will happen tomorrow. What if what you have been hoping for doesn’t happen?” Faith spoke to Nandipha standing behind her.

Nandipha: “Mama, I am leaving tomorrow and there’s really no need for you to try and convince of anything because I have tried my best.”

Faith: “No! This is not your best child! You are letting anger drive you to make decision that you will regret tomorrow. I don’t want us to keep talking about ‘ifs’ because ‘ifs’ are the death of us and they always set us back. But now stand up and go wash your husband.”

Nandipha: “I won’t do that.”

Faith: “Yeywena! I am your mother and you won’t speak like that with me. You’ll respect my word and now, I am telling you to go finish up what you were doing last night. I let you sleep in my room and your husband slept alone because I didn’t want to disturb you. But now, I won’t listen to any negativity and anger from that mouth of yours because you talk too much. Stand up!”

Nandipha: “Mama, you can’t-”

Faith: “Awuyena umfazi kimi Nandipha. I will hit you if I have to, stand up!” she shouted last because she saw speaking nicely with her didn’t work. She wasn’t about to let her daughter give up on all her hard work because of some old men who came and tried to control her. She was going to force her because that was going to be for her own good. She needed to let her heart see the end and accept that end either bad or good...

Nandipha got up quickly from the wooden bench and she wiped her tears. She didn’t look at her mother but she walked away from her without saying a word to her mother... She used the kitchen to enter the house and she walked passed the lounge pretty fast for her children not to see her... She opened her bedroom with her left hand, the basin with clean water was on her right hand she was supporting it with her waist. She then closed the door behind her and she marched to Ngcebo’s side of the bed. She placed the basin on the chair that was still next to the bed. She removed the blanket from his body and she began washing his body without greeting him like she always did. She was angry but she was gentle with him she wasn’t taking out her frustration on his body. By the time she was down to washing his feet she felt her hot blood had cooled down... She took the body lotion and moisturised his body before applying the ointment on his wounds.

“The children haven’t greeted you.” She said looking at his face and she marched to the window to open the windows for fresh air. She then marched to the basin and she cleaned around the bed. She lifted her basin and she left the room to get the children to speak to their father...

“My babies, go now and speak to your father.” Nandipha told her children who were watching TV now. They’ve finished their food... She looked at the children and they didn’t move from their positions. “Buhle and your sisters, I am talking to you now. Can’t you hear

me?” she raised her voice.

Buhle: “Ubaba akashilaleli aniyi mina kokhuluma naye.” (Dad doesn’t listen to us. I am not going to him.)

Others: “EHE!”

MaNtombela: “Let them be, Nandipha. They’re upset.”

Nandipha sat down and sighed. “I called Thula this morning and she promised that she will come back tonight.” She informed her mothers.

Faith: “She will come back for what?”

Nandipha: “You’ll need someone to help you with watching over the children because mama over there is older and amadolo ayahlupha manje.” She commented looking at MaNtombela and they laughed.

MaNtombela: “That was thoughtful because I really can’t run around.”

Faith: “Your brother is also coming for the funeral.”

Nandipha: “He told me on the phone yesterday morning.”

MaNtombela: “Did Nontobeko call you?”

Nandipha: “She told me she’ll see me after the funeral because she’s still busy. I am just worried about my photoshoot because I am supposed to do it on Monday. They sent me an email to remind me.”

MaNtombela: “You’ll have to put that on hold.”

Nandipha: “I really wanted to do it, mma.”

Faith: “You can’t be in two places at the same time. And are you sure that you’ll be alright with staying here alone tomorrow? I can ask your brother to stay here with you.” She looked at her and saw she was more calm now.

Nandipha: “I will keep busy by writing mama. Don’t worry.” She replied and stood on her feet she looked at her children. “Get up, let’s go wash your clothes now. I told you yesterday. Let’s go!” she clapped once for her children and they got up quickly because this was their opportunity to play with water.

Thando: “Showasha nezika baba wethu?” (We’ll also wash dad’s clothes?)

Nandipha: “Yes, what do you think he’ll wear when you don’t wash his clothes?” she replied and stepped her feet repeatedly to startle them. They giggled and ran away from her,

Nandipha ran after them to give them the satisfaction...

“Hawu, thokoza gogo.” MaNtombela greeted the teenage girl who was standing before the door of Nandipha’s house. She had to stand up and answer the knock on the door. Nandipha, Faith and the girls had gone to buy dinner at the lodge and they were going to fetch Thula on their way back... The girl wasn’t wearing casual clothes today but she was wearing red, white and black gear showing she was a sangoma in training.

Girl: “Thokoza, how are you?”

MaNtombela: “I am fine and how are you? Please come in.”

Girl: “No, I am not staying but I am here for the prince’s wife.”

MaNtombela: “She’s not here at the moment but I can take the message.”

Girl: “I can only speak to her I will wait.”

MaNtombela: “Okay, come in.”

Girl: “I won’t come in I will just wait over there.” she pointed the wooden benches and MaNtombela nodded. The girl walked away and MaNtombela left the door opened. Before she could sit down on the benches she saw what she wanted from Nandipha. She was going to gamble and wait for her but now that she’d seen their clothes on the washing line she didn’t have to wait any longer because time was against her and Langalibalele told her not to be distracted on the road. She then marched to the washing line and she took all the five blue dresses of the girls, a black dress that she was certain belonged to their mother and she took the shirt she was certain belonged to their father. She then fixed the clothes on the washing line not to leave spaces. She then left the premises without speaking to MaNtombela. She didn’t have time to waste because she wasn’t using a car but she was walking barefoot...

“Thula, please go and take the girl’s clothes and the rest of the clothes on the washing line. I will dish up for us now.” Nandipha told Thula who was entering the kitchen followed by MaNtombela.

Thula: “Okay.”

MaNtombela: “Hee! We MaZondi, there was a girl here who came here looking for you. Uyithwasa. I told her to come in and wait for you inside because she didn’t want to leave the message with me but she said she will stay outside.”

Nandipha: “Hawu! Really?”

MaNtombela: “Yes, I fixed something to eat for her and when I went out to give her the food she was no longer there.”

Nandipha: “Hawu, maybe she couldn’t wait.” She said and turned to the cupboard to take out the plates. She couldn’t deny that she was nervous now. What if this girl meant no good? Why didn’t she wait for her? She asked herself these questions and dodged answering MaNtombela’s questions if she knew the girl. She was scared now and she didn’t want to show it...

Nandipha looked at Ngcebo and she held his hand. She was on her nightdress and the girls were sleeping along with the rest of the house.

Nandipha: “I am sorry about my anger outburst this morning. I didn’t mean everything that I said but I was just angry that they wanted me to marry your twin brother. I won’t do it because you’ll come back. I won’t leave you here and go as if you meant nothing to me. You still mean everything and you’ll forever mean everything to me. I am just scared about the girl whom I accepted this ointment from. I am scared that maybe she’s not genuine but I trust God that he won’t let my hard work be robbed by evil. I love you, goodnight.” She spoke to him and she kissed his lips. She laid down on the bed with the lights on. She hadn’t been switching them off...

“Hhhhhhh!” He drew the longest breath and he opened his eyes widely ignoring the sharp light that was in the room. He’d been seeing nothing but the darkness and this light was sharp on him. It didn’t matter though what mattered was the fact that he wasn’t seeing the darkness anymore.

He didn't lift his body from the bed right away but he lifted his heavy head to look around the room. He drew his hands from the blankets. He opened his eyes to look at his hand and they were shaking. He felt his stomach was grumpy and he recognised the pain...

He tormented his jaw as he felt the tiredness of his body and the physical pain that he hadn't been feeling much. But he could do this he was going to sit up. "Nandipha!" Ngcebo called Nandipha's name on a hoarse voice and his shaky hands moved her shoulder as Nandipha was sleeping next to him on a Wednesday morning... Ngcebo looked at the door quickly as he heard the laughter of his children but no... He couldn't see them now he needed to wake his wife... Nandipha needed to wake up...

She woke up immediately when she heard her name being called. She sat up straight and she looked at Ngcebo's side. Her eyes saw him leaning his upper body on the bed's headboard. Nandipha didn't say anything to Ngcebo but she had her eyes widened and her mouth slightly opened. She stared into his clear white eyes as Ngcebo wasn't breathing a word to her but he was looking at her with a white face. Nandipha forced her head down and she rubbed her eyes.

Ngcebo: "It's me!" he informed her because he could see by the look on her face that she couldn't believe what she was seeing. She'd been holding on to him but now, she couldn't believe that he was actually awake.

"You!" She exclaimed loudly and she threw her upper body on his. Ngcebo accepted her into his arms and he groaned deeply as Nandipha was hurting his wounds. But he wasn't about to tell her to get away from because she was hurting him. This was nothing compared to her cry he'd heard...

Nandipha: "It's you for real, Rasta?" She checked still holding Ngcebo tightly, she laughed lightly as tears came out of her eyes.

Ngcebo: "Yes, it's me."

Nandipha: "No!" she felt the sudden change of heart and she backed away from him. She looked at him and Ngcebo was looking at her seeing the change of her facial expression. Now, there a slight anger. Nandipha folded her lips tightly and she unexpectedly slapped Ngcebo. She heard him groan and Nandipha felt her hand paining because of the slap but she wasn't satisfied she used both her hands to hit him. "How could you do this to me? Ngcebo! Do you know what I went through because of you? Can you even imagine?" she shouted at him while her hands were hitting his upper body.

"Stop it!" He shouted even though he felt the dryness of his throat he needed to get it through. He held both her wrists. He looked at her as she was panting with tears flowing off her eyes. "I am sorry!" he said.

Nandipha: "That's not enough!"

Ngcebo: "Can we fight later? I am hungry and I need water I am even shaking Nandipha but you don't care about that."

Nandipha: "Don't tell me I don't care! Don't you dare!"

Ngcebo: "Wasn't you who wanted to leave yesterday? And do you think I have been happy where I was?"

Nandipha: “Oh! Now, you are also showing me your true colours and I don’t care in your eyes because of what I said yesterday? Is that what you are trying to tell me, Ngcebo?” she raised her voice on him angered by what he was saying to him. Why would he say such things?

Ngcebo: “I won’t answer that question.”

Nandipha: “Oh, it seems like you came back with an attitude. Gha!” she exclaimed and removed the blankets on her side to get off the bed.

Ngcebo held her left wrist before she could leave. “Where are you going now?” he asked Nandipha and cleared his dry throat.

Nandipha: “I woke up midnight and stared at you hoping you’ll wake up. I really need to sleep and I can’t sleep here.”

Ngcebo: “No, I want to go to my brother’s funeral Nandipha. Please, don’t just go and sleep but I need you here I am hungry.”

Nandipha: “Wake up and go to the kitchen-” a knock on the door disturbed Nandipha from finishing up her sentence. She was fuming and she could feel her certain body parts sweating because of anger. This wasn’t what she expected, she didn’t expect this shitty attitude from Ngcebo. She yanked her hand out of his hold and she marched to the door with her phone on her hands. She was going to leave the room.

Ngcebo: “If it’s the girls don’t let them in because I don’t want them to see me like this. I am not strong to carry them.” he told her as she marched to the door to open it. Nandipha opened the door for her mother.

Nandipha: “Mama?”

Faith: “What’s wrong?”

Nandipha: “He wants water and food, I will go and sleep, tsk!” she told her mother and she left the door opened leaving her mother astonished.

Ngcebo cleared his throat. “Sawubona, mama. Can you close the door because I don’t want the children to see me yet? I am not too strong to hold them.” Ngcebo requested politely looking at Faith who couldn’t believe that Ngcebo was seated on the bed... She nodded her head quickly and looked back, her daughter wasn’t going to the kitchen direction. She closed the door.

“How did this happen? Alright, I shouldn’t ask questions I will go make something to eat for you because I don’t think your wife will do it.” She said.

Ngcebo: “Can you please speak to her because I want to go to Ndabezinhle’s funeral?” he requested and swallowed the saliva to dampen his throat.

Faith: “I don’t think it’s a good idea for you to go to the funeral because your presence will only divert their attention. But it’s better that you stay here and don’t distract your brother’s burial.”

Ngcebo: “But-”

Faith: “I fully understand that you want to bury your brother but imagine if someone you thought is dead comes to the funeral? Their minds will be disturbed from the actual day. Just let your brother be buried and your wife will take you to his grave tomorrow.”

Ngcebo: "You are right. Thank you."

Faith: "I will go and make food for you just something that would be lighter." she promised him and Ngcebo nodded his head accompanying it with 'thank you' Faith then left the room...

Ngcebo stamped his head back on the headboard and he closed his eyes, as soon as he saw the darkness because he'd closed his eyes. He opened them quickly and he removed the blanket to look at the rest of his wounds. He lifted his leg that was injured and he felt the pain. He groaned and clicked his tongue. He dropped the leg back on the bed and he covered himself with his hands still shaking. He looked around the room and he sighed...

"Here's your food. The girls and I are going to the funeral along with MaNtombela." Faith told Ngcebo and she placed the tray of food on the free space of the bed because she didn't trust putting it on his lap.

Ngcebo: "Thank you. Where's Nandipha?"

Faith: "I think she went to sleep. What happened?"

Ngcebo: "We had an argument." He replied and he took the spoon without lifting the bowl. He didn't trust if he was going to be able to lift it up.

Faith: "I will speak to her. I have to go now you'll see the children when we come back because I will come straight here with them."

Ngcebo: "Okay, there's nobody here from my family? I heard you talking about you and mam' uMaNtombela?" He asked and looked at her.

Faith: "No, it's been me and her, then Nandipha."

Ngcebo: "Oh! I'll see the children when you come back." he said, Faith nodded her head and she left the room...

S5 >> EPISODE 39

"Nandipha, what's wrong now?" Faith asked Nandipha and she sat on the bed where Nandipha was sleeping in her mother's bedroom... Faith looked at her daughter and she had her eyes closed. She wasn't sure if she was sleeping or she was just avoiding her. Faith shook Nandipha and she didn't wake up. Faith shook her head and she got up to finish up getting dressed. She didn't understand how they could just argue after such a long time of being apart. They were supposed to be happy that they're together again and by now she thought they would be in bed holding each other. But Nandipha was here sleeping and Faith was certain that she was just ignoring her.

Faith: "We are leaving now, Nandipha. You'll need to wake up from here and check on your husband because he's alone over there. It doesn't matter that you two argued but you'll need to check on him." she said and grabbed the handbag to leave the room since Nandipha wasn't saying anything...

"What's wrong now? Why are you clicking your tongue? We should be celebrating not

clicking tongues.” MaNtombela asked Faith as she took the driver’s side of the viano. The girls were on their seats with Thula seated on the last seat holding Nongcebo because the viano had five seats apart from two front seats.

Faith: “How can I not be clicking my tongue ngoba le ngane isivele yaba neconsi nje esthubeni.” (Nandipha is short tempered suddenly.)

MaNtombela: “Didn’t you speak to her?”

Faith: “I did speak to her but I think she pretended to be asleep. Ngcebo told me that they had an argument. I don’t know how can they have an argument.”

MaNtombela: “They should be hugging each other and be happy that they’re together. Why are they arguing?”

Faith: “I don’t know, MaNtombela.”

MaNtombela: “Let’s hope by the time we come back to the house they would be talking to each other by then.”

Faith: “Yes, let’s hope so. You’ll go to the palace after the funeral or you’ll come back here with us? I won’t go to the palace because the children are not allowed to enter the palace.”

MaNtombela: “I will ask Qalokuhle’s father to drive me.”

Faith: “Alright.” She said and they had the rest of the drive quietly with the children speaking alone and Ntokomalo was just humming unknown melodies as if she was alone in the vehicle...

“NANDIPHA!” Ngcebo roared Nandipha’s name as it’d been too long that he was seated on the bed and Nandipha wasn’t near him. He’d finished eating his food and he gotten enough strength to move from his position and he had his feet touching the floor but he wasn’t strong enough to stand on his own...

Nandipha heard Ngcebo calling her name... She wasn’t sleeping when her mother wanted to speak to her about what was wrong. She was ignoring her because she didn’t want to talk to her.

Now, she had taken a shower and she was on her long sleeve orange stretchy dress. The dress reached her ankles. She’d eaten her breakfast and she was cleaning her house. She was almost done when she heard Ngcebo calling her name. She dropped the mop as she was moping that stoep... She carefully moved back inside the house to hear what Ngcebo had to say to her... She opened the door of the bedroom.

“What do you want?” Nandipha asked Ngcebo who was still seated on the bed.

Ngcebo: “You think leaving me here like this is the best thing you can do?”

Nandipha: “Why are you like this towards me, Ngcebo? You haven’t spoken not even a single good word to me since you woke up. Why are you acting as if I am the one who shot you?”

Ngcebo: “I never said that but what should I do now if you don’t help me? My body has been here on this bed for days and you can’t even think that I need to see the light outside at least?”

Nandipha: “You told me I don’t care about you and what’s wrong if I show you now that I don’t care. How can you speak like you are speaking to your servant? How can you do that?”

Ngcebo: “I have been through a rough patch and you haven’t even asked about that but all

you care about is yourself.”

Nandipha swallowed his words hard and she moved forward without saying a word to Ngcebo. She didn't want to keep arguing with him because it was clear that Ngcebo was the only one between them who'd been through a rough patch. And she'd had a smooth patch... She took the towel and gave it to Ngcebo because he was completely naked...

“Come, I will take you to the bathroom.” She said sending her arm on Ngcebo's armpit.

Ngcebo lifted his body up and pressed his teeth together not to show his wife that his body was strained and he was feeling pain.

Nandipha: “How's the pain?”

Ngcebo: “I can feel it but I will take pain killers. There are pain killers in the house, right? I have eaten but it was just porridge.”

Nandipha: “I will make food for you but you'll have to bath yourself.” She said mixing the water for Ngcebo who was seated on the bathroom bench looking at her. She didn't hear a word from him. Nandipha then brought everything for Ngcebo closer to the tub and she moved back to him to help him get in the tub. “Do you know the girl who came here and gave me an ointment to apply on your wounds? Mama MaNtombela told me that she came back here to look for me but I wasn't in the house.” She asked Ngcebo and placed him inside the tub with warm water.

Ngcebo: “I couldn't see anything where I was.”

Nandipha: “But how do you know what I said yesterday?”

Ngcebo: “I could hear when someone was speaking to my body.”

Nandipha: “Who brought you back?”

Ngcebo: “Langalibalele, Gobela's son. Can I bath now without being asked questions?” he looked at her and Nandipha nodded, she then left him inside the bathroom tub. She wiped her tears as she couldn't understand what was happening. Why was Ngcebo acting like that towards her? She couldn't even guess...

“We've had a successful day and we have placed my son at rest. Thank you for everything that you did, all your hard work and dedication. You were holding each other and did everything together without fighting.” Dalisu thanked the members of his family... It was a Wednesday night and the family was gathered together inside the dining room. Dalisu had asked that they gather around for a meeting before they got to rest. It was the elders of the family, his sons and their partners. Thembelihle was seated next to Dalisu wearing black mourning clothes. She was just quiet amongst them but her mind wasn't quiet she was thinking that she would have deep peace if she had buried both her sons today. And now, she was going to go through that grieve once again because Nandipha stopped her from burying Ngcebo. She would have gone to the Easter service this coming weekend to have her wounds healed but now, that was not going to happen. She would have slept better today knowing that she'd laid her sons at rest but she didn't even know if things were going to go her way with Ngcebo's burial...

It'd been a long day for all of them but they were grateful that the day went on smoothly

without any struggles. People had come in numbers even though it wasn't the weekend. And that was comforting for the family that people respected them enough to leave everything they were doing just to bury their prince. The funeral was lecture for the youth because the prince who'd passed was hardworking and everyone who spoke in the funeral highlighted that about him. Ndabezinhle was praised for his good work and his kind heart. His family was comforted by the people...

Uncle elder1: "It was a good thing to witness you working together along with your wives and we are hoping that you'll do the same for Ngcebo."

Mlamuli: "Yes, we didn't have to argue over everything and that's appreciated." He breathed looking at his brothers and they nodded once.

Aunt Nomkhosi: "What should happen now? We have the initiation ceremony of Gobela's son this weekend and Ngcebo is not buried." She asked and looked at Dalisu. Faith and MaNtombela didn't go to the palace after the funeral but they drove to Ngcebo's house without seeing any of the family members. MaNtombela thought she could manage to go to the palace but she couldn't. They left without telling anyone from the family that Ngcebo was awake.

Thembelihle: "Every child will have their hair cut and Ngcebo's children, I didn't even see them in the funeral. Were they there?"

Banele: "Yes, they were there with their grandmother."

Thembelihle: "That woman! She couldn't even give the children to us but she chose to stay where she was with them. What's that?"

Banele: "But mama' MaNtombela was there too."

Thembelihle: "What was she going to say because that woman is bossy. Nandipha's mother doesn't listen to anyone just like her daughter."

Mlamuli: "That's unnecessary mama. You can't just speak like that about the mother of your daughter in-law while she isn't here. And if you wanted the children to be with the other children you were supposed to tell them before the funeral. They couldn't just bring the children to be with the others while they were not seated with us because the children are not allowed in here."

Mnotho: "Mlamuli is right mama."

Thembelihle: "Ngcebo is no more now and his children will come here."

Dalingcebo: "There's nobody who'll do that because Ngcebo said it clearly that his children won't come here as long as their mother is not allowed in here."

Thembelihle: "Oh! So, you'll be her shield now?"

Dalingcebo: "Ah! I can't believe this-" he said and stood up as his phone was ringing. He looked at the caller ID.

Dalisu: "Dalingcebo, sit down!"

"I have to answer this call. I think it's important than what's being discussed here." He said and left his father shouting at him for being disrespectful...

Dalingcebo swiped green on Ngcebo's phone call that he was certain was Nandipha was the one calling. "Nandipha?" He answered the phone call.

Ngcebo: “Hhe! They told you that you’ll marry my wife and now, you are calling her name with so much authority.” He said jokingly as he heard Dalingcebo’s voice that sounded deep because of anger...

Dalingcebo placed his hand on his mouth and he supported his phone with his shoulder while he sent the other hand to check if he had his car keys. “Tsk! Yey! Ngcebo? Is that you for real?” He asked and jogged to his car without going back to the house to tell them he was talking with him on the phone.

Ngcebo: “Who were you expecting?”

Dalingcebo: “Hhaybo! I thought your wife was calling.”

Ngcebo: “No, it’s me. I didn’t hear you speak to me more often but my girls told me that you usually came here more often.”

Dalingcebo: “I am on the road now coming to you. We will talk when I get there. Just save your airtime.” He said and removed the phone from his ear without waiting for Ngcebo’s response. He laughed and shook his head as he drove his car to the gate. “I am going to Ngcebo’s house. He just called me! You go and tell them.” He shouted to the guards and he drove off...

Guard1: “Did you hear that right?”

Guard2: “I heard him. Go and pass the message!” he shouted at him as he was pulling the gate towards him... The other guard ran to the house...

“You can’t even stop your brother from disrespecting your parents?” Uncle elder shouted at the brothers who were left at the table after Dalingcebo had left the house to answer the phone call.

Mntwana: “What mom said to him wasn’t right and what’s wrong if Dalingcebo becomes defensive of Ngcebo’s girls because dad said it clear that Nandipha mustn’t be allowed here even when he’s dead and Ngcebo said the same thing. Why should we be expected to respect dad’s word and not our brother’s?”

Nkosazana: “I don’t think fighting will help us now. Why should we fight after we’ve buried Ndabezihle with such dignity? Can’t we go to rest without fighting? We will talk tomorrow when we have gotten rest?”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Ndlovukazi is right. This night shouldn’t be a night of fights because we have just put our son at rest. We will talk-”

“I am sorry to budge in like this but Dalingcebo had just told us that he’s driving to Ngcebo’s house because he’d just gotten off the phone with Ngcebo.” The guard announced quickly to them without having a break in between his announcement.

“HHE!” Everyone in the house exclaimed and they automatically stood on their feet, none of them remained seated... Thembelihle looked at Dalisu with her chest rising and falling because of astonishment. She wasn’t expecting this.

“You are lying to us.” Thembelihle said to the guard and she held her husband’s hand tightly. She looked at him and Dalisu was looking at her. He gave his wife a smile, he’d never told her about the blood that he saw on Ngcebo’s bandages, the blood that signalled that he wasn’t a corpse.

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Dalisu and MaSthole go to his house along with your sons.” She told them what she saw appropriate because she didn’t think it would be appropriate for them to go at once.

Uncle elder1: “Yes, MaZulu is right. Just go and see if that’s the truth.”

Dalису: “Let’s go!” he instructed his sons and pulled his wife away from the position where she was standing on. They followed each other out...

Ngcebo was seated alone inside the lounge he was watching TV. MaNtombela and Faith were already sleeping and Nandipha was putting the children to sleep... The joy in his children’s faces when they saw him seated on the couch was unmeasurable. The joy in their faces made Ngcebo’s angry heart melt instantly and the children sat down with him to narrate everything that has been going on in the house while he was sleeping. They told him how angry they were because he wasn’t listening to them. He listened and laughed with them he was happy to see his children once again...

Now, he was watching TV because he didn’t want to sleep he didn’t want to close his eyes. And he was waiting for his brother to come to his house...

Ngcebo smiled as he saw Dalingcebo enter the lounge. He chuckled and gave him his hand. “I didn’t think you’ll come for real.” Ngcebo said to Dalingcebo as he was pulling him up to stand on his feet.

Dalingcebo: “I had to come and see this myself.”

Ngcebo: “Don’t forget I am injured.” He said to him, they laughed and they gave each other the brotherly hug. Ngcebo wasn’t feeling pains now because of the painkillers that he’d taken and he had spent his day outside the house.

Dalingcebo: “I didn’t even think you’ll come back because a part of me would believe you are really dead and the other part would believe Nandipha when she said you’ll come back.” he told him and they sat down on the couch.

Ngcebo: “My soul was deserted in a dark place and the ancestors wouldn’t accept it. I can’t believe how cruel they’ve been to me, Dalingcebo.”

Dalingcebo: “But wasn’t because you didn’t obey their word? What were you thinking Ngcebo? You should have stayed at home.”

Ngcebo: “I didn’t know there would be danger when you are just fighting and to tell you the truth I haven’t accepted this gift before the fight.”

Dalingcebo: “And now, you have accepted it? How did you come back? What was happening where you were?”

Ngcebo: “I couldn’t see things that were happening in the land of living but I could hear when someone was speaking to my body. And I didn’t even hear mom speaking to me not even once.” He confided in him and he raised his head as the family entered the lounge following each other.

“Ngcebo!” Thembelihle exclaimed and looked at him, she could feel that her whole body was shaking because of shock. She couldn’t believe this was really happening. She looked at her husband with her eyes releasing fresh tears. Dalingcebo was helping Ngcebo get up.

Ngcebo: "Mama?"

Thembehle: "Oh! My son!" she exclaimed shaking her head as tears couldn't stop falling from her eyes. She held Ngcebo's body with her shaking hand from his shoulders she moved her hands down to his arms and she hugged him. "You've come back to us, Ngcebo. God is amazing. My son has come back to me." She spoke to her son while she was still in her arms. Ngcebo: "Why are you crying now because I am here?" he asked and wiped her tears as they were no longer hugging each other.

Thembehle: "I can't believe it."

Daliso: "Yes, we can't believe it." He said and placed his hand on Ngcebo's shoulder. They then all hugged Ngcebo and shared their words of appreciation that Ngcebo was back with them.

"Where's makoti?" Mntwana asked as they all sat down after they've greeted and hugged Ngcebo. And now, they wanted to talk.

Ngcebo: "She's putting the children to sleep."

Thembehle: "Tell us where have you been?"

Ngcebo: "No, why did you want to marry my wife to my brother?"

Thembehle: "HHAYBO!" She looked at her husband and the rest of her sons as it was her first time hearing this. "What is it that am I hearing?" she asked.

Dalingcebo: "It's nothing mama. Don't make a big deal out of it." He said before she could even speak further because she knew that her mother was going to start talking ill things.

Daliso: "Ay, Ngcebo, I was just stressed and worried about the children."

Mlamuli: "And now, that you are here we don't have to dwell on that."

Ngcebo: "Let a brother be worried!" he joked and looked at Dalingcebo, they all laughed at his statement and Dalingcebo clicked his tongue.

Thembehle: "We don't have to worry about that now. I am just happy that you've come back to us. How did you come back?"

Ngcebo: "Langalibalele brought me back."

"Who's that?" They all asked him.

Ngcebo: "Oh, it's Gobela's son, his name he got from the initiation school. I think he will tell you that what you need to know. But now, I want to know why didn't I hear y'all speaking to me? Was it because you were too busy with the funeral preparations to come here to speak to me? I heard Nandipha, the children and Dalingcebo. And mama? The rest of you?"

Thembehle sighed and she looked at her husband. Daliso shook his head as he didn't know how to answer that question. "How were we supposed to speak to you because your wife took you and she serve us with papers that didn't give us rights to you?" She asked raising her voice as she felt anger all together thinking about the day Nandipha chased them out of the hospital.

Ngcebo: "What do you mean?"

Thembehle: "When the Doctor told us that you are no more Nandipha threw us out of the hospital room and told us that you are her husband. We were told to leave because we have no rights over you. I went back the second day and she gave us court papers telling us we

have no right over you. Me, your mother Ngcebo. I have never been that hurt.” She cried and laid on Dalisu’s shoulder as she had old wounds awakening...

Mntwana: “But that was because she believed you were not dead.”

Ngcebo: “But did she really chase you out of the hospital room?”

Banele: “She did but-”

Ngcebo: “Are you going to make an excuse just to cover up that my wife chased my parents out of the hospital room?”

Mlamuli: “Nobody is making an excuse, Ngcebo. But Nandipha just wanted to have some assurance that you are really dead. She meant no harm.”

Ngcebo didn’t comment any further but he taunted his jaw because hearing this was only making him angry. But he didn’t want to be angry now...

Dalisu: “It’s no use dwelling in past things because you are alive because of your wife’s stubbornness and nothing else.” Mntwana looked at his father with a surprised look as he wasn’t expecting that from him. “Yini wena?”

Mntwana: “Nothing.”

Ngcebo: “Mama, would you take me to Ndabezinhle’s grave tomorrow?” he requested softly and looked at his mother. Thembelihle pressed her eyes shut and she nodded her head with a short smile on her face...

“Nandipha?” Ngcebo shook Nandipha awake. He’d spent a few minutes looking at her as she was sleeping and he couldn’t believe that she’d chased HIS MOTHER out of the hospital. He was angry and he couldn’t just wait to confront her about this. “Nandipha!” He insisted.

It was just after midnight and his family had just left the house.

“Hmm?” She opened her eyes and looked at him. She sat up straight because Ngcebo requested that she sat up straight because he wanted to speak to her. She heard Ngcebo’s family was in the house but she didn’t go to greet them.

Ngcebo: “Why did you chase my mother out of the hospital and you gave them court papers? How could you do that?” he asked and looked at with a firm eye. Nandipha looked at him without answering him. “Just answer me!”

Nandipha: “They wanted to take you to the mortuary and I didn’t want let you go because I couldn’t believe you were dead.”

Ngcebo: “Oh, so, that gave you a right to chase my mother out of the hospital room? I am her son and when I was trapped over there I wanted to hear her voice. I wanted to hear her speak to me but you, my wife! You stopped that from happening. How could you do that?” He shouted.

Nandipha: “I didn’t stop your mother from coming here. I didn’t stop your family from coming here but I only stopped them from taking your body.”

Ngcebo: “How were they going to come here after you’ve chased them out of the hospital as if they were nothing to me? How? Huh? You didn’t respect my mother, the woman who gave me life, Nandipha. Are you trying to compete with my mother now? Why did you do that?” He shouted at her looking into her eyes and Nandipha didn’t breathe a word. “I am speaking to you! Why are you quiet now, huh?” he shouted further.

Nandipha: "I am sorry."

Ngcebo: "I can't believe you did this Nandipha. I wouldn't have done what you did. I wouldn't have chased your mother as you did to mine. Uyangicasula!"

Nandipha: "Ngiyaxolisa for everything that I did. I am sorry." she said to him and she turned to lie down on the bed without speaking anything further. She wasn't expecting this and it made sense that he'd been mean towards her because he didn't hear his mother's voice but she never stopped Dalingcebo from coming to the house. They didn't come to the house because they didn't want to come. They were able to come to give her orders but they never came to see him and he was barking at her now... She heard him click his tongue. Nandipha pinned her face on the pillow...

S5 >> EPISODE 40

"I am so happy, baba. My son has come back." Thembelihle said to Dalisu who was on the bed while Thembelihle was before the mirror moistening her hands... She'd just taken a shower and dressed up for bed. The time was about 1am when they arrived in the palace from Ngcebo's house.

Dalisu: "I can see that you are happy but don't you forget who's the reason behind his return. Don't just be happy."

Thembelihle: "What do you mean?" she asked and joined him on the bed. She sighed and looked at Dalisu waiting for him to answer her.

Dalisu: "Ngcebo's wife is the reason he's alive and it would be a disgrace if we can forget that. We shouldn't forget it."

Thembelihle: "I didn't say I have forgotten that."

Dalisu: "But I don't like how you spoke back there because you were supposed to tell your son exactly what happened. What happened is that after a time of the family crying that Ngcebo has died she said she's not letting go and we fought her. But you made it look like she was wrong."

Thembelihle: "No, that's not what I did Mageba. How can you say that? Are you trying to make me look like a bad person now?"

Dalisu: "No, that's not what I am doing but I feel like you have something against this girl and we don't know about it. What is it?"

Thembelihle: "I don't know what you are talking about."

Dalisu: "MaSthole, when I don't want or don't like someone I don't hide behind my thumb or any excuses but I make it known that I don't want that person. And they should know how I feel about them just like I have done with Nkosazana. I have done the same thing with Ngcebo's wife and if you have a problem with her and you don't say it, there will be a problem."

Thembelihle: "Why is your concern in Ngcebo's wife? We should be showing happiness

about our son but you are talking about things that are unnecessary.” She looked at him.

Daliso: “I am saying this because it’s necessary, MaSthole.”

Thembelihle: “I don’t have a problem with Nandipha. I was just angry because of what she did by calling Mnotho not that there’s something else.”

Daliso: “Okay, I know that if Ngcebo can be separated from his wife you wouldn’t be happy to see him alone. Let’s sleep now.” he said and turned to the lamp by his side of the bed.

Thembelihle: “Can we pray before we sleep?” she requested and they held hands to pray...

They then turned to sleep... Daliso then made arrangements in his head. He needed to show his gesture of appreciation because that was the right thing to do as Ngcebo’s father...

Thursday morning, she was seated on the bed inside the guestroom and she was tying her sandals. She smiled and shook her head she couldn’t believe how the night ended the previous night... She took her phone that was ringing and she smiled, a wider smile before answering the phone call.

“Hello, sistaz.” Happiness answered Luvuyo’s phone call and she laid back on the bed. She felt that her heart was lighter this morning as if everything was going well in her life but it wasn’t like that. It was just seeing others happy that made her feel like everything was going well in her life.

Luvuyo: “How are you, mama ka Nonjanja?”

Happiness giggled. “I am fine and how are you, aunt ka Yoliswa?” She asked and smiled remembering how Lonwabo would call their daughter ‘Yoliswa’

Luvuyo: “I am fine and I just thought I should call you just to check on you. We haven’t spoken since I left South Africa.”

Happiness: “Yes, I have been busy and that helped me live with everyday accepting that he is no longer here with us. How do you cope?”

Luvuyo: “I work to keep myself distracted and my boyfriend is very supportive. How are my children? Are you near them and where are you?”

Happiness: “I am in KZN with them.”

Luvuyo: “KZN? What are you doing over there?”

Happiness: “Remember that I was going to visit Njabulo’s grandmother so that I can be able to heal. The following day of my arrival her son was killed and I couldn’t leave her because that would be selfish of me.”

Luvuyo: “Are you trying to say that Nonjabulo is there with you?”

Happiness: “Yes, I wasn’t going to leave her behind.”

Luvuyo: “How can you go with my brother’s child to those people that you know he hated Happiness? How can you do that?”

Happiness: “Hawu, Luvuyo. I told you that I was going to come here. Didn’t I tell you that, Luvuyo?”

Luvuyo: “You didn’t tell me that you will be going with her and you are still there even now? How long has it been exactly?”

Happiness: “Why are you angry, Luvuyo?”

Luvuyo: "I am angry because you went there with Nonjabulo and I thought that you have cut ties with those people. You are supposed to be mourning your fiancé but no, you are back to rubbing shoulders with your in-laws."

Happiness: "Hey! Mind how you speak with me because I am older than you and I don't have to explain myself to you because you know exactly what led me back here. I wouldn't have come here to my mother in-law in to search for comfort if Lonwabo stayed in Botswana with the children."

Luvuyo: "Your mother in-law? You are still calling her that? Huh! Happiness did you really love my brother or you were using him?"

Happiness: "Hhyabo! Why are you speaking as if I am back with Mnotho? I am just here for Njabulo's grandmother the woman who'd been a mother to me and now, you are screaming at me like your brother and I, were already married. I loved Lonwabo and I will forever love him but if you don't believe that then it's fine!" she shouted at her feeling angered by everything that Luvuyo was saying to her. She was insulting her and questioning her loyalty.

Luvuyo: "You are giving me every reason not to trust you."

Happiness: "Okay, don't trust me then I don't care but Lonwabo knew I loved him. I don't have to prove myself to you. You've really upset me, Luvuyo. I will tell the children that you called." She said and removed her phone from her ear. She hung up the call and she clicked her tongue. She couldn't believe how much Luvuyo had upset her by questioning her loyalty. How could she??? She dropped her head and she cried as anger overwhelmed her... Mnotho jogged to get to Happiness's house because he needed to tell her that he was driving to town with the children. That was just an excuse he was going to tell to her. His true intentions were to see her and check how she was. There was a spirit of hope and healing raining in the entire family as they were embracing the fact that one of the Princes who'd been taken away from them was returned to them safe and sound. Mnotho still blamed himself for Ndabezinhle's death but he felt his heart being at ease because Ngcebo was back. It'd been difficult for him to sleep the past few days but after coming back from Ngcebo's house at dawn. He slept like a baby.

Mnotho knocked on the door of the guestroom and he didn't hear a response from Happiness. He then decided to open the door and he marched fast to get to Happiness as she was seated on the bed crying.

"Hey!" He exclaimed, he gave out his hand and pulled them back to himself because he was scared to hold her. But Happiness not responding to his voice gave him courage to hold her and so, he pulled Happiness up by her shoulders. "Why are you crying, MaMthimkhulu?" He asked and held Happiness into a hug. She didn't protest or fight Mnotho off but she cried. He closed his eyes as Happiness didn't stop crying and her body was slightly shaking because of crying. She was feeling the pain after speaking to Luvuyo. She couldn't believe how she'd disrespected her. How she questioned her love for Lonwabo.

Happiness: "You ruined my life! Why are you holding me?" she shouted as she realised that she was actually crying in the arms of Mnotho not she didn't see in the beginning. She tried

to push him back but Mnotho didn't allow her.

Mnotho: "You are hurting Happiness."

Happiness: "Yes, and that's because of you!" she shouted and managed to push Mnotho back from her body. She sat down on the bed. "Why did you make my life so miserable, Mnotho?" She looked at him something that she didn't plan out to ask but now, that Mnotho was here she felt that she needed to take out all her anger on him because he was the cause of everything.

Mnotho: "I was being cruel Happiness because I was angry and please, forgive me and that way we will be able to move on. I want us to be parents to our children." He said politely looking down at Happiness who was seated on the bed looking at her hands with tears rolling down her cheeks...

He didn't even want to talk about the possibilities of them getting back together because that was an impossible topic to talk about. He needed to focus on them being parents to the children and he was going to bring her closer to him because he needed her in his life. He had a life with Happiness and Siphosami, they were not really together but the life they shared together was heart-warming. Happiness had been a woman to him and they would laugh genuinely even though they would quarrel and tease each other about their fake marriage it never maddened him to an extent that he would lay his hands on her. But he allowed resentment took the best of him because of Elena's return. He was supposed to allow Elena to go to the city and live her life there and trust her with their son because he knew that Elena loved their child. She was his mother but he told himself he was going to learn to love her and he did. But he failed to love Happiness. He'd always recognised Happiness was a good woman and at times that would make him angry. Her sticking around made him angry but now he wasn't.

Happiness: "How can I even begin to trust you? You'll hurt my children and please know that I will leave tomorrow. It's best we cut ties."

Mnotho: "You won't stop me from being a father to the kids Happiness because if you do you'll only be hurting them. I love them and there's nothing that will stop me from being their father. And I hope that you'll forgive me." he said to Happiness and he left the room...

"Mama?" Mnotho called his mother who was standing before the fridge taking out a jug of juice. She wasn't alone in the kitchen but she was with other women of the family who were cooking... Mnotho was standing behind her.

Thembehle: "Mnotho?" she looked back at him and she moved away from the fridge, she closed it and marched to the sink. "What is it?" She asked as Mnotho was following her.

Mnotho: "Are you busy now?"

Thembehle: "I am going down to Ngcebo's house because I promised I will take him to your brother's grave. We will have to come back here with him as the elders requested that he comes here."

Mnotho: "Okay, I just wanted to request that you go check on Happiness now because I found her crying in the guestroom."

Thembehle: "Aybo! Did you try to comfort her?"

Mnotho: “Yes, I did but she was angry with me when I tried.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, let me go to her. And please, don’t stay longer in town because you all need to be here when your brother comes home.”

Mnotho: “Okay, but mkhulu asked me to buy a sheep for him. I think I will just ask the guard to go and buy that sheep. Or goat whichever is available.”

Thembelihle: “Why does he need that animal because we already have an animal that we will slaughter for today?” she asked and moved out of the house with Mnotho following her as she was going to Happiness.

Mnotho: “He’ll cleanse the insult that he casted, out to Nandipha when he accused her that she was going to use Ngcebo’s body part for wealth. I will leave now.” he replied and walked away to get to his car...

Thembelihle sat down on the bed and she held Happiness who was laying on the bed quietly with her head on the headboard. “How are you?” She asked.

Happiness: “Mama?”

Thembelihle: “Yes, I am here. Why are you crying?”

Happiness: “I just had an argument with Nonjabulo’s aunt and I think that I will have to go back home tomorrow. We will see each other when the families meet to talk, mama.” She replied and looked at her hands.

Thembelihle: “No, you are not leaving because we are going to the Easter service. We will need to go there and you’ll see we will come back better.”

Happiness: “But mama-”

Thembelihle: “No, you’ll give me no excuses. Please, get up now and don’t stay here alone that’s not the reason you came here, to stay alone and cry. You’ll go back home on Monday.”

Happiness stood up from the bed. “What about the ceremony of the initiation?” She asked walking out of the room with Thembelihle after she had wiped her face. She looked at Thembelihle.

Thembelihle: “I will join it later. The family would be there and your father in-law said there’s no problem if I go to the church service this weekend.”

Happiness: “I slept happy last night that your son came back.”

Thembelihle smiled. “That eased the pain I was feeling. I will have to go now and please, don’t stay alone, okay?” She looked at Happiness.

Happiness: “I won’t.” she promised and Thembelihle nodded with a smile...

“I will go with you to the Doctor tomorrow.” Nkosazana promised Danielle. They were inside the kitchen chopping vegetables for the feast. The other women who’d been inside the kitchen had gone to the dining room to have their breakfast... Danielle had just told Nkosazana that she was going to the Doctor the following day.

Danielle: “Thank you. I am grateful that I am not alone in this.”

Nkosazana: “You can’t be alone if you talk about what’s bothering you but we will need to tell Mnotho in the long run.”

Danielle: “Once he has his relationship with his children intact I will tell him.”

Nkosazana: “Okay, that’s better.”

“I will come back I want to go to the bathroom and I will check on Candice.” She told Nkosazana leaving the knife she was using to chop...

“Sawubona.” Happiness greeted Nkosazana who was inside the kitchen alone. She looked around for something to do and she figured she was going to ask her what she needed her to do.

Nkosazana: “Yebo, unjani?”

Happiness: “I am fine and how are you?”

Nkosazana: “I am fine.”

Happiness looked at her and she decided that today, she needed to ask Nkosazana what was her problem with her. “Nkosazana, I have noticed that you are not your usual self around me. And I was wondering if there’s something that I did wrong?” She asked and looked at her direction.

Nkosazana: “You did nothing wrong.”

Happiness: “But why are you like this?”

Nkosazana: “How should I be, Happiness? Should I smile with you because you’ve come back here? You and I didn’t have a friendship, remember?”

Happiness: “That’s not true.”

Nkosazana: “Yes, it’s true because you were just using me to pass time. I trusted you, Happiness and I shared my deepest feelings, problems and thoughts with you but no, it wasn’t mutual because all you shared with was lies. Do you know how I felt when I learnt that everything was a lie?” she asked politely and she looked back at her. She’d been avoiding speaking to her because she was still upset. She was hurt when she learnt the truth about Happiness, she’d been living in pain and all she chose was a man instead of confiding in her. She knew that she helped a number of women in the village not just pregnant teenage girls but women with marital problems. She didn’t even bother to be honest with her. She felt betrayed and even though a part of her felt sorry that she’d been going through everything she heard she went through. A big part of her was angry because Happiness made her a fool for years. She would ask her when she saw that she wasn’t alright but Happiness would lie to her. There was nothing Nkosazana valued as friendship. Her husband was the first person who taught her the value of friendship. She learnt from there that good friendship was based on honesty and trust but Happiness played with her feelings.

Happiness: “I am sorry.”

Nkosazana: “Don’t be sorry but answer my questions.”

Happiness: “You won’t understand my situation-”

Nkosazana: “Please, don’t even say that because you didn’t give me a chance to understand. I can’t believe half of the things I shared with you. I would pour my heart out to you but you, you were just stringing me along. And you know what, don’t make me understand now because you never wanted me to understand. I can never trust you again and it’s better that we keep things civil. You are traditionally a daughter in-law here and I am a daughter in-law as well. It would be better that we keep it that way.”

Happiness: “Nkosazana, I know that I have hurt you and I understand your anger but I

wasn't using you. Please, don't think like that and please, forgive me for what I have done." Nkosazana: "I don't have a grudge with you. I just realised our friendship was fake and there's nothing to grudge on there."

Happiness: "But I can see that you are upset with me."

Nkosazana: "If you are here to help us cook. Please, peel the butternut." She said to Happiness as Danielle entered the kitchen.

Happiness nodded and she moved to do what she'd said, she was feeling that she was wrong to do what she'd done to Nkosazana. She made a fool out of her and no human being would have been happy to learn that. But she was going to apologise to her and restore their friendship...

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She sent her hand beneath the pillow to take her phone that was ringing... It was Thursday of the following day since Ngcebo woke up... She opened her eyes to check who was calling. She smiled and she looked at his side of the bed. It was empty and he wasn't in the room...

Nandipha: "My dear sister friend."

Palesa laughed. "You don't sound sad does that mean our dear husband is awake? You haven't been greeting me with a relaxed voice lately."

Nandipha: "How are you, Palesa?"

Palesa: "I am fine and how are you? I saw Duma last night and he told me that he came to the funeral but then he didn't see you."

Nandipha: "Yes, he told me that he will come but then he wasn't going to see me even if I went to the funeral because obviously they would have rumoured me to date him."

Palesa: "Hmm. And how's your husband? You are not telling me. I was scared to call you yesterday because I didn't want to be disappointed."

Nandipha: "He's awake-" she shook her head and laughed as she heard Palesa screaming completely as if she'd won some lottery. Nandipha sat up straight and she waited for Palesa's scream to end. "Ain't you at work, child?"

Palesa: "I am inside the car driving to work."

Nandipha: "And where's Phemelo as you are screaming? Are you actually telling me that you are abusing the child with that horrible scream?"

Palesa: "Oh! Her husband is awake and now, she's being cheeky on me. Don't even start with me because I will remind you of your behaviour and you'll cry like an absolute mad woman."

Nandipha laughed. "Palesa, can you leave me alone with such talk but really, where's my son?" She asked and smiled feeling that deep down she was free even though Ngcebo said everything he said to her the previous night. But she was free that her children had their father back.

Palesa: "He's not here otherwise you would have heard him complain. How happy are you, my friend? Your husband is back."

Nandipha: "Yesterday was his brother's funeral and what did I say?"

Palesa: "There wouldn't be a funeral for him and we didn't even believe you. I must confess, for a moment I thought that you were really crazy."

Nandipha: "I didn't want to let him go but he just couldn't appreciate that he is back to us. He has been grumpy on me for no reason at all I would try to speak to him and he would be rude. I was clueless until his family came here. He shouted that I served them with court papers."

Palesa: "Hawu!"

Nandipha: "Yeah. He even told me I don't care Palesa. Apparently I deprived him his mother's voice that he wanted to hear."

Palesa: "Eh! I didn't expect this."

Nandipha: "I am still shocked."

Palesa: "Don't allow him to make you angry because you've come too far my friend. You must smile now I know that you wouldn't smile genuinely while he's cold towards you but the children will surely make you smile."

Nandipha sighed. "I will see you this weekend, okay?" She promised her.

Palesa: "You'll be coming back for the shoot?"

Nandipha: "Yes, I will sleep in your house."

Palesa: "Okay, babe. I love you."

Nandipha: "Kea go rata ka pelo yaaka yotlhe!" she said, Palesa giggled and Nandipha removed the phone from her ear. She placed the phone back beneath the pillow. She then got up from the bed and she kneeled on the floor. She closed her eyes and thanked the Lord because he was above all ruling power and spirits, he was above all gods in the world...

Nandipha then got up from the floor when she was done and she made the bed. She moved around the room cleaning it and packing away Ngcebo's medication. She then opened the windows and left the room for the bathroom. She was walking to the bathroom and she was planning ahead.

"Hawu, mama, sawubona. You already have your bag?" Nandipha asked MaNtombela and she took her bag that she was walking with slowly.

MaNtombela: "Yes, I want to have it in the lounge because I will be waiting over there for the car to come. I will have to go back home now."

Nandipha: "But you won't leave without eating? I haven't made breakfast and look, now you are awake so early."

MaNtombela: "I heard you didn't sleep last night because someone was crying. Who was crying between them? I was reluctant to wake up."

Nandipha: "It's Ntokomalo who kept me awake." She replied and placed the bag on the couch as they have reached the lounge where Ngcebo was seated with Randall and the four girls... Ngcebo didn't sleep but he'd been watching TV all night because he didn't want to sleep. He was awake when Ntokomalo and Nandipha were awake but he wasn't with them.

He had a crutch that helped him walk around, Randall was the one who went to the local hospital to request the crutch for him because he needed it...

MaNtombela: "Oh, and she's not here."

Nandipha: "I bet she's still sleeping. Sanibona." She greeted them and her eyes looked at her girls who was seated on the couch with their father. They were talking with him when she entered the room and Randall was concentrated on the TV and his phone. Nandipha didn't send her eyes to Ngcebo.

Them: "YEBO!"

Buhle: "You woke up late mommy."

Similo: "AWUGEZILE FUTHI!" (You haven't bath!)

Nandipha: "Yes, and I bet your uncle has given you some porridge, right?" she looked at Randall with a wink and Randall laughed.

Girls: "YES!"

Nandipha: "And he made breakfast for everyone?"

Randall: "You are dreaming now."

MaNtombela: "Who can make breakfast while the woman of the house is sleeping?" she asked and looked at her.

Nandipha giggled. "I made breakfast back at home when the woman of the house was sleeping. How does this thing work, kanti, mama?" she asked.

MaNtombela laughed. "Yey! You were my daughter, gha!" She said.

Randall: "Just go and shower because I am hungry."

Nandipha: "I wonder when are you getting married?" she wondered out loud and turned to leave the lounge with Randall laughing.

"Mama, you are dressed up nicely. Are you leaving as well?" Nandipha asked her mother who was coming out of the guestroom dressed up formally.

Faith: "Yes, we are leaving with your brother."

Nandipha: "No, please don't go. I doubt that Ngcebo would go back to Johannesburg right away and I should be there by Saturday because I have the photoshoot on Monday. My girls will be included."

Faith: "You want to leave with us?"

Nandipha: "Yes, Thula will be with Randall in the car with some of them and I will be with you or it can be vice versa. It's Friday tomorrow and so, can we leave tomorrow, mama?"

Faith: "You've spoken to Ngcebo about it?"

Nandipha: "No, and I am going there for work I can't just stay here for no reason. I have to go there."

Faith: "I will drive to Mzingazi then and tomorrow I will drive back here to take you. I don't know if your brother will want to leave with me."

Nandipha: "Hawu, can I go with you too?"

Faith: "Ay, you won't be going with me there, just go and shower you'll find me in the kitchen." She said and she walked away from her... Nandipha then proceeded with her journey to get to the bathroom...

“Are you going with mom?” Nandipha asked Randall who was with her inside the kitchen helping her set the table for breakfast.

Randall: “No, I will wait for her here but how are you leaving with the children I heard their father talk about some ceremony that will happen this weekend.”

Nandipha: “Randall, I have a magazine cover that I have to do. What should I do then? I should stop doing it? Don’t you think I deserve to do something that will make me happy after everything that I have been through?”

Randall: “Yes, you are right and when last did you spend time with me? Don’t make your brother jealous that you don’t spend time with him now.”

Nandipha laughed. “Ah! We will have time tomorrow I will drive with you and we will spend time at home tomorrow because I am going to Palesa’s house on Saturday I will come back on Sunday.” She told him.

Randall: “Okay, don’t count my plate because I will go eat outside on the benches. I want some fresh air.”

Nandipha: “Okay, I will join you then. Dish the food for us and go, I will ask Thula to watch over the girls here when they eat because they won’t even follow me. They’re following their father now.” she said moving to the stove to get more food and Randall did as she said.

Randall: “They’re very happy that he’s back.”

Nandipha: “Yeah.”

Randall: “But I don’t see that in your eyes. Ain’t you happy?”

Nandipha: “I am happy. I will go call them. You can go with our food now.” she walked away from the table and marched to the lounge where the noise was. Ntokomalo was also awake and she was seated with her sisters.

Nandipha: “Breakfast is ready you can go and eat.”

“Where are heading?” Faith asked as Nandipha wasn’t walking to the kitchen’s direction. She stood up along with MaNtombela.

Nandipha: “I am going to call Thula to watch over the kids.”

Ngcebo: “You won’t be watching over them because?” He asked and got up from the couch taking the crutch that Buhle was giving him. He’d seen that she was avoiding him. And he didn’t understand why she was avoiding him because all he told her at dawn was how he felt. But now she was acting as if he’d killed her or abused her... Faith and MaNtombela followed each other with the four girls leaving Nongcebo standing by her father’s side.

Nandipha: “Randall and I want to sit outside.”

Ngcebo: “Why would you eat outside? You are angry because I told you that you were wrong. Is that the reason you are avoiding me?”

Nandipha: “I didn’t avoid you Ngcebo and I just want to be with my brother. What’s wrong if I do that because everything I do here is wrong?”

Ngcebo: “Who said that did you hear me say that?”

Nandipha: “Just go and have your food, let me be.” She said and walked away from him because now, their daughter was looking at them...

“I think she long wanted to break up with you and she saw this opportunity as a good

opportunity.” Nandipha commented to the story that her brother had just told her about, a break up with his girlfriend. She told him clearly that she wanted them to talk about him not her. She wanted to listen to him.

Randall: “No, she was being dramatic for no reason and she thought I was going to beg her to stay with me.”

Nandipha laughed. “Don’t be like that maybe she’s just pregnant.” She guessed and looked at him holding in laughter as she waited for his response.

Randall: “Hell to the no! She’s not pregnant and Faith would very much whip me if I can make a girl pregnant while she’s still paying for my studies.”

Nandipha laughed. “Ah! That one, when last did she hit you? She threatened me on Tuesday and I got up quickly because I didn’t want to be embarrassed and be beaten up by my mother in my house.” She narrated and they laughed.

Randall: “I am a good boy for now and so, I haven’t been getting any beating.”

Nandipha: “I laughed pretty bad when mama was hitting you for scratching her car. I was watching you but I pretended like I didn’t see you. You cried!” She placed her plate down and pointed Randall as she laughed at him. He was looking at her with his jaw dropped because he wasn’t expecting this. “It was so funny, damn! And I bet you haven’t been clubbing since then.” She added.

Randall: “Don’t be too forward but I haven’t been. And I have just nailed some local dance I want to go out clubbing just to show it off. Would you help me?”

Nandipha: “Hha! How can I help you because when mama can learn that I helped you I will get a very long lecture about being a responsible sister? ‘There’s nobody who will have to look after him when I am gone beside you but now, I don’t trust you.’” she mimicked her mother and they laughed.

Randall: “I will come visit you at your house and I will go out. Let me show you this dance. I am no longer hip hoping now but I also doing local.” He stood up to show his sister the dance and Nandipha concentrated on him.

She laughed and clapped her hands. “Who helped you?” She asked and looked back as she heard the gate being opened... It was her mother in-law’s car. Nandipha looked back at her brother who was seated down now.

Randall: “That girl whom my girlfriend saw me with. She’s the one who helped me. Would you help me then, sis?”

“Sure case!” She promised and gave Randall her fist, they fist bumped...

“SANIBONA!” Thembelihle greeted Nandipha and her brother, she had just gotten off her car and she looked at them as she walked up to the house. Nandipha and Randall greeted her back. “Who’s with your husband inside the house as you are seated out there?” She asked Nandipha.

Nandipha: “He’s with my mothers and the children.” She replied and Thembelihle nodded her head before heading inside the house...

“We really appreciate that you came, MaNtombela even though I didn’t see you see you properly but siyabonga.” Thembelihle sent her word of gratitude to MaNtombela. She was

seated on the couch with Nongcebo on her lap and the others were on the floor with their dolls... Thembelihle had joined them on the table when they were eating and she had food with them. Ngcebo then left them to get dressed because he was leaving with his mother. Faith wasn't with them now she was in the bedroom to gather her things because she was leaving for Mzingazi.

MaNtombela: "It's understandable that you couldn't see me but his service was more inspirational for the youth. It was beautiful."

Thembelihle: "Yes, and people came in numbers."

MaNtombela: "Yes."

Thembelihle: "You've done us great honour for being here with Nandipha."

MaNtombela: "You don't have to thank me for that." She said to her and Thembelihle nodded with a smile. She then looked at Nongcebo and held a conversation with her as she was seated on her.

"I am ready, mama. Let's go. Where's your mother, Buhle? She's back?" Ngcebo asked his daughter who was seated down with her sisters.

Buhle: "Mama is in the kitchen."

Thando: "Where are you going, daddy?"

Ngcebo: "I am going somewhere with your grandmother but I will come back. You'll tell your mother that I am gone."

Thembelihle: "Hhaybo, go and tell her yourself." She suggested and looked at Ngcebo, she saw that he wasn't fully himself. But she hopped they were going to talk about what was bothering him when they get to Ndabezinhle's grave.

Ngcebo: "Mama MaNtombela, thank you for coming. Travel with grace."

MaNtombela: "Okay, Mageba. You'll be better soon, your wife will look after you just like she'd been doing when you were laying on your bed. Don't worry and we are just grateful that you are alive."

Ngcebo: "Thank you." he said and he limped to the kitchen to tell Nandipha that he was leaving with his mother now... He found her washing the dishes and her brother was helping her while they were talking but they stopped talking when they recognised his presence.

Ngcebo: "Nandipha?"

Nandipha: "Yebo?" she looked back at him and Ngcebo didn't say anything for a few minutes. Nandipha didn't remove her eyes from him as he was looking at her. She didn't understand why he was looking at her without talking she then turned to the sink because he wasn't speaking.

Ngcebo: "You won't come closer to me?" he asked her firmly. Nandipha wiped her hands and she turned to Ngcebo. She stood before him and looked at him. "I am going to my brother's grave with my mother and I will come back home later because we will drive to the palace after that. You and the girls don't have to wait up for me." He told her looking into her eyes.

Nandipha: "Okay." She said politely without moving away from him because he couldn't keep his eyes from her eyes. Nandipha then removed her eyes from his eyes and she turned

back to the sink to proceed with what she was doing. After a few seconds of being on the sink she turned back to look at him thinking he'd walked away but Ngcebo was still standing where he was. He moved from his position when Nandipha looked at him...

"Ngiyabonga mama that you came and you've been here with me from the first day till now. I would have actually gone crazy if you and mama didn't come here to be with me. I really appreciate it." Nandipha said to MaNtombela, she was standing before her holding her hands. They were outside the house next to MaNtombela's car.

MaNtombela hugged Nandipha. "You have grown now and you've shown the greatest strength as a woman. Don't ever change that to accommodate people because you are fearless my child." She said to Nandipha.

Nandipha: "Thank you and please, drive safe back home."

"I will!" She said and turned to wave goodbye to the girls who were standing by the gate with their uncle. She'd shared goodbye words with them.

The girls waved back. "BYE GOGO!" They screamed.

Nandipha then helped MaNtombela inside the car and she closed the door once she was inside the car. She looked at the car as it drove out of the premises... Her mother had long left for Mzingazi... Nandipha marched to her brother and kids.

Nandipha: "We don't have much to do here let's drive to Richards bay. Do you want to see the sea?" She asked the girls and smiled. They screamed and nodded, while they ran back to the house because they were excited...

"Mageba, it's me, Ngcebo. Sawubona." Ngcebo greeted Ndabezihle. He was seated on top of his grave that had the tombstone they put on, the same day of his burial. Thembelihle was standing next to him.

Thembelihle: "Speak to him." she encouraged and pressed her hand on Ngcebo's shoulder as he wasn't speaking now but he had his head looking down because he was crying.

Ngcebo: "I don't know what to say, mama. Our ancestors accepted his spirit but they didn't accept mine. Ndabezihle had just gotten back from abroad to spent his entire life with his son and everything just vanished before him."

Thembelihle: "Nhlakanipho cried when we told him about his father."

Ngcebo: "How's he now, mama?"

Thembelihle: "I left him playing with other children and his mother said he can stay because the school are closed for Easter holidays."

Ngcebo: "Hee! Ndabezihle, I remember when he was angry that we woke him up in his house just to speak about his friend selling drugs in his club. He told us to leave his house, mama. Imagine!" he looked at his mother and Thembelihle laughed. She sat down next to Ngcebo.

Thembelihle: "And what did you do?"

Ngcebo: "Ha! We were with our king phela, mama. He was the first to tell him that he wasn't going anywhere. We all followed him, mama." He reflected and they laughed with his mother. "He was angry and I remember all the good times we had together him, Banele and

I. We would travel Gauteng with his squad and sometimes my squad. Well, Banele had no squad he was just a kid. Him and I, we were very much alike when it comes to having multiple girlfriends but Banele would just say he was dating them at once because he wanted polygamy.” He added.

Thembelihle laughed. “I really thought that he was going to marry Naledi because she was just a decent girl and they seemed to love each other.” She said and placed her hand on the writings.

Ngcebo: “I supposed not everyone of us are meant for marriage but what I know about Ndabezinhle is that he was happy with his life. He was satisfied with the way things were in his life.”

Thembelihle: “He made a name for himself and he’ll forever be known. It’s been so difficult for me to accept that the two of you had left me and I was worried that I won’t have a say in burying you.”

Ngcebo: “I am sorry for everything that my wife put you through. I don’t condone what she did because you are my mother and she knows that I don’t like what she did. It was wrong.”

Thembelihle: “What matters to me now is that you are here with me.”

Ngcebo: “Let’s go sit under the tree now. It’s hot in here.” He told his mother standing up and Thembelihle stood up after him... Ngcebo then looked at his brother’s grave and he bowed his head with his eyes closed. “Rest in peace Mageba, Mntwana, sthuli sika Ndaba. We will always remember you.” he said quietly and he walked away with his mother.

“I hope that you won’t leave right away. We will have to inform the journalists that you are well now because Dalingcebo said Nandipha asked we don’t tell them that you are dead.”

Thembelihle told Ngcebo as they sat on the ground under the tree. They both straightened their legs.

Ngcebo: “We won’t leave right away.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, that good. Langalibalele is coming back this weekend as you know and he’ll have to cleanse you. The adults said they will speak to you though. You mustn’t sleep with your wife that’s if you haven’t already.”

Ngcebo: “Hawu!”

Thembelihle: “Yes, you have been in a dark place and intimacy is also more spiritual than physical. You’ll be with her after the cleansing.” She informed and looked at him. Ngcebo didn’t say anything but he rubbed his scalp with his head looking down as he was digesting what he was being told. “There’s something that’s bothering you. I have seen it this morning. Share it with me.” She placed her hand on his shoulder and she looked at him.

Ngcebo: “I was alone trapped in the dark and I could hear my children telling me to come back. I could hear Nandipha crying. I am angry mama. They didn’t even give me time to accept this gift and they had to trap my spirit into that kind of darkness. I am angry and I don’t know what I can do to remove this fury that I have in my heart. And I was always thought I will hear your voice.” He confided in his mother and Thembelihle held him into a hug.

Thembelihle: “I am sorry my child but we should be grateful to the Lord that you are here. I

think that you must come to the Easter service from Friday. Happiness and I will be going to the service. It will help you uplift your spirit and on Sunday when they cleanse you it would be full perfection.”

Ngcebo: “You are right. I will speak to Nandipha and we will come. I think I will convince Dalingcebo as well because he needs Jesus. He really does. And Bhuti Mnotho included.” He said and they laughed with his mother.

Thembelihle: “That would be great. Ngiyakuthanda Ngcebo, mfanawami.”

Ngcebo: “Ngiyakuthanda nami, mama. And I think we should drive home now.”

Thembelihle: “Yes.” She said and got up from the grass. She gave Ngcebo her hand and he got up from the grass with his crutch. They walked together to the car. “Don’t you think now it’s time that you let the children come to the palace?” She asked Ngcebo just trying her luck as the driver drove them to the palace. She thought maybe he would have a change of heart.

Ngcebo: “No, that won’t happen.” He told her firmly and his mother didn’t say anything.

Ngcebo forced his eyes closed and he drew a long sigh. He opened them and he looked at his hands, they were slightly shaking. He folded them into a fist and he allowed his blood to cool down...

“The palace is full.” Ngcebo commented and looked at his mother shortly as the driver drove the car inside the palace that was full.

Thembelihle: “Yes, your return has healed our bleeding hearts. And we need to give thanks that you’ve returned.” She said looking at him and Ngcebo smiled, he nodded once. They got off the car for the family gathering...

S5 >> EPISODE 42

“You’ll be here for the whole week or you won’t stay for the week?” Dalingcebo asked Ngcebo, it was after 9pm and they were walking together to their parking lot after a long day in the palace. Dalingcebo was going to his house and Ngcebo was going to be driven by a guard to his house because he came to the palace in his mother’s vehicle.

Ngcebo: “We will leave next weekend. I am tired now I want to go rest.”

Dalingcebo: “Yeah, we had a long day. Let me drive you home let the guard go.” He told Ngcebo as they’ve reached his car and Ngcebo was looking around for the guard that was going to drive him home.

Ngcebo: “Okay, let’s go and tell me, bhuti’ Mnotho. How are things?” he asked and stepped inside the car with him... Dalingcebo started the engine.

Dalingcebo: “Eish, I have been apologising, first time when I did he asked me questions about the affair and I answered him but I never told him that it’d been going on for three years.”

Ngcebo: “That would have killed him for sure.”

Dalingcebo: “Yeah, the last time I did apologise he didn’t even want to talk to me but for now, I think I will just give him space.”

Ngcebo: "You are right but he will forgive you. But your relationship will never be the same. You'll have to be forgiven so that you work together smoothly."

Dalingcebo: "If I had power I was going to leave the position so that I can make things easier for him but I can't leave the position."

Ngcebo: "No, don't run away from him but he must get used to seeing you that way his heart will accept you and what happened."

Dalingcebo: "Yeah, you are right."

Ngcebo: "I want to see Qhawe tomorrow."

Dalingcebo: "The elders are coming to your house tomorrow for Nandipha. They didn't tell you that?"

Ngcebo: "Oh! I forgot about that but they will come in the morning I can see him later. What did they say to her for them to see the need to cleanse her? They didn't tell me the exact words."

Dalingcebo: "Mkhulu said she wants to keep your body to use your parts for wealth. He kept saying that she'll use them for that purpose and it's us who stopped him saying that any further."

Ngcebo kept quiet for a while and he clicked his tongue as he felt angered by what Dalingcebo was telling him. "Does he even know Nandipha as he said that to her? Why did he find the reason to talk like that about someone he doesn't know, personally?" He asked and looked at Dalingcebo.

Dalingcebo: "I don't know, I think they were just angry and they had their pressure up because they couldn't understand why she didn't want to let go."

Ngcebo: "He said that in her presence?"

Dalingcebo: "Yeah, the night you were declared dead. Hawu, kanti wena didn't you ask Nandipha what really happened?"

Ngcebo: "What was I supposed to ask because she's been grumpy since I have woken up? And I was also angry that she wanted to leave me."

Dalingcebo: "She wanted to leave you?"

Ngcebo: "Yes, she wanted to leave on Tuesday because she was angry that she was going to be married to you."

Dalingcebo: "But she didn't leave you. What's making you angry there?"

Ngcebo: "You wouldn't understand."

Dalingcebo: "Let me tell you what really happened. The family got to the hospital after us because I drove to your house with you to get Nandipha. When they got there, mama had a problem that I didn't call her first."

Ngcebo: "Why didn't you call her?"

Dalingcebo: "Hawu, I didn't think of her but I thought of your wife that you were going home to. She complained over silly things like Nandipha holding you, she told her to let go of your hand and she did. When you were declared dead some time passed but I don't think it made it to an hour as we were crying. Nandipha then said your body is still hot and so, you are not dead. Everyone tried to convince her to let go because your heart has stopped but she

said she will be with your body until it turns cold. Mntwana supported her that we must let her do what she wanted to do. But mama said she wasn't going to allow your body to rot in that room. Nandipha insisted she wanted to stay with your body until it turns cold and she was going to pay for the room and that's where they began attacking her saying she'll use your body for wealth. She then told them she didn't care what they think about her and she asked that we leave because she was your legal wife, the Doctor supported her and we then had to leave the room only because they didn't want to let her stay with your body until it turns cold. I wasn't there when mama returned the second day but that's where she had papers of legal rights over your body." He saw the need to tell him exactly what happened because it was clear to him that their mother had an unknown problem with their wives not the rest of the wives but just Nontobeko and Nandipha. He thought his twin brother was just blinded but Ngcebo wasn't blinded.

Ngcebo: "I get all that but still that didn't give Nandipha a right to serve my parents with legal papers. Why didn't she try to reason with them? She just had them thrown out as if they were just people who were not important to me. That's not right and I will never see it as right. And in all that explanation I didn't hear you tell me that she stated the reasons she believed I wasn't dead. I am sure if she had told the family that the ancestors might be punishing me. They were going to listen to her but no, my wife always wants to do things the way she wants and she doesn't care who she hurts or disrespect in the process as long as she'll get to the results. I hate that."

Dalingcebo: "Hhayi, ke angazi. If you want to keep mom happy and give her false proof that Nandipha was the biggest mistake of your life, you'll be doing that yourself by destroying your marriage. And you'll have nobody to blame but yourself because I don't get why you are angry. I would personally kill for a wife like Nandipha. But destroy your marriage ke mfana."

Ngcebo: "I never said I want to destroy my marriage."

Dalingcebo: "Yeah, you like saying you didn't say things when we know that you didn't say them. I know that you didn't say it but your actions say that." He said to him and Ngcebo didn't voice out a response to his statement. They drove in absolute silence for a few minutes.

Ngcebo: "Were you really going to marry my wife?" he asked him after that few minutes of silence. He looked at him and Dalingcebo laughed as he saw the seriousness of his face. "It's not funny." He added without laughing.

Dalingcebo: "Well, Nandipha is beautiful and she got a catchy body-"

Ngcebo: "Voetsek! Dalingcebo!" he swore at him and he fisted his arms. Dalingcebo was just laughing trying to push his fist away from him.

Dalingcebo: "I wouldn't have married her but dad was blackmailing me over there telling me this is my fault because if I didn't cheat with Elena none of this would have happened. I left the house wishing you can wake up because I understood his fears that the girls were going to have a stepfather if Nandipha moves on and what if he molests them. I was blaming myself too and after hearing him say that I felt the greater guilt. So, honestly speaking if you

did die for real I was going to marry her.”

Ngcebo: “You were going to marry her while you don’t love her and mistreat her like Mnotho did with his wife. You didn’t take notes, neh?”

Dalingcebo: “No, don’t you remember I once wanted an arranged marriage.”

Ngcebo laughed as Dalingcebo rose the past. “Tsk! But she wasn’t going to agree to marry you. I am certain about that.” Ngcebo commented.

Dalingcebo: “Ey ikukhathazile le ndaba?” (This thing bothered you) he looked and Ngcebo, and they laughed. Dalingcebo took the corner to the road leading him to Ngcebo’s house.

Ngcebo: “Not that much because I am back and there’s nobody who’ll take her away from me. And you, when’s the divorce?”

Dalingcebo: “It’s near and I hope that it won’t be bad.” he said and stepped out of his car to open the gate as his car had stopped before Ngcebo’s premises.

“Don’t open the gate I will get off the car.” Ngcebo raised his voice for him as he’d opened the door of the car. Dalingcebo stopped opening the gate and he went to Ngcebo as he was moving forward. “I will see you tomorrow then.”

Dalingcebo: “Sure, bafo.” They shared a brotherly hug and Dalingcebo moved back to his car while Ngcebo proceeded to his house...

“Gal, will you pay me for always requesting that I sing for you? And I am actually singing for your boyfriend.” Nandipha asked her ex-classmate that she was talking to on the phone...

Nandipha was seated on the bed facing the headboard with her legs crossed and her laptop and papers were before her when she received Layla’s phone call... Her brother and the girls were asleep, the girls were the first to fall asleep because they were tired from all the playing with water and running around that they did in Richards’ bay with Randall in the sea. They were enjoying themselves and Nandipha along with Thula were watching over them closely while they played. They fell asleep in the car and they had to wake up to bath and sleep again...

Layla: “Please, just sing the song for me. You don’t have to sing that nasty one. You will sing it for me when I am horny.”

Nandipha laughed. “I can’t believe you are begging a dick using my voice and you can sing but no it should be mine.” She commented.

Layla: “It’s not the same.”

Nandipha: “Okay, but you should really pay me now.”

Layla laughed. “I will do. Nandy, I will hang up now my airtime-” she couldn’t finish off her statement. Nandipha removed the phone from her ear and she connected her hotspot to her laptop to search the lyrics of the song that Layla wanted her to sing for her. She knew that always when she texted or call her she would be asking her to send voice notes to her of a certain part of a song. Nandipha would only do it when she knew the song.

Nandipha then tapped on the record option and she sang from the part she requested she begin. “... Three years of ups and downs, nothin’ here to show for now. And I know it ain’t pretty when the fire burns out. Calling me when I am drunk, reminding me of what I have done and I know it ain’t pretty when you try to move on... I hope someday we’ll sit down

together and laugh with each other about these days, these days. All our troubles will lay to rest then we'll wish we could come back to these days, these days... Oh! I know, I know." She sang for the girl while clicking her fingers for the sound and the lyrics ended up making her think about herself. Where the first verse went on about being 'too young to feel this old watching us both turn cold' she released the voice note to send but her mind was no longer there. It was on herself as she felt that she was actually too young to feel this old and to deal with us things. But what was she supposed to do now because she'd already vowed?

"Who are you singing to?" Ngcebo asked Nandipha standing behind her back. He entered the door when Nandipha began singing on the phone and he didn't speak nor make a sound but he listened to her sing.

Nandipha turned back and looked at Ngcebo. "I am singing to some girl." She replied and turned her head forward to gather her things together because she was certain he was going to want to sit on the bed.

Ngcebo: "Oh, she's your friend?" He asked and sat down on the bed, he unfastening the buttons of his shirt.

Nandipha: "Palesa is my friend."

Ngcebo: "Why would you sing to a girl then?"

Nandipha: "What's wrong if I sing to her?" she asked and got off the bed with her laptop and papers, she marched to her bag with it.

Ngcebo: "It's nothing I was just asking. Please, don't sleep as yet I want us to talk when I come back from the bathroom." He said looking at her behind as she was bent down to her bag packing the laptop and papers.

Nandipha: "Oh!" she got up and turned to the bed's side and Ngcebo was still looking at her. She felt like she couldn't keep quiet now. "Why are you looking at me? You keep looking at me and it's weird." She asked.

Ngcebo: "You're my wife and I haven't been seeing you in days. What's wrong if I look at you because I can't really have sex with you now?"

Nandipha: "Really? That's what you are thinking nje, having sex with me? You've been talking shit to me and you think I will sleep with you?"

Ngcebo: "I was just angry just like you were angry."

She didn't say anything to him but she proceeded to the bed and Ngcebo left the room to get to the bathroom. He could see she wasn't happy and that was just his fault that she was unhappy. But he wasn't wrong for telling her how he felt. He wasn't going to hide his feelings because Nandipha was going to be angry. Nandipha knew how important his mother was to him but she chose to do what she did to her. But it was alright he wasn't going to bring it up again. He was supposed to make her happy because he'd heard her cry badly... Nandipha placed her phone down after speaking to her mother who was telling her that she was going to come by 1pm to fetch her and the children. Ngcebo entered the room and he dressed up for bed. He could feel that he was going to have to sleep tonight because he was tired.

Ngcebo: "The family will come here early in the morning and they will cleanse you because

they insulted you by saying you'll use my body parts for wealth.”

Nandipha: “Oh. I am leaving tomorrow by 1pm mom will be here and we will leave with the kids and my brother.”

Ngcebo: “Hawu! And you are only telling me that now? You can't leave while I am here and what's there for you in Johannesburg that you can just leave. I haven't been with you and the children and you are just leaving. You are telling me that you are leaving you are not asking.” He raised his voice.

Nandipha: “I should ask? No, I should inform you that I am leaving. Why should I ask for permission because you are not my father but my partner? Isn't that we only ask each other the permission to go somewhere only if a person's plans clash with our main plans?”

Ngcebo: “I was going to tell you that mom said we should attend the Easter service because it will help me spiritually and you are my wife you must come with me and the children. I thought we can stay here for a week and then we can go back to our lives in Johannesburg.”

Nandipha: “I have a magazine shoot on Monday I can't stay here.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, you'll come back with the children after the shoot.”

Nandipha: “No, I won't come back because I have other things that I need to do like my book and I haven't been to the gym for quite some time. I need time to myself. I want to go back to my life. I won't be coming back.”

Ngcebo: “Leave on Sunday then and those things you can still do them when we go back to Jozi but now, you want me to beg you to stay here.”

Nandipha: “I don't want you to beg me because I am going because of work. And if you don't understand that then I don't know what I will say.”

Ngcebo: “You are not even happy that I am back but all you want to do is rush back to Johannesburg.”

Nandipha: “What do you want me to do? I should throw a party for you? It seems like you have forgotten why you were shot in the first place but regardless of the fact that you didn't listen to me. I nursed you and you woke up to tell me that I don't care about you.”

Ngcebo: “I am sorry I said that can we move on from that?”

Nandipha shook her head, she didn't want to have regrets because this man was the father of her children but she was hurting that Ngcebo was like this towards her. He had unreasonable anger and he was speaking to her as if he didn't care about her. He was speaking as if she was just his servant.

Nandipha: “I think you must go to the palace and be there for that week that way you'll hear your mom's voice that I deprived you.”

Ngcebo: “How can you speak like that!” he shouted at her and Nandipha made a move to get away from her. She needed to rest and she wasn't going to rest if she kept arguing with this ball of fire that Ngcebo was. But Ngcebo held her wrist to stop her from leaving. “You are being disrespectful for no reason and you haven't even apologised for what you did. And I can see that you gave my parents the same attitude. I stand by you when I have to but that doesn't give you a right to do as you please. You were wrong and that should get through your scalp because now, you want me to praise you for disrespecting my parents. I won't do

that.” He vomited his anger to her.

Nandipha: “Why did we get married Ngcebo?” she asked politely as if he didn’t just shout her. But she felt the need to ask him this burning question.

Ngcebo: “What kind of a question is that?”

Nandipha: “Why did we get married if I won’t have say in things that concerns you? I wasn’t going to bury you if you died because I am not allowed in your parents’ palace and your mother stated it clearly to me that you were going to be taken home. My children were going to come to your funeral as ‘just some family members’ Your mother just came to me to tell me that you’ll be buried on Wednesday. What’s the point of being married if when you die I will have to fold hands and watch your parents take over and give me orders? It’s clear that even if you can be sick maybe things that would need us to decide on medication types. I won’t have a say because I am not your mom. Why didn’t you just stay as a bachelor and let your mother rule your life and take decisions about your life? I will spend my entire life with you, nursing you, loving you and doing all my wife duties but when you die I won’t bury you the way I wish? Would you be happy if my mother does what your mother did to me?

Would you be happy if my mother curses the day you met me and says it to your face?

Would you be happy if my mother doesn’t even call not even once to check on our kids? Not you because she doesn’t care about you but your kids? I really don’t get why you married me if I will have to take orders from your parents about you. I think you have to sit here and re-think your decision of making me your wife because it surely doesn’t feel like I am one.” She pulled her hand from his hand and she walked out of the room to get to the guest bedroom to be alone. She did what she didn’t want to do what she thought she was done doing. She’d cried enough for Ngcebo and she thought when he wakes up they were going to be happy...

“Where’s your wife? I thought you said she’s sleeping but she isn’t inside your bedroom.”

Thembelihle asked Ngcebo as he was seated down eating cereals he’d made for himself. It was 5am and his family had come to his house.

Ngcebo: “She’s sleeping in the guestroom.”

Thembelihle: “Hawu! Why? And why do you look sad?”

Ngcebo: “It’s nothing mama. I will go wake Nandipha and her brother.”

Thembelihle: “No, sit over there and I will go wake her. She’ll wake her brother.” She said and walked away to get to the guestroom...

“Didn’t Ngcebo tell you that we will come here as you are sleeping?” Thembelihle asked Nandipha who was getting off the bed after she’d been woken up by Thembelihle.

Nandipha: “He told me but he didn’t tell me time. I thought that he will wake me because I didn’t know the time.”

Thembelihle: “Why are you sleeping here?”

Nandipha: “It’s nothing. I will go wake my brother.”

Thembelihle: “Sleeping in a guestroom when you had an argument is not how you should do things as a wife. I am not saying you had an argument but that’s the only explanation I can make out for you sleeping here.” She lectured her walking behind her as they left the guestroom.

Nandipha: “Yebo.”

Thembelihle: “Get dressed and come outside the gate.”

Nandipha: “Yebo” she opened the door to her brother’s room to wake room...

“We doubted you and threw insults at you and for that we are sorry as a family. Our pressure was high and we couldn’t trust the possibility of Ngcebo waking up after being declared dead. We are old people traditional people and the only explanation we got out of your request was witchcraft. For that we are sorry and we have this animal to cleanse you.” The uncle elder who’d cast an accusation at Nandipha apologised to her. She was kneeling down on the straw mat with her head looking down as he spoke. The uncle was holding the goat by its horns when he apologised.

Aunt Nomkhosi: “Yes, and that just shows that a person who can know her husband better is a wife. You understood what was happening but we didn’t.”

Nandipha: “I forgive you and I am sorry for being harsh and using the approach that I used to when I took him. I will never do it again.”

Uncle elders: “Ay siyabonga.” He said and he looked back at the brothers. They then took the goat for it to be slaughtered... Dalisu was amongst them with all their sons and elders but he wasn’t going to talk because he wasn’t the one who’d requested this to happen. It was uncle elder. This wasn’t his time...

“Why should I wash my whole body? All I know is I can just wash my hands that’s how it’s done where I come from.” Nandipha asked and looked at Nkosazana’s direction even though she couldn’t see her face because of the dark. She was standing before her after she’d place a basin with water that was mixed with umswane wembuzi. (a goat’s dung/waste) They were hiding behind the trees to have Nandipha cleansed.

Nkosazana laughed. “Zulu elders like doing things the right way without short cuts and that means you’ll wash your whole body. Please do it fast before the sun rises because people will see the prince’s wife naked body.” She encouraged and they laughed. Nandipha then took off her clothes and she held her breath before pouring that cold water on her body... She then took a blanket from Nkosazana, she covered her body and they marched back to her premises... The meat was cooked outside the premises and they were going to eat it outside the premises but Nandipha wasn’t allowed to eat it...

“Hmm! MAMA UYANUKA MANI!” (Mom, you have a bad odour.) Similo told her mother loudly as she was meeting up with her on the hallway. She held her tiny nose and looked up at her mother. Similo was the only one awake.

Nandipha: “Musa ukuphapha wena. Uvukeleni futhi?” (Don’t be too forward and why are you awake?)

Similo: “Hmm! Baba, cela ukuhamba nawe umama uyanuka la!” (Dad, can I go with you because mom has a bad odour) She raised her voice to her father who was walking out of his bedroom. She didn’t even answer her mother’s question.

Ngcebo: “Woza!” (Come) he said and stopped walking to wait for her.

Similo looked at her mother with her hand still on her nose and she shook her head.

“Hamba, uyogeza mama! Hmm! Hmm!” (Go and take a shower, mom.) She said to her

mother and ran away to get to her father.

Nandipha clicked her tongue and she proceeded to the bathroom. She washed her body thoroughly because her daughter was right, she had a bad odour.

“I wonder who came up with traditions. Insult is more like a bad odour and they wash you with dung? Agh!” She spoke to herself as she was moisturising her body after she’d taken a shower.

Ngcebo: “Iva likhishwa ngelinye iva.” He commented as he heard Nandipha speak to herself. He’d come to the bedroom for her. Nandipha looked back at him shortly and she didn’t say anything. “Mama wants to speak to you and if you are done please go to her. She’s in the room where you were sleeping. The girls have woken up and they are outside the premises, people have joined to eat the meat.” He told her.

Nandipha: “Okay, I will go to her.” she told him and plugged the hairdryer to dry her locks. Ngcebo then left the room...

“Ngcebo said you wanted to speak to me.” Nandipha said and she sat on the dressing chair while Thembelihle was seated on the bed.

Thembelihle: “Come sit here. I am still a mother to you.” she said and patted the space that was next to her on the bed. Nandipha got up and she sat next to her. Thembelihle opened her handbag and she got back with a black squared box. She placed it on her lap. “My husband would give me a gift when I give him a child. It was what his father taught him and he liked adapting it. I think I have told you before that I was never a person of jewellery before getting married.” She looked at her.

Nandipha: “Yes.”

Thembelihle: “He would say I should decorate myself. I grew to love it and I have a lot of it but I treasure the jewellery he would personally gift me. When I gave birth to Ngcebo and Dalingcebo he gave me set of diamond earrings and a necklace. I want you to have this necklace he gifted to me when I gifted him with Ngcebo. This is my token of saying ‘Thank you for saving my son’ I want you to have it now and wear it, don’t just put it away.” She said and placing the box on her hands and she looked at her hoping she would see ‘that smile’ her smile but she didn’t see the smile.

Nandipha looked at her. “But I can’t-” Nandipha was cut off by Thembelihle.

Thembelihle: “Don’t tell me you can’t take it because you will take it. I was just feeling anger and grieve when I said everything I said. Please, take it.”

Nandipha: “Thank you. It’s beautiful.” She admitted looking at the jewel... Thembelihle felt that the Nandipha she knew wasn’t just going to say a plain ‘Thank you’ and she didn’t even show a smile. Thembelihle admitted she’d really changed and she couldn’t even notice that this change of her behaviour kept hurting her over and over again. But maybe...

Thembelihle: “Ngcebo told me that you are leaving.”

Nandipha: “Yes, I have work that needs me back in Johannesburg.”

Thembelihle: “Don’t let what happened get between the two of you. I really didn’t like the fact that you were sleeping in the guestroom.” She said to her... And Nandipha looked aside because she didn’t have words to share with her. She didn’t trust her anymore and she

decided she wasn't going to share anything with her because she might use it against her anytime.

Nandipha: "I understand."

Thembelihle: "That's all I wanted to say to you."

Nandipha: "Thank you." she said and she got up from the bed to leave the bedroom. She left the room and closed the door behind her...

"HA! MAMA, USHUGEZILE! WOZA NIKUNUKE!" (Mom, you have taken a shower. Come, let me smell your odour.) Similo said to her mother as she entered the kitchen. Similo was seated on top of the kitchen island having her milk from her bottle and Randall was with her inside the kitchen.

Nandipha: "Ngizokuphoxa wena namehlo amakhulu. Hmm! Unuka inyama yembuzi futhi ungangthinti nje!" (You have the goat meat's smell) She said to her daughter, she laughed and moved her face away from her as Similo was trying to hold her mother's face.

Similo: "Beshiyidla no baba! Hmm!" (We were eating the meat with dad) she replied after putting her bottle away and she placed her hands on her nose to smell her hands. She shook her head. Nandipha and Randall laughed. "Cela ukogeza mama. Manje! Manje!" (Can I go and bath, now, now!) she screamed at her mother and Nandipha lifted her off the counter to give her a bath...

S5 >> EPISODE 43

"Where are we heading?" Ngcebo asked Dalingcebo and he looked back at the two brothers who were seated at the backseat of Dalingcebo's Hilux 4X4. The car was parked outside Ngcebo's premises, the family had gone back to their homes after the cleansing and seeing that all the meat had been consumed by the people who came by and none was taken back inside Ngcebo's premises. Dalingcebo, Ngcebo, Banele and Mntwana were inside the car because they were planning on going out for some fun, whatever fun... It was Friday, 9am...

Banele: "Let's start by going to the hospital to see Qhawe and we can drive to uLundi or Durban. We still have time on our hands to come back for the ritual that baba' uSbani will be doing. How's that?"

Ngcebo: "What's the ritual about?"

Dalingcebo started the engine and drove his vehicle away to get to the hospital. "His last born is leaving tomorrow with aunt Nokuthula. He'll be asking the ancestors to protect him in the foreign country." He told him.

Ngcebo: "Oh! Banele, when are you leaving?"

Banele: "I don't know yet but I don't think it would be this year. A lot of things had happened this year and in a shortest period of time."

Others: "YEAH!"

Mntwana: "It's not even June yet but it feels like we have lost too much and we still going to

lose another wife. Mrs Nontobeko Zulu.”

Dalingcebo chuckled. “Why do you have to bring that up?” He asked and looked at him through the review mirror.

Mntwana: “It’s the truth because next week you’ll begin the divorce process, right?” He asked and took out his phone from his pocket to check the calendar.

Dalingcebo: “Yeah and I don’t know what I can do to make it less toxic.”

Banele: “You’ll have to talk to her about that.”

Mntwana: “We are reaching the end of April now.”

Ngcebo: “And your mother suggested I go to the Easter service this weekend. Why don’t we all be good sons and go with her?” he looked at them folding his mouth. He was just trying his luck but with Dalingcebo he was going to force him to because he saw the need for him to go.

“HHAWU! HHAWU!” The three of them made the disapproving noise and Ngcebo laughed because he was expecting this response and more...

Banele: “You can’t be serious.”

Ngcebo: “I am dead serious.”

Dalingcebo: “We can’t go because Sunday we will be needed at home and mom will only join the family later.”

Mntwana: “Yes, yes, Langalibalele is coming back.”

Ngcebo: “No, boys, we will go for today’s service and come back tomorrow night. We won’t have to stay until Sunday. And don’t you remember how fun it used to be going to Easter service and having to dodge some of the services.” He reflected and the rest of them laughed as they remembered the old times.

Banele: “So, you want us to be embarrassed when mom shouts for us because now, we are nowhere to be seen. We are too old to be embarrassed like that.”

They all laughed. “You can’t really want that Ngcebo. Imagine being embarrassed in the presence of your wife.” Mntwana tried to convince him otherwise because he couldn’t see this idea.

Ngcebo: “That will not happen because mom knows that we are not those boys anymore.

Banele, you’ll take Candice with you so that she can see how, we actually praise the Lord.

We don’t just jump with drums as they do.” he teased Candice indirectly and Dalingcebo and Mntwana laughed.

Banele: “Voetsek!”

Mntwana: “It would be best if we go. I think we all need that spiritual enhancement. One got to take care of all his cognitive developments.”

Ngcebo: “PREACH!” he chanted as Mntwana was giving a lecture. They laughed and clapped hands for the short ‘sermon’

Dalingcebo: “We will go.”

Ngcebo: “Hawu! Siyabonga!”

“Okay! Okay! Keep quiet.” Mntwana hushed them as his phone was ringing and they kept quiet automatically. He drew his breath and answered the call.

Mntwana: "Sawubona."

Simthande: "Hey, how are you?"

Mntwana: "I am good now that you have called me and how are you?" he asked and kicked Banele's foot as he heard the whispered laughter.

Simthande: "I am fine. I thought I should check on you because I haven't heard from you in a while and I became quite nervous that maybe—"

Mntwana: "Huh? You were actually nervous about me not returning? Does that mean you care about me now to that extent of worrying about me?" he asked her with a smirk on his face as if Simthande was before him. They were still not dating but Mntwana had never given up on pressuring her into having a relationship with him even though Simthande was scared of her insecurities.

Simthande laughed. "Why do you so und excited to hear that?" She asked.

Mntwana: "Who wouldn't be excited in my position?"

Simthande: "I got no idea. When are you coming back?"

Mntwana: "I am coming back on Tuesday and please, go to church this weekend—" he couldn't finish up his sentence because all his brothers laughed. "Sorry about that. I am with some manner less men in here." He said.

Simthande laughed. "It's okay, you can call me later and elaborate on that church suggestion because I didn't think you are a church person." She said.

Mntwana: "Okay, I will call when I am not with these guys."

Simthande: "Who are they anyway?"

Mntwana: "My brothers."

Simthande laughed. "Holly God! You are younger than all of them and you are calling them manner less." She raised her voice.

Mntwana: "It's no big deal, really. Bye."

Simthande: "Bye."

Mntwana dropped the call and a smile was forced out of his face. He raised his head and he met Ngcebo's eyes. "Why are you looking at me?" He asked.

Banele: "Just tell us what was that about."

Mntwana: "You must be joking! I won't do that. I am not a sissy to tell you my business. I am secretive." He said and he was the first one to laugh.

Dalingcebo: "It seems like you are still trying to get her on board."

Banele: "I hope she's younger this time."

Mntwana: "No, why should I go for the younger ones?"

Ngcebo: "She's not getting on board though. Why?"

Mntwana: "She told me she's insecure and it's not safe to date her."

Dalingcebo: "RUN!"

Others: "HAWU!"

Dalingcebo: "What? That's the best thing you can do. Don't date insecure women because they're dangerous."

Banele: "But he can just try and see how far it goes."

Dalingcebo: "Ey, don't even try just run."

Ngcebo: "Don't be a coward like him, Mntwana."

Dalingcebo: "Okay, go for her but don't cry when you get burnt." He said looking at Mntwana, the others gave disapproving responses and they stepped out of the car as they've reached the hospital to see baby Qhawe...

"You'll have to begin with the treatment pretty soon and that means you'll have to tell your husband." Nkosazana told Danielle and she gave her a glass of water. Danielle was seated on her bed... They've just gotten back from the Doctor and Nkosazana helped Danielle choose the type of medication for her tumour. The Doctor had referred her to a hospital in Durban for treatment.

Danielle: "You are making it sound easy."

Nkosazana: "But that's what you wanted to do, to tell him before you learnt that he was trying to build a relationship with his children. What can possibly be a problem if you tell him now?"

Danielle: "You know at times, Elena and I would fight about Mnotho spending more time with me than them. I really didn't care about that because that was his choice but when it comes to the children I can't make him choose. I can't take all his time and invest it in me. What if I die?"

Nkosazana: "Just stop being negative."

Danielle: "You heard the Doctor said it's not guaranteed that I will live after receiving the treatment. I can still die."

Nkosazana: "I would like to focus on the positive side that says you can still beat this and live a long life with your daughter. And have children."

Danielle: "I can still live a long life with my daughter and husband without any more children. There's a damage I can get from this."

Nkosazana: "The good this is that you are not on your worst stage. Now, you just need to rest and don't worry about Pearl she's with my boys."

Danielle: "Thank you. If I don't get the courage to tell my husband, I will go as if I am visiting my mother and I will get the first dose of treatment."

Nkosazana: "Just rest because you are sleepy. We will speak when I come here with Pearl later. You don't have to come to this ritual we are going to now."

Danielle: "Okay. Thanks." She said and closed her eyes. Nkosazana sighed and looked at her, she didn't want to go against her wishes and tell Mnotho behind her back. But the best she could right now, was support her and ensure that she took good care of herself because Nkosazana had hope she was going to live. And she was going to live a long life...

"Sit here, I will go to Pearl's mother." Mnotho said and he put Nonjabulo on the couch.

Njabulo was already seated on the couch inside Danielle's house. She wasn't with them at Nandipha's house and he wanted to check on her because he was told she left the palace with Pearl.

"Hawu, ndlovukazi? You are here." Mnotho greeted Nkosazana as he met with her on the

hallway, she was coming from Danielle's room.

Nkosazana: "Yes, I am here and Danielle is sleeping in her room."

Mnotho: "Hawu, and where's Pearl? I was told that she left the palace with her. But you are saying she's sleeping."

Nkosazana: "Pearl is at my palace with my sons. Danielle and I had to go somewhere together. She's resting now."

Mnotho: "What's happening is there something that I should know? She told me she's not pregnant and she said she's doing fine now. But she's resting and you have gone 'somewhere' with her."

Nkosazana looked aside because now she was on a tight spot with Mnotho hounding her with questions she didn't want to answer. "She's not pregnant but it's just those sicknesses that women normally get." She gave him an answer that she saw fit because she didn't want to lie to him completely.

Mnotho: "Oh! Everyone is on about the spirit of going to church this weekend and we have all decided to join in with your husband but we will come back Saturday night. I am here to tell MaNkosi about that. I thought she'll be coming to the ritual now."

Nkosazana: "No, I told her she must rest. Please, don't wake her. I can fix a bag for her because I don't think she can protest going to church." She said and pointed the way back where he was coming from... They walked together.

Mnotho: "Okay, that'll be good."

Nkosazana: "As you are saying everyone is on the church spirit. Does that include our very own father or he's excluded?" she asked and they laughed.

Mnotho: "You'll be surprised that he's also going to church."

Nkosazana: "Hee! Masibuyele kuJehova."

Mnotho: "Amen!"

Nkosazana: "Sanibona, babies." She greeted Njabulo and Nonjabulo who were no longer seated on the couches but they were standing before the TV stand. Nonjabulo and Njabulo greeted Nkosazana back and they placed down the décor objects they had on their hands.

Mnotho: "Don't break anything there, Njabulo."

Njabulo: "We are looking baba." He told him and pulled Nonjabulo to their father who was looking at them. "Where's Pearl, baba?" he asked.

Nonjabulo: "Yes, you said we are going now."

Nkosazana: "It seems like you two love the road."

The children giggled. "Pearl is not here. Let's go now we will find her with the others.

Come." Mnotho said and gave them his hands. They held him. "We will see you when you are done then, queen." He said back to Nkosazana.

Nkosazana: "Okay. Bye, I will see you just now." she said waving at the children and they waved back as Mnotho left the house with them...

"What are you making, mama?" Mntwana asked his mother who was busy baking inside her kitchen. The four princes who'd gone out had just come back before 1pm. Banele entered the

kitchen followed by Ngcebo.

Thembelihle: "I am baking for the ritual. Just stop that, Mntwana." She shouted at him and she hit him with the kitchen cloth as Mntwana was taking the cake without his mother's permission.

Banele: "Can I have a taste?" he requested and took the cake from Mntwana without waiting for him to give it to him. They then began wrestling about that and their mother smiled looking at them... She looked at the entrance of the kitchen thinking that her tall footballer would walk inside the kitchen right now and he would do the same thing, taking the cake she was baking without asking for her permission. But he was never going to walk through that entrance ever again. She wished Nhlakanipho could come back and live with them but she didn't want to separate him from his mother. It would have been better if Naledi was her daughter-in-law but...

"What are you thinking about?" Ngcebo asked his mother as he'd seen that she was distracted now and she was no longer smitten by her sons who were acting like boys fighting over a cake.

Thembelihle: "It's nothing. I was just looking at them being crazy."

Ngcebo: "Yes, but you became distracted."

Thembelihle: "I was thinking about your late brother."

Ngcebo: "His space will forever be there mama and there's nobody who'll fill it. But as time passes on we will all live with it."

Thembelihle: "You are right." She smiled and looked at him.

Ngcebo: "And you won't believe that these two along with Dalingcebo agreed to go to the Easter service this weekend."

Thembelihle laughed. "You are lying." She argued and looked at Ngcebo. They were no longer with Mntwana and Banele inside the kitchen.

Ngcebo: "I was just trying my luck and they agreed."

Thembelihle: "Hawu! Ngcebo, thank you. You don't know how happy I am to hear that. And if the four of you are going that means my whole house will go."

Ngcebo: "Yes, I need to get home now." he told her and he limped away from his mother.

Thembelihle followed him with a smile on her face. She could feel that the joy was going to return in their family...

"I just wanted to speak to you before we leave the palace." Thembelihle said and she pointed the couch for Banele and Candice. They sat down.

Banele: "What's wrong, mama?"

Thembelihle: "I just wanted to speak to you two since your plans had been postponed now and again because of the situations we've been through. What have you decided now? Or it's still early that you can go?"

Candice looked at Banele expecting that he would be the one to speak first for both of them. She'd seen how things were done here. And luckily, they've discussed what they were going to do about their plans.

Banele: "We decided that it's better we put the travelling part on hold and after end of the

mourning period for Ndabezinhle. We will begin with the first pre-wedding ceremony.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, that’s good because I can’t be going everywhere wearing black clothes. It’s inappropriate according to culture.”

Candice: “We were not sure about the mourning period though, mama.”

Thembelihle: “It’s six months that is a long time but I want to mourn my son properly. And we will have all the ceremonies after that. I hope you will be patient Candice. It’s culture that you are coming into.”

Candice: “I understand. I wouldn’t want to be selfish and rob you of that mourning period just because I am rushing to get married.”

Thembelihle: “Thank you. And travelling?”

Banele: “We will travel next year and we don’t know long it will be.”

“Let’s go, MaSthole, time is against us now.” Dalisu told Thembelihle passing the lounge to get to the door as it was time for them to leave.

Thembelihle stood up. “We are behind you. Let’s go.” She looked at Banele and Candice.

They got up from the couch.

Banele: “Where are the children?”

Thembelihle: “They are all gone. You know children arrive first at any function. Just like you would always run to any neighbour that would have a tent.”

Banele laughed. “That’s embarrassing mom.” He made her aware and he looked at Candice as she was laughing.

Thembelihle: “Hawu, didn’t you do that?”

Banele didn’t answer his mother. “What did father do when he did that?” Candice asked with interest and she looked at Thembelihle.

Thembelihle: “He would always get a beating but he never stopped. They were not allowed to go out anyhow but this one had his ways.” She replied and opened the door to her car as they’re reached their separate ends. Candice and Banele marched to the car with Candice teasing Banele...

Dalису: “I haven’t seen MaMthimkhulu today but I have seen the children.”

Thembelihle: “She is inside her house.”

Dalису: “Alright, after the return of Langalibalele. We will have to face her situation with Mnotho heads on. There must be peace between our ancestors and her ancestors. It’s the right thing to do.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, that’s right. Have you see Mnotho and the children?”

Dalису: “Yes, I have seen them following each other a lot. I hope the children won’t have a problem when they have to go back to Johannesburg.”

Thembelihle: “They’re children they can never be relaxed about it. But it’s better because the schools are closed and Nhlakanipho still has time with us.”

Dalису: “Yes, that’s better and we should talk to Banele and Ngcebo as they live closer to him. They must make time for him to keep the connection.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, when his mother comes back we will have to talk about his father’s will. And she must be able to manage the child’s money.”

Daliso: “Ey, there’s still something like that, hhayi! But I trust his mother.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, she’s a good mother but there must be money that will be fixed to secure Nhlakanipho’s future. We will continue maintaining him as we did when Ndabezinhle wasn’t here.”

Daliso: “Yes, we shouldn’t stop doing that.”

Thembelihle sighed and she gave her hand to Daliso. He held her hand tightly and they had the rest of the drive quietly...

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“MINA ANIIFUNI LE NGUBO FUNA LE BLUE!” (I don’t want this dress but I want the blue dress.) Similo screamed at her mother as she was dressing them up. They were all inside their room getting dressed and Nandipha gave them freedom to wear whatever they wanted to wear.

Nandipha: “Where should I get that dress now?” she placed her hands on her waist and she looked at Thula who was with her inside the room.

Thula: “Just tell her someone stole it.” She whispered and looked at Similo who had her hands folded on her chest and she was looking down with a sulk.

Nandipha: “I can’t lie about that because she will make a big deal out of it. You know how dramatic she can be, this one.” She knew now about the clothes that had been missing in her clothes. After her in-laws left her house she drove her mother’s car after 11am she went to visit Gobela’s wife just have the clarification on the girl that had visited her house. She didn’t have peace about her. She then learnt from Gobela’s wife that the girl was at the initiation school with her son and she’d been to her house because she was sent by her son.

Langalibalele had called his mother to inform her about this because he suspected that Nandipha might ask her because the girl said she was her daughter. He was the one who told the girl to say that because he knew that she was going to trust the ointment when it came by his mother’s name. He wasn’t sure if Nandipha was going to trust taking it if he used his name. It wouldn’t sound too convincing because he was still at the initiation... Nandipha learnt all that from Gobela’s wife and it relieved her...

Thula: “But she wants her dress now.”

Ntokomalo: “Gcoka Mimi ugoto uzofika manje manje!” (Get dressed Similo, granny will get here anytime.) she told her sister standing before her. Ntokomalo was dressed up now and she waiting for the others.

Nandipha: “Ehe, I will buy you a new blue dress all of you because your dresses disappeared around the house, okay?” she went down to her and she lifted Similo’s chin. She gave her a smile and tickled her. Similo laughed. And that was Nandipha’s chance to dress her up...

She closed the children’s room as she’d finished cleaning it. They were seated on the lounge waiting for her... Nandipha then marched to her bedroom to get dressed. She stood before

the mirror and she noticed that even though she hadn't been on the gym her body weight was lighter. And that was because of the stress she'd endured the past few days. She placed her hands on her face and she drew a long breath and she released. She then turned to her black vest, she placed it on her body and placed on the long black stretchy high waist skirt. She sat down to tie her locks. "I trust Palesa will give me a hairstyle idea. I have to look superb for that shoot." She spoke alone as she tried tying her locks. That was when Ngcebo stepped inside the room. He closed the door behind him as he limped inside the room with nobody following him.

Ngcebo: "You are really leaving?" he asked and sat on the bed facing Nandipha's side. He looked at her through the mirror.

Nandipha: "Yes, I didn't say there was a possibility for me to stay."

Ngcebo: "But I said you'll leave tomorrow."

Nandipha: "I have already made plans for tomorrow."

Ngcebo: "Oh, so, you don't see the need to go with your family to this church service. The girls and I are your family but now, you'll just take them and leave. You can even leave tomorrow morning."

Nandipha: "I can't go with you, Ngcebo."

Ngcebo: "You can't or you won't?"

Nandipha: "I can't." she replied and she marched to the wardrobe to get the blue cardigan to complete her outfit.

Ngcebo: "Will you ever loosen up when you are around me? Or you'll keep giving me this cold behaviour. I haven't even seen you smile."

Nandipha: "What should I smile about when I am with you because there's nothing to smile about?" she looked back at him shortly, she was hoping that she would leave the house without seeing him because when he left the house. He didn't tell her that he was leaving but he told the kids.

Ngcebo: "What are you expecting from me, Nandipha? I really don't get what you are expecting but if you can tell me about your expectations I will be able to meet them or give them to you."

She didn't answer him but she had hopes that maybe after the cleansing Ngcebo was going to be a better man that she knew. Because now, he wasn't the man that she knew, the husband that she was married to before he was shot. She concluded that there were demons he was dealing with after returning from that darkness and after the cleansing he was going to be alright. How could he ask her how to make her smile? He didn't know now what to do give her a smile that she deserved? Okay! This was just a ridiculous test if it was a test, it wasn't really fun because it was only hurting her feelings further more than she was already hurting... She felt his eyes on her as she was crossing the room to get to her handbag. Ngcebo figured she wasn't going to answer him. He tightened his fist and closed his eyes unwillingly because he was feeling the anger escalate within him. He opened his eyes quickly. "You are not being supportive of my situation and I know that you can see that I am not really myself but you are pretending as if you can't see that." He told her and his eyes

moved with her.

Nandipha kept quiet for a while she didn't want to keep arguing with him because he wasn't going to stop. She'd seen that all he wanted from her was arguing with her but she didn't know what satisfaction did it serve to him. She wished she could know.

Ngcebo: "And whenever I say something that's offending your actions you just keep quiet. It's annoying when you are quiet because we both know that you are just incapable of keeping quiet."

Nandipha: "Can you please leave me alone and go argue with your ancestors!" she snapped at him as she felt that Ngcebo was being too much now. He was actually being aggressive with words and he didn't seem to care how they reach her. Her sin was keeping his body... She left the room...

Ngcebo taunted his jaw and his shaking hands, he turned them into fists. He tried breathing with his eyes opened because he was beyond angry. He couldn't keep up with his reasons of being angry because they were buzzing inside his head and they were bothering him.

Nandipha wasn't being inclusive of his situation but just the previous night she was preaching to him about marriage. But now, she was just running away from him, from their marriage. He placed his hands on his salivary glands and he stared at the door.

"Here's the knife." Nandipha said to Ngcebo and she placed the knife on the dressing table. She looked at him and Ngcebo relaxed his shoulders, removing his hands from his glands he looked at Nandipha. "My only sin here was keeping your body and so, it's better you take this knife and stab yourself to death. I will take your body to your family and that will give you closure. I will fix my mistake. Just do it then because now, I am being punished by you. You are punishing me because you are alive. Or you don't want to admit that you were wrong not to listen to me. You were aggressive with me because you didn't want to stay here but now, you want me to stay here."

Ngcebo: "You want me to kill myself? You don't love me that much that you want me to die, Nandipha?"

Nandipha: "I think it's better that we talk after your cleansing because it's clear to me that you are very confused. I thought you are angry with me because you are alive but now you want to live. So, let's talk after that." She turned to the mirror because she could feel that she was also losing her mind. She was telling him to kill himself, now, that was crazy. She was losing a grip on her senses. How could she suggest that after everything she'd done? She was in a situation that was tight and she could have peace by leaving because he was all good with his family, he was happy and merry with them. She'd seen him around them this morning, he would laugh while talking to them but he wasn't like that with her. She was still suffering even when he was back.

Ngcebo: "Did you apologise to my mother?"

Nandipha held the dressing table tight and she closed her eyes. "Did I apologise to your mother for what? What did I do to her?" she asked.

Ngcebo: "You know what you did."

Nandipha: "Bye, bye, Ngcebo." She said putting her bag on her shoulder and she took the

knife that was on the dressing table.

Ngcebo: "I am talking to you, don't just leave!" he raised his voice and stood on his feet as Nandipha was taking a step forward. Nandipha stopped walking but she didn't look at him as he limped towards her. "Did you apologise to my mother? I asked you a question." He repeated the question.

Nandipha: "No, I didn't apologise."

Ngcebo: "Why?"

Nandipha: "Because I am not sorry."

Ngcebo: "You are not sorry for disrespecting my mother to an extent that she couldn't even come here to check on me?"

Nandipha: "That was her choice and why are you acting as if I asked her alone to leave the hospital room? Dalingcebo was able to come here and check on us but he was also there when I asked them to leave? Mntwana was also there but he was able to call me to check on us. Why don't you face your mother heads on for not checking on you? Why are blaming me for that?"

Ngcebo: "It's your actions that stopped her from doing that!" he shouted.

Nandipha: "Oh! It's my actions? But the minute she learnt that you are awake all that disrespect you say I gave to her vanished? I mean she was able to come here at night. Why didn't she stay in her house and ask that they drive you to her house because my actions stopped her from coming here to see you?"

Ngcebo: "I was awake then and she knew I wouldn't throw her out. I can't believe you did that to my mother who has loved you and our children. She would come here just to spend the weekend with you and the kids since you are not allowed in the palace but you did this."

Nandipha: "I can't believe how everything is about your mother."

Ngcebo: "It will be about her until you apologise to her."

Nandipha: "I won't apologise for doing everything I can to give my children their father back. I won't apologise for trusting my instincts while your precious mother wanted to bury you. And you know what, it would be much better if your mother stops coming to this house because I will never apologise to her for what I did."

Ngcebo chuckled. "She mustn't come to whose house? This house is mine, it was built with my money that I have worked hard for and there's no single cent that you contributed into building it. You don't get to decide who should come to my house and who shouldn't. This is my house!" He told her clearly.

Nandipha swallowed his words with a painful heart. She took a step back and she left the room without saying anything to him. She opened the door and she closed it behind her. She stopped walking, she opened her handbag and looked for a tissue as she cried fresh tears.

"Sis, mom is here, let's go." Randall informed his sister who had her head looking down at her bag and her hands searching.

Nandipha: "Oh, please, take my bag... I will go to the bathroom." She said without looking at him as she couldn't find the tissue. She gave the bag to him.

"What's wrong, sis?" He asked and took the bag from her and he sent his head down to look

at her face because he couldn't see it. But he was certain that Nandipha was crying...

Nandipha shook her head and walked away...

She exited the bathroom after she'd fixed her face and her way out of the house she smiled as Thando was running back to the house. "Where are you heading young lady?" She asked her with a smile on her face. She lifted Thando off the ground as she was laughing.

Thando: "Beniyokubiza uthe ugogo 'hamba uyobiza uMaZondi Thando'"

Nandipha: "Oh! Let's go now. We are going to grandma's house."

Thando: "Ashihambi ngani nemoto yethu enkhulu khona shohlala shonke?" (Why don't we use the viano so that we will be together?)

Nandipha: "Your father will use it when he drives back to the house in Johannesburg. Did you say goodbye to him?"

Thando: "Shiyile konconcoza ekameleni lakhe wathi shingangeni." (We went to knock in his bedroom and he told us not to come in)

Nandipha: "Najika pho?"

Thando: "Shithe 'bye, bye, baba' wathi 'ashime' wavula shangena."

Nandipha: "Okay, we will drive with grandma." She told her and she walked to her mother's car that was parked outside the premises along with her other car that was driven by Randall.

"Sawubona, mama." Nandipha greeted her mother and closed the door of the car after she buckled Thando next to her. Buhle and Ntokomalo were already seated at the backseat of the car.

Faith: "Yes, baby. How are you?" she asked and started the engine... And Nandipha replied with the usual. 'I am fine' they held a conversation with her mother making their drive bearable...

"We will see each other when the families come together to talk again. I should get home. I am not late." Thembelihle told Happiness... It was a Sunday morning after the last service of the Easter service. Thembelihle's family had come to join the service from Friday and her husband along with her sons left Saturday night. Thembelihle was left behind with her daughters' in-law and grandchildren. She was grateful for this weekend because it gave her the absolute inner peace and she was much more grateful that her family was with her on the service. She thought it was going to be her and Happiness but her son, Ngcebo, he was able to convince the others to come. And they had a blessed weekend, the conference was at uLundi.

Now, they were going their separate ways with Happiness. Happiness was driving back to Johannesburg with the children.

Happiness: "Yes, mama. I had a good time and thank you for convincing me to stay for this service. It was a blessed one."

Thembelihle: "Yes, I feel a little lighter."

Happiness: "I feel the same and I am hoping that the family won't make my life difficult when they come together."

Thembelihle: “Don’t worry about that because there’s nobody who’ll make your life difficult. We will meet and that will bring peace.”

Happiness: “Thank you for everything, mama.” She said and they shared a tight hug. “I will miss you very much.” She told her.

Thembelihle: “I will miss you too and call when you get home. The children are sleeping and I couldn’t even say goodbye.”

Happiness: “You’ll say it when I call.”

Thembelihle: “Okay, travel safe.” She said to her and Happiness nodded. She then marched to her car and Thembelihle marched to hers. Nkosazana and the others had already driven away as Thembelihle was still talking to Happiness. She stepped inside the car and her driver drove away...

They hit the drums louder as Langalibalele entered through gates of the palace. He was on his full ‘Inyanga’ gear as he’d finished his journey of ‘Ukuthwasa’ The Zulu elders and the princes along with Dalisu and his brothers had gone to Langalibalele’s initiation school for his final ceremony.

Now, at 5pm on a Sunday they were entering the palace gates with him. They have done the traditional procedures at the gate to welcome him. He wasn’t just walking to get to the circle where ‘ezogida’ (dance) but he was moving his shoulders and feet with the rhythm of the drums until they reached the circle. Everyone was gathered around the circle and they watched Langalibalele and other traditional healers and Sangamos do ‘umgidi’

Langalibalele would tap his feet around the members of the royal family looking at them in their faces and he would shout when they try and move their eyes away from his eyes.

“Ulaka! Ulaka! Ulaka luyawavala amehlo! Hheyi! Hheyi!” (Anger blinds the eyes.)

Langalibalele groaned the words instead of speaking them out. They were in his mouth not directed to a specific person but they were forced out of his mouth for every single person who was present to hear them... He kept saying them and he would add other words and phrases that kept rolling out of his mouth.

“Lapho okukhona inzondo nokuxokozela akukho ukuphumula no thando.” (Where there’s hate and commotion there’s no peace and love.) He groaned the words looking directly at Mnotho and Mnotho felt the words were meant for him because Langalibalele was rooted into him. He moved away from Mnotho and he felt his shoulders were heavy all he was sensing in the royal family was a load of negative energy and anger that was going to turn into hate if they don’t attend to it individually... He’d long saw the anger of their ancestors as things were messed up amongst them alone.

The kingdom was safe and their leader had it held up intact and his ancestors were happy about him. He was a leader people cherished, the kingdom was safe in his hands...

But the problem was within the family, their togetherness wasn’t as it was before. There was a great divisive amongst them, it wasn’t just physical but it was greatest spiritually. There was no peace and happiness reigning amongst them and as Langalibalele kept feeling these negative energies... He wasn’t about to tell them about these energies in the presence of the community but they needed to fix their lives because an inner wound in the family was only

going to ruin their outer lives. He didn't have solutions for them but they were going to have to work on the solutions to restore their togetherness...

"You can't even tell us where we went wrong?" Uncle elder asked Langalibalele the question after he'd told them all about the negative energies he'd sensed... People had left the palace for their houses, they've had food and drinks that was served to them... The royal family was left alone inside the palace. They were all around the circle where they were before with the community and Langalibalele was in the middle of the circle.

Langalibalele: "As I have said you'll have to look amongst yourself and find the solution to restore the peace in the family. I don't have answers but the ancestors are not happy about this division."

Dalisu: "We hear and we will do as you've said looking within us." he said and he looked at his wife with worried eyes. Thembelihle shook her head...

Langalibalele: "Thokoza!"

Mlamuli: "I don't think we must keep you waiting any longer but you must go and rest because it'd been a long day."

Aunt Nomkhosi: "Yes, we must take you to your hut." He said and they got up from their positions. They called the girls who were doing the drums to come back. The family then walked with Langalibalele to his father's hut. His mother and brother were within the royal family...

"I don't know if I can come tomorrow for a cleansing." Ngcebo checked with Langalibalele. He was with him outside the premises, the family was walking back to the palace after they've put Langalibalele to his place where he was going to fill his father's shoes... Ngcebo didn't come down by foot because he was using a crutch to walk but he was inside the car that was driving behind them to give them light on the road...

Langalibalele: "Yes, you should come with your wife."

Ngcebo: "But she's not here."

Langalibalele: "How?"

Ngcebo: "She had to go back to Johannesburg with the children because of work that needed her urgently."

Langalibalele: "Alright, you'll have to tell her to come back Nkosana and we will do the cleansing then."

Ngcebo: "You are trying to say I can't do it without her?"

Langalibalele: "Yes, that's what I am trying to say. I will come at your house in the morning with the ashes of the clothes I burnt to help bring you back. And we will do the cleansing she'll have to buy three white chickens from her pocket and I will come with the rest of the things we will use. I hope that is clear, Nkosana?" he gave him instruction with his head looking down not looking into Ngcebo's eyes.

Ngcebo: "It should be me and her? Or?"

Langalibalele: "Yes, it should be like that. But akumele abe seskhathini uma kunjalo sizolinda." (But she shouldn't be on her periods. We will wait if she is)

Ngcebo: "Thokoza, mkhulu!" he clapped hands agreeing to what he was telling him.

Langalibalele clapped hands as well and they went their separate ways...

“Can we talk, Dalingcebo? I am going to my house to rest now. I want to talk to you.”

Mnotho said to Dalingcebo who was seated inside the kitchen with Mntwana and Banele, they were eating... The family members had decided that they were tired and it was best that they go rest for the night.

Dalingcebo: “Yebo.” He dropped his spoon and he followed Mnotho as he was leaving the kitchen through the back door. He was following Mnotho with his heart beating pretty fast because he didn’t know what was the reason for him to request to speak to him. And he wasn’t stopping near the kitchen but judging from the direction he was moving towards, Dalingcebo saw that Mnotho was going to the parking shelter...

Dalingcebo: “Is there something wrong?” he asked politely.

Mnotho: “I can never forget what you did to me, Dalingcebo. You ruined my house by taking advantage of my wife’s loneliness.” He told him upfront and Dalingcebo looked down without raising a comment. “And don’t you think that our relationship will ever be the same again because it won’t be the same, reason being, I no longer trust you with anything. But I don’t want to live my life with grudges and hate because you heard what was said today, peace and love doesn’t live in a place of commotion. And for the sake of our brother’s life that we have lost because of my actions I forgive you for what you’ve done and I hope I won’t use it against you in future.” He gave out the words to Dalingcebo with a little pain coming from his heart. He wasn’t just saying them because he felt like it but he meant it. He wanted the peace back in his life and he had to forgive to be forgiven. Dalingcebo had wronged him but he was his little brother, he wasn’t about to live his life hating his blood like he’d done to his son. He was never going to repeat that same mistake. Dalingcebo was his blood, they share a father and a mother. This was his second step to putting his life back in order...

Dalingcebo: “I don’t... know what to say...” he said, he wasn’t expecting this and his heart pounded harder the minute Mnotho said he was forgiving him. He gave Mnotho his hand and he took it, they shared a handshake. “Thank you. I promise I won’t do what I did to anyone.” He said to Mnotho and he nodded his head... Mnotho then turned to his car with a lighter heart believing that forgiveness was about him being peaceful...

S5 >> EPISODE 45

“Randall, come here!” Faith said to her son showing her head from Randall’s bedroom.

Randall was laying on his bed with his phone in his hands.

Randall: “What’s wrong, mum?”

Faith: “I said come here!” she insisted without answering his question. Randall jumped out of his bed and his mother walked away... It was a Sunday night, Nandipha and the girls were

sleeping. Nandipha got back home later because she was with her friends. She left the house Saturday afternoon to spend time with Palesa in her house. She called her mother to inform her that she was going to come back late on Sunday...

"What's wrong, mum?" Randall asked his mother and he yawned.

Faith: "Why are you yawning because you were not sleepy when I called you but you were wide awake?" she asked and pointed a free space on the couch for Randall to sit next to her. He sat down.

Randall: "Mum, yawning happens anytime."

Faith: "I want us to talk about your sister. Have you noticed that from Saturday morning she wasn't really herself? She would laugh when needed and talk because she can talk but something is not right."

Randall: "Yes, mum, when I went to her room to tell her that you've arrived. She was already outside her room and she was crying."

Faith: "She was crying? Did you ask her why she was crying?"

Randall: "She was avoiding eye contact mom and she told me nothing was but I know that she wouldn't just cry for no reason."

Faith: "Who was with her inside the room?"

Randall: "She was with her husband inside their bedroom."

Faith sighed. "I don't even want to keep asking what's wrong. I am tired of these people that Nandipha is married to and I can't separate her from her husband. That decision should come from her." She breathed.

Randall: "I thought she would be happy by now since she'd been stressed and unhappy about her husband."

Faith: "Yes, that's what I thought too but it looks like she's going through something and she clearly won't tell me because she keeps secrets when it comes to her issues with her husband."

Randall: "What should we do then, mum?"

Faith: "I think that you'll have to take her to a holiday for her to get some rest and for her to be happy since she hadn't been happy."

Randall: "Just the two of us?"

Faith: "Yes, I will be here with the girls. You'll go tomorrow night when she comes back from her magazine shoot and you'll come back on Saturday."

Randall: "Alright, and what's our holiday destination?"

Faith: "It shouldn't be America because you know how she feels about it. I don't think she'll love to go back there and it shouldn't be London because she'd been there. Just go and search on your phone, you two have travelling documents we will buy the tickets tomorrow."

Randall: "Alright, mum. Hmm, a holiday-"

Faith: "Randall, don't you dare forget what is the purpose of the holiday. Your sister has been through a lot the past few days and she must get to relax and be happy away from here. I know it won't solve whatever problems she has but it will decrease any chances of her being highly stressed."

Randall: "I won't be irresponsible mom."

Faith: "I have taken her phone, she won't need it that much tomorrow and I don't want her to get any calls from KZN."

Randall: "But mom, she'll be looking for her phone."

Faith: "I will tell her she might have left it in Palesa's house. It was inside her bag and that means she'd long used it. You'll tell her about the trip when she comes back from her shoot with the girls. I have already told the girls this morning that their mother is going to leave for a while and they were going to be here with me. They didn't seem to have a problem."

Randall: "We will skype you so that she will speak to them."

Faith: "Alright, that's all I wanted to speak to you about, my boy. You can go back to bed now." she said and stood up. She marched to her bedroom feeling the worry because her daughter wasn't happy and it showed through her eyes because she knew Nandipha when she was absolutely happy. She fell asleep that night with hopes that God was going to enlighten whatever weight she was carrying on her shoulders now...

"It's not like you need your phone badly, Nandipha. The girls are impatiently waiting for you inside that mini bus. Go." Faith said to Nandipha and she gave her handbag to her. They were inside Nandipha's bedroom and she was looking for her phone that her mother had taken... Faith had told Randall that he mustn't answer any calls from Ngcebo. She told him this in the morning because she was woken up by Nandipha's phone ringing and Ngcebo was calling. She switched off the phone and placed it away.

Nandipha: "But mama, you know that we all can't function without our phones. What kind of day will I have?" she asked looking around her room for the last time as if she was going to see her phone.

Faith: "I will call Palesa to look for your phone and please, tell that magazine driver to bring you back home immediately after the shoot. It's very important that you come back home."

Nandipha and Faith marched to the mini bus. "But Duma said we should go out with a few people to celebrate the cover." She told her mother who was pushing her out of the house to get to the mini bus.

Faith: "No! No! That can wait but you will come back home right away."

Nandipha: "Okay, I will do that. I love you, sis Nandi." She said shortly looking at her mother who was walking by her side. She held her mother's hand tightly and she gave her a smile.

Faith: "Yes, I love you too Nandi. Go now." she said pointing the bus and Nandipha rushed to it... Faith laughed as she heard the girls chanting 'Bye, Gogo!' She waved her hand even though she couldn't see them...

Faith rushed to her bedroom as she heard her phone ringing. She shook her head and answered Ngcebo's phone call. "Hello?" Faith greeted.

Ngcebo: "Mama. How are you?"

Faith: "I am fine and how are you?"

Ngcebo: "I am fine. I have been calling Nandipha from last night but she's not answering and her phone is off now. Is she busy? I wish to speak to her about something. It's important."

Faith: “She just left the house for the shoot. What is it that you want from her?” She asked and sat on her bed.

Ngcebo: “I will call her when she’s free.”

Faith: “She misplaced her phone as it’s out of reach now. I wouldn’t know when she’ll find the phone. I will pass the message.”

Ngcebo: “Eh, I should be cleansed and the family healer said that I can’t be cleansed without Nandipha’s presence. I called to ask that she comes back home tonight. I will send someone who’ll drive her and the girls.”

Faith: “Alright, I will tell her.”

Ngcebo: “Thank you.”

Faith removed the phone from her ear and she vowed she wasn’t going to tell Nandipha because she didn’t want her to go back to KZN. She knew that should she tell her she was going to run back there because she cared for Ngcebo. She wasn’t going to tell her to leave Ngcebo again and at this stage she wasn’t going to try and tell her to fix whatever was wrong. But she needed her to go and relax because that was all she deserved...

“How do you feel?” Palesa asked Nandipha, Nandipha was walking Palesa out of her mother’s house on a Monday evening. Palesa had passed by the house to check on Nandipha because her phone was off.

Nandipha: “My phone is missing, gha!”

Palesa: “Bitch, please, gake bue ka tseo.” (I am not talking about that!)

Nandipha: “O bua ka eng?” (What are you talking about?)

Palesa: “Photoshoot, slima!”

“Ha! Gwani man. O mpitsa sematla, sematla ke wena!” (You are calling me a fool, fool!)

Nandipha exclaimed and pushed Palesa away from her. Palesa laughed and balanced with her feet not to fall...

Palesa: “But you just called me, a fool too!” she moved towards Nandipha just to push her back and Nandipha saw it coming, she ran to her car. “O motona thata obo o tshameka lenna waitse.” (You are too old for playing games with me, you know.) She said and they laughed.

Nandipha: “I had fun my dear sister friend. You’ll see me and my girls slaying on that magazine, like, ‘we slay, we slay’” she said and did the dance.

Palesa: “Yes, girl!”

Nandipha laughed and stopped dancing. “It was so fun and everyone had fun because of the children’s presence. It’s my lady Buhle who was composed and posing for the camera but the others. Lord! But it will be beautiful.”

Palesa: “That’s all we want and we will market the cover to get people to buy it more than it has been bought.”

Nandipha: “Yes! Girl power!”

Palesa: “[#BlackGirlMagic](#).” She said and they giggled. They hugged each other. “I have to go home now. I need a proper sleep.” She told her.

Nandipha: “I should also sleep. My friend, I have been thinking of buying a house.” She told Palesa seriously.

Palesa: "Hawu! A house?"

Nandipha: "Yes, a house that will belong to my children and I."

Palesa: "Why? I mean you have two houses."

Nandipha: "They're not really mine but they belong to Ngcebo. If Ngcebo and I can separate will I actually go live in mom's house with five kids forever?"

Palesa: "Okay, what happened?"

Nandipha: "We've been fighting a lot and somethings rose up in those fights, things that made me realise that I need to do this. Palesa, forever is never promised and I should use my brain for my kids' sake. I won't use my heart."

Palesa: "But do you have enough money for the deposit? And you are not working Nandipha, how will you afford the bond?"

Nandipha: "I do have money for the deposit I can even put all my money on it because it's good to have a higher deposit. But I was actually thinking that you can help me buy directly from the owner not from the agent. You know buying directly is cheaper than the agent."

Palesa: "Yes, it's cheaper and difficult to actually find that offer."

Nandipha: "I can wait until we find the offer. I don't mind. You know a lot of people from the bank and you know people around nje in general."

Palesa sighed. "Okay, I will search and you'll do the same thing. You'll send the details of the environment and type of house. You'll have a legal arrangement with the seller for payment. You'll afford that?" She asked.

Nandipha: "I will rent the house out and use that money to pay for it. But if we do find the house, please don't mention it to anyone."

Palesa: "Okay, my friend. I will go now." she said, Nandipha opened her arms for Palesa and they hugged each other. They backed away from each other and Palesa looked at Nandipha.

Nandipha: "What?"

Palesa: "Are you fine? As in like very fine, fine?"

Nandipha smiled. "Why do you always ask me like that!" She exclaimed and she pushed her shoulder playfully.

Palesa: "You laugh a lot more than I do, you make more jokes and you are funnier than I am. At times you seem stronger than I am. And for people like you, I should always ask my friend just to make sure." Nandipha looked down and she didn't answer her for a while.

Palesa held her chin up to have a look at her face. "Hey, you are crying." She said and she hugged her tighter. Nandipha cried seriously and tighter.

Nandipha: "I am tired, Palesa... and I have been crying... like a fool asking God to enlighten... my weight that I have on my shoulders... but it's like he doesn't listen. When I am alone and... I look into my heart... it's dark because I have hurt and I don't know what to do... I have these painful words ringing in my heard every time when I am alone they replay themselves and I can't control my mind... It's hard but I always have to wear a smile every time for my children's sake and for my mother not to see that I am not fine even though I can't really hide from mom... I need a break too but I am not getting it... I - I - I am not fine at all." She poured her heart on her and they cried together with Palesa holding

her tightly into her arms.

They got away from each other and they wiped their tears. Palesa looked at her and Nandipha gave her a short smile before looking down. "I am sorry that you are going through all this and you know, what tomorrow, just go to the gym and hit a punching bag while thinking everything that makes you feel this hurt." She advised but she knew that by tomorrow she would be long gone from South Africa and she was hoping that she would have a good time where she was going with her brother. And she would come back feeling better, time away from her problems was what she needed because she didn't look like someone who was in a right state to solve her problems now.

Nandipha sighed. "You think so?" She asked.

Palesa: "Yeah, and when you are feeling calm you'll sort out your problems. Don't confront them now because I can see that you are hurt and upset, you might make decision based on emotions. You know how it goes."

Nandipha: "Yeah, kea leboga neh?"

Palesa slapped her playfully and they laughed. "Don't be so formal." She said and they hugged each other one last time.

Nandipha moved to the back of the house to wash her face. She felt good that she had Palesa, it was good to love someone like she loved Palesa. She'd never thought that after everything she went through with female friends in high school she was ever going to find a true female friend. She was grateful for her... When she was done washing her face she sat outside for a while to have her eyes clear and her face clear because she didn't want her mother to see she was crying. She'd seen how she looked at her, she knew she had failed to hide it from her that she wasn't alright. But she hadn't asked her, she knew she wasn't going to keep quiet but she was going to ask...

"You are a mother now, don't scream like a mad woman!" Faith shouted at Nandipha as she was screaming senselessly after being told by her mother that she was going on a holiday with Randall.

Randall: "And don't think you'll trouble me over there."

Nandipha: "Really? And who are you?"

Randall: "Ow! Mum, did you hear that? She'll trouble me."

Faith: "Whose trouble between you and your sister?"

Nandipha: "Yes! But my phone, mama."

Faith: "What about your phone? You won't need your phone over there."

Nandipha: "I should take some pictures and update on my social media accounts. Can you buy me a new one?" she smiled.

Faith: "Forget it! Just go and pack the rest of your things you still have a lot of time before you go to the airport."

Nandipha: "Okay, but my girls, mama. I will leave them for so long."

Faith: "They will be here with their grandmother and you will skype them."

Nandipha: "Eish, okay, can you borrow me your phone then."

Faith: "What do you want to do with my phone?"

Nandipha: "I want to call their father and tell him that I am leaving."

Randall: "There's no need for that because mum has already done it. Please, stand up." He said pulling his sister by her arm because she wasn't supposed to call her husband. Their mother had told him about his phone call and she told him he mustn't let her call her husband if she requests...

Nandipha: "Really? You got everything under control. What did he say?" she looked back at her mother as they followed each other with her brother.

Faith: "He had no problem, just go!" she replied and she sighed as Nandipha nodded with a smile on her face. Faith hoped that her daughter would have absolute fun and distress...

"How are you?" Mnotho asked Happiness on the phone. It was a Tuesday night after dinner, Mnotho was seated alone on the couch. Pearl had gone to bed and Danielle was in the bathroom taking a shower... Mnotho had been the one to call Happiness because he wanted to speak to the kids.

Happiness: "I am fine."

Mnotho: "The children are sleeping? I called to speak to them."

Happiness: "Yes, they're sleeping."

"Hawu! Why are you lying? Whose laughter is that, isn't Nonjabulo?" Mnotho asked Happiness as he heard Nonjabulo's laughter in the background and he judged by Njabulo's voice that they were running after each other...

On the other side of the line, Happiness was seated on her bed and the children budged inside the room running after each other. "I thought they're sleeping." Happiness said to Mnotho seeing that her lie was caught.

Mnotho: "Can I speak to them?"

Happiness: "You called yesterday and tomorrow you'll be coming here with your family. Tell, me what's the need of speaking to the children now?"

Mnotho: "Happiness, I am using my airtime to call them and you are asking me that? Do you want me to buy them a phone so that I will call them whenever I want to call them because it's like you have a problem that I want to speak to them? I will speak to you tomorrow if you wish to speak to me as well."

Happiness: "Mxm! Here's the phone you two!"

Mnotho smiled as he heard her call them to the phone. He heard Nonjabulo ask who was on the phone and Happiness was found with no answer for that but she just said "Speak to the phone it's on speaker" that was what Mnotho heard and he figured that she didn't want to tell Nonjabulo 'it's your father'

Nonjabulo and Njabulo: "HELLO!"

Mnotho: "Yebo, sanibona!"

Children: "BABA!"

Mnotho: "Yebo, how are you?"

Children: "We want to come back home!"

Happiness: "Aybo! Since when?" on the other side of the line, she raised her voice to the

children and they laughed looking at each other.

Mnotho: "I miss you too and I wish you can come back home. But I forgot to tell you something yesterday."

Children: "INI/INTONI?" (WHAT?)

Mnotho: "Your father will see you tomorrow and I will bring some goodies for you two. Would you like that?"

Children: "HEE! YES!"

Njabulo: "Uzofika ekuseni baba?" (You'll arrive in the morning?)

Mnotho: "No, I won't arrive in the morning."

Nonjabulo: "Don't forget! Don't forget to bring goodies and a lot of them."

Happiness: "No, sweets please."

Children: "SWEETS! CHOCOLATE!"

Mnotho laughed. "Your father will bring anything that you want." He said. They made the sounds showing that their tongues could only anticipate what they were going to be eating the following day... Mnotho chuckled.

Nonjabulo: "Where's Pearl and Shami?" (Siphosami)

Mnotho: "Pearl is sleeping and Siphosami is with your grandmother."

Njabulo: "They will come too?"

Mnotho: "No."

Children: "HAWU!"

Mnotho: "You'll see them again when you visit. I will see you tomorrow, goodnight, my children."

Children: "Goodnight."

"Please, don't hung up. I want to talk to you." Mnotho said after the children had said 'goodnight' he suspected she was going to hung up.

Happiness: "What?"

Mnotho: "What should I bring for you?"

Happiness: "Mxm! You are sleepy." She said and hung up the call... Mnotho chuckled and looked at the phone. He figured teasing her was the way to go while he was still apologising to her... He got up from the couch...

"I like this view. It's looks yummy and how long has it been?" He asked standing before Danielle as she was naked before the mirror. She was moisturising her body. Mnotho pulled her closer to him by her waist.

Danielle: "It's rude to disturb a lady while she's busy with her body."

Mnotho: "It's our body not just hers."

Danielle: "Wow! You don't say." She said softly and she laid her head on his shoulder as Mnotho was massaging her breasts. He smiled and laid her lips on the sensitive part of her neck and he heard a moan.

She turned her body to face him, Mnotho didn't ruin the moment he held her face with his hands. He then rested his lips on her cold wet lips. They shared a slow, emotions soothing kiss. The kiss awakened the hunger in Danielle, it'd been way too long without him and this

was just what she needed to distress. The intense kiss made her sob because the emotions she was feeling were not just overwhelming but they were highly satisfying. She felt as if her moist was thicker and that was just making her wish they could rush to bed...

Mnotho: "I have been so busy and I hope our dear friend doesn't hate me for not giving her attention lately." He said and lifted Danielle off the floor.

Danielle laughed loudly as Mnotho carried her into his strong arms. "I think she understands that you've been busy but now, she wants you strong." She told him without removing her eyes from him as he was looking at her while he removed the vest that was on his body... She sucked on her lower lip as Mnotho ran his hands through her soft skin from her thighs up to the sensitive part of her waist line. He laid on her loosely and he kissed her all over again while his right hands visited her moist openings. Danielle moaned a tight louder as she received his finger and he was torturing her by rubbing it just around her.

Danielle: "Can you please, just..."

Mnotho: "Just what?" He asked and widened her legs but he stopped doing any moves as Danielle wasn't finishing up her statement. She opened her eyes.

Danielle: "Why are stopping now?"

Mnotho: "You wanted to say something?"

Danielle: "Ah! Babe? Please, I wanted to say do that I like it." She lied because she could see that now he wanted to play games with her and torture her even further than he'd done.

Mnotho chuckled and he positioned his organ on her openings but not to enter her just to play with her. He laid his body on her to kiss her again, while they were kissing he could feel her body moving closer to his because she couldn't take what he was doing. She just wanted him! He knew what this meant and he felt that he'd tortured her enough.

Mnotho held her legs lifting them up, he brought them together so that he could enter her sharp because that position closed her in, making their first entrance more exciting... He smiled as he heard a sharp scream and her face reflected the glorious emotion that she was feeling... He began moving slow... slow... slow... until he had the need for speed...

He collapsed on her convulsing body and he smiled as he felt her heart pounding and she kept gasping for air. "I really missed you." He admitted.

Danielle: "I missed you too, my love."

Mnotho: "Let's give it some time and go again." He said licking her breasts and Danielle laughed placing her hands on his shoulders to hold him tighter...

S5 >> EPISODE 46

Tuesday afternoon, he sighed as he set his feet inside his apartment. He'd been away from the city for quite some time and now, as he was back it was going to be business all the way... He looked around the apartment, he saw a glass of wine on top of the coffee table with a bottle next to the glass. He figured Simthande was inside the apartment.

Mntwana threw his bag on the single couch and his body on the double couch, removing a cushion that was on the couch he saw a condom. He frowned and took the condom that wasn't placed on the couch obviously but it was placed in a manner that someone wouldn't see it. But Mntwana saw it.

"You are here!" Simthande exclaimed and widened her eyes as Mntwana had the condom that she placed on the couch. She didn't relax her body as Mntwana was looking back at her now and the condom was still on his hand.

Mntwana: "You are expecting someone?" He asked politely masking the fact that he was angry to see this condom on his couch. He didn't leave any condom here and he had to come back to it! This meant that Simthande was sleeping with men in his apartment or she was expecting a man. He couldn't deny it to himself that this was making him angry. He wasn't helping her with the shelter so that she could sleep men in his place. If she didn't want him but she wanted other men. Why didn't she go to those men?

Simthande: "Yes, I am expecting someone." She admitted and she moved forward to stand before Mntwana as he was on his feet now. He stood on his feet immediately after Simthande admitted that she was expecting someone.

Mntwana: "You can't even lie about it. You are expecting a man here! Wait, you were going to sleep with him on my couch? How could you?" he shouted at her feeling the complete anger and it wasn't just anger alone, there was jealous that was bigger than the anger that he was feeling. She had no shame!

Simthande: "Why are you angry? And you ruined my plans." She said coolly as if Mntwana wasn't angry. She could see that he was angry but she was trying to be cool now because she wanted to hide the fact that she was ashamed that Mntwana ruined her plans. He'd told her that he was going to come back in the afternoon and she thought he was going to find her laying on the couch on the long black robe that she was wearing, she would be holding her glass of wine with her eyes looking at the TV. She had planned to lure him into sleeping with her because she'd been wanting him so bad since he left. He was attractive and her inner bitchy woman wanted him.

She didn't want to obviously agree that she wanted a relationship with him but she was hoping that if they share intimacy tonight that would be the best answer that she would love to have a relationship with him.

But now, he'd found the condom before he was meant to find it and that ruined her entire plan. She hoped she could still try and run along with it...

Mntwana: "Oh! I have ruined your plans? Sorry, I should leave then."

She smiled a little feeling turned on by the fact that he was angry and jealous and he couldn't even hide it to her face. "I know that you've had a difficult time for the past weeks. You must be stressed and I missed you around." She told him removing the jacket that Mntwana was wearing after she'd taken the condom from his hand. She looked at him and she saw his face was relaxing.

Mntwana: "You are playing games with me. Is this your plan of covering up the fact that you wanted to bring a man here?"

Simthande: "You are the man I was waiting for. What do you take me for Mntwana? I am a woman and if I had another man I would have left the apartment to go to him. I knew you were coming here and tell me, why was I going to bring a man while you are coming over?"

Mntwana: "I don't know but to make me jealous." He closed his eyes as Simthande was unfastening his belt and the heat from her body was already giving him signal of what was going to happen now. He wasn't about to be a gentleman and say, 'don't you think we should take things slow?' No! He was going give himself over to her and take herself for him to embrace. There was no time to be a gentleman about this because he'd long wanted this woman. And why would he refuse sex?

Simthande: "I am not the one to play games." She said to him and she avoided looking at 'him' as he was naked before her. She looked into his eyes and waited for him to take action now because she'd done her part... Mntwana unfastened the strings of her robe. He smiled as he saw the medium sized sensuous breasts. He placed his hands on them after he'd discarded her robe. She was completely naked beneath the robe.

Mntwana chuckled. "I can't believe you took me by surprise like this."

Simthande: "You are a man right and I know what you are seeing is not new." Mntwana didn't comment but he began licking and teasing her breasts with his warm tongue. His hand slipped up to her neck and he crept his face to her face. Their lips tightened on one another as they shared their first kiss. Mntwana groaned feeling the touch of her hands on his body, they moved down to his significant organ. He didn't let go of her lips...

Down on the floor, their bodies dropped quietly and they laughed as the space between the couch and the coffee table seemed small. "I got this." Mntwana said and he pushed the coffee table carefully. All the middle space of Mntwana's fluffy red carpet was left unattended.

They then occupied it...

Mntwana: "Sit on my face." he encouraged and Simthande smiled delightedly. She didn't ask how he knew that this had always been her sexual fantasy but no man had suggested fulfilling it. And the one she'd asked, he said 'he was no toy to do that' He looked at her and he saw the excitement and he pledged to give her nothing but glory... Simthande sat on his face, he held her waist to stop her from neglecting her entire body on him. Mntwana then began savagely exploring her inner places and her moans were super melodic... Simthande laid down to reach his organ and they shared a pleasing 69...

Now, Simthande had her waist bent inwardly and Mntwana satisfied his eyes with her organ. "What are you waiting for now?" Simthande asked sounding impatient as she wasn't feeling him enter her.

Mntwana: "I am still staring."

Simthande laughed. "Come on!" She exclaimed and Mntwana sank himself on her and she was tight, her internal walls were holding tightly on to him and her warmth drove him insane...

Mntwana: "Wow! You are full of surprises." He said to her, now, they were looking at each other... They were facing each other.

Simthande: "That was very fun. You are really a man."

Mntwana: "Did you think that I am a boy."

Simthande giggled. "No, but you are an intense man and I love it." She admitted and she rested her head on his chest. Mntwana held her and they both closed their eyes as they were both sleepy...

Simthande moved from Mntwana quietly as she was woken up by her ringing phone. She didn't get up because her phone was on the coffee table. It was an unknown number that was calling her.

Simthande: "Hello?"

"Sis, how are you?" A familiar voice greeted Simthande and she held her breath without answering the question that she'd asked. "It's Nikhona sis and I am around Cape Town. Do you still live there?" She asked.

"Why is your face white as if you've just seen a ghost? Who's that on the phone?" He asked and took Simthande's phone from her ear as he saw that she wasn't about to speak to this person. She didn't protest.

Mntwana: "Who's this?"

Nikhona: "It's Nikhona, Simthande's sister and I was asking if we can meet up. I am around Cape Town. You can send her address."

Mntwana didn't say anything but he removed the phone from his ear and he dropped the call because he wasn't expecting that she was the one on the phone. He looked at Simthande and held her shoulder.

Mntwana: "Let's go and shower. I will cook for us." he suggested pulling Simthande by her hand... Simthande looked at him and she sighed as her mind came back to the present. She nodded and got up from the floor...

"Why are you not coming with us?" Mnotho asked Ngcebo, they were at the gas station in Johannesburg. They have got off their cars to buy drinks at the garage. Mnotho was driving alone and Dalingcebo was driving with Ngcebo. The two cars with their parents and Nkosazana along with aunt Nomkhosi and uncle elder had already drove forward to get to Mthimkhulu's house.

Ngcebo: "I haven't been able to reach my wife on the phone and I think I should go to her mother's house to check on her and the children. I don't think that she's in our house. She must come to the house because you'll be going there after the meeting." He replied while taping on the phone, he was requesting an Uber because Dalingcebo was also going to attend the meeting.

Mnotho: "Okay, we will see you after the meeting."

Ngcebo: "Sharp. I hope you'll resolve things today."

Mnotho: "That's my wish." He said paying for his car tank... Ngcebo then limped to Dalingcebo's car to get his wallet. He'd been living in his parents' palace since Nandipha and the girls left their house.

Dalingcebo: "I was going to drop you I don't get why you are requesting an Uber. You'll wait until when?"

Ngcebo: “Dad, I won’t wait because it’s here. I will see you.” he said and he limped away from his car to get to the Uber that was waiting for him...

“It would be best that we get straight to the agenda of this meeting.” Mthimkhulu said to the Zulu family members who were seated around the dining table. They’ve had refreshments and smalls talks before the meeting.

Daliso: “Yes, I think that it would be better that today, we don’t argue but go straight to the solutions of this problem.”

Others: “YEAH!”

Mthimkhulu: “What is the solution to this problem? My daughter has been abused by your son and there’s nothing that can change that.”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “We never said there was something that can change that.”

Daliso: “Before we rush to solutions. MaMthimkhulu?”

Happiness: “Baba?” she responded without looking at him.

Daliso: “What you did was wrong.”

Mthimkhulu: “She was wrong where, Ndabezitha?”

Daliso: “She was wrong to keep quiet when she was being abused.” He looked at Nkosazana and hoped that she would talk about this issue. He’d spoken with Nkosazana that she was supposed to speak about this with Happiness in the presence of the family because it was clear that tolerance was normal to her.

Nkosazana: “Baba’ Mthimkhulu, Happiness wasn’t alone in the family. She had me as a friend and she had me as queen. It was wrong of her to keep quiet with the abuse. Was your husband threatening you that he was going to kill you if you talk to the family members about it?” she looked at Happiness.

Happiness: “No, he didn’t threaten me but it wasn’t easy speaking about it.”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “It wasn’t easy because you’ve found a man who comforted you. Is that right or wrong, MaMthimkhulu?”

Thembelihle: “Kodwa, aunt, why are you jumping to that?”

Aunt Nomkhosi: “It’s a straight forward question MaSthole.”

Nkosazana: “Happiness knew the kind of cases I had to solve with women being abused even though she never knew them in depth because of confidentiality but we would talk about issues that women face. And she would even raise suggestions but she never thought of speaking about her abuse? You are not strong if you are tolerating abuse MaMthimkhulu and you should know that from today. I was angry with her and I am still angry with her, baba. Your daughter wasn’t alone over there and it’s not right that she chose to suffer for unjust reasons.” She looked at Mthimkhulu who was looking at her with a close eye.

Mthimkhulu: “I hear your point.”

Daliso: “We are not turning a blind eye to the abuser but I have treated him the way he deserves and whip him the way he deserves it because I was ashamed of his actions. It’s no excuse that Mnotho was in a forced marriage because there is no reason in the world that gives a man a right to abuse his partner and he knows that.”

Mthimkhulu: "I hear you, Ndabezitha and I have been alone and seen the huge role I played in this. I admit I was wrong to threaten him into this marriage."

Uncle elder: "Yes, both ends are wrong."

Aunt Nomkhosi: "You don't jump from a man to another just because things are not going right. We have disgraced your ancestors because our son abused you and you have disgraced our ancestors for sleeping with another man while married to our son. There's no justification to what Mnotho did to you and there's no justification to what you did."

Uncle elder: "Yes, the two of you were equally wrong and that's not something we can even discuss and try to say you went to another man because our son mistreated you. That's nonsense."

Happiness's aunt: "It was entirely wrong but what is the way forward?"

Daliso looked at Mthimkhulu, he didn't want to be the one to come up with solutions. "It didn't sit well with me that prince Mnotho had formed a relationship with my granddaughter without the family meeting to discuss this issue of the children." Mthimkhulu voiced out his concern.

"HAWU!" The Zulu family exclaimed and they looked at one another.

Mnotho: "Baba, I couldn't exclude Nonjabulo when I build a relationship with Njabulo. And I didn't include her because I feel pressured to do it as she's a sister to Njabulo but that was coming from my heart. Nonjabulo is my daughter by tradition and there's nobody who will change that."

"YEBO!" Uncle elder and aunt Nomkhosi supported Mnotho's words with their heads nodding along with their supporting statements.

Mthimkhulu: "You didn't do it right."

Happiness's aunt: "Bhuti, what do you want to become of Nonjabulo now? Should Nonjabulo stay behind when Njabulo is visiting his father? Should Nonjabulo stay in the house and don't go to Njabulo's father? Why do you want the child to live the life of noticing that she doesn't have a father?"

Thembelihle: "It's really not a good thing that you can want for a child."

Mthimkhulu: "How can I trust the prince with my granddaughter if he was able to abuse her mother sexually?"

"HHAWU!" Everyone was blood drained and they looked at one another in disbelief.

Mnotho closed his eyes and he looked down feeling insulted beyond measure. It was clear that Mthimkhulu was implying that he could molest the child. Mnotho stamped his forehead on the table and there was silence...

Mthimkhulu: "You can't blame me for thinking like that."

Aunt Nomkhosi: "A child? Mthimkhulu? How can you possibly compare these things that are incomparable?"

Dalingcebo: "And my brother has recognised his mistake he'd stated before that it was anger of being trapped in this marriage that drove him to do what he did. Just like MaMthimkhulu cheated because of being in a loveless marriage. Bhuti Mnotho was never an abuser and it's gut wrenching that you can think that he can molest a little child. How can you really

compare these things? You are painting him as a monster now and monsters don't rectify their wrongs but they keep feeding on doing bad things."

Happiness's aunt: "Bhuti, we understand you don't trust him but look closely into this. What are the possibilities that the prince could abuse Nonjabulo? From what Happiness had told us he didn't seem as a manipulative abuser but someone who was acting out of anger and so, what are chances?"

Dalису and Thembelihle were quiet because they were both feeling the same pain that their son was reduced to this now because of his behaviour.

Dalису: "It would be better then, if my son doesn't have a relationship with your granddaughter just to keep your heart at peace."

Aunt Nomkhosi: "Ndabezitha, that will hurt the child. You've seen how the children would follow their father around because they were closer to him at that shortest period of time."

Nkosazana: "And it won't only hurt Nonjabulo but it will hurt Njabulo too. What should he think if his father suddenly excludes his sister? He will think that his father hates his sister like he did with him."

Thembelihle: "What do you think, Happiness? What do you want for your children?" She asked and looked at Happiness as she could hear everyone arguing about this matter without asking the mother of the children what she wanted to happen, without asking her what she thought was right for her kids.

Happiness looked at Thembelihle. "I don't want to break my children's heart because I can see they're happy to have a father. Queen Nkosazana is right, if Njabulo gets closer to his father and exclude Nonjabulo he won't be happy."

Mthimkhulu: "My child, you trust the prince?"

Happiness: "Being in this marriage changed me into something that I wasn't and the same thing happened for him. I admit that and before everything else came between us I saw he wasn't a monster that I thought he was when I met him. I don't see him hurting a child like that, baba." She replied the truth that she knew deep in her heart. She didn't want stand in her children's way because they were happy that they had a father. She'd once heard them talk about him, talking to each other about all the things they were going to tell him to buy for them when he calls again... And that was everything that she wanted for her children, happiness.

Mthimkhulu: "I will trust my daughter."

Dalису: "Thank you. Now, we will need to have appease the ancestors because we need to keep the peace so that we can live with peace again."

Mthimkhulu: "I support that, Ndabezitha." He said that and they all supported, they then discussed the dates and how things were going to happen. They had that discussion without having arguments...

"How are you?" Mnotho asked Happiness politely. She was standing behind the sink washing the dishes after the meeting had ended.

Happiness: "I am fine. What do you want because you've took the children?" she asked and didn't turn to look at him. She heard by his voice that it was him... Mnotho had asked that

the children go with them as they were heading to Ngcebo's house for the night. Happiness didn't refuse.

Mnotho: "I just wanted to say thank you for not stopping the relationship between me and the children. And I wouldn't hurt them, Happiness."

Happiness: "I didn't do that for you but I did it for them."

Mnotho: "Okay, but thank you, anyway. I will leave now." he said and turned to leave the kitchen. He was still feeling down because of Mthimkhulu's words.

"Gogo, when are we going to speak to mama again? I miss her." Ntokomalo asked her grandmother who was inside the kitchen blending fruits for them to drink... Ntokomalo was standing behind her granny and her sisters were at the back of the house playing and Thula was watching over them.

Faith: "We will speak with her a day after tomorrow, baby." she replied and looked back at her shortly. Nandipha had skyped them in the morning. They were not giving Faith a hard time by crying for their mother...

Ntokomalo: "Ashihambanga nani naye?" (Why didn't we go with her?)

Faith: "You couldn't go with her because she's far away and only adults can go where she is. But she will come back and you'll go where children can go. Okay, Ntoko kagogo?" She smiled at her bending her face down to hers. Ntokomalo giggled and she held her granny's cheeks.

"The prince is here for you, mama." Thula told Faith. She'd been the one who saw Ngcebo approaching the gate as she was running around Similo who didn't want to stay put and play where the others were...

Faith: "Tell him to come here. I am busy."

Thula: "Okay, come Ntokomalo. Your father is here."

"Hawu! Nampela?" (Really?) She asked delightedly and she ran away leaving Thula behind... She giggled as she saw her sisters standing before her father who was seated on the single couch. "Baba!" She jumped repeatedly.

Ngcebo: "Ntokomalo." He pulled her to the others as they were standing before him no one was standing before the other.

Ntokomalo: "Ehe, baba, ushiphatheleni?" (What did you bring for us?)

Others: "LUTHO!" they screamed and Ngcebo chuckled as they screamed.

Thando: "Ubaba wethu yena akaphathanga lutho Ntoko! Shizokhala thina." (Our father didn't bring anything for us and we will cry now.)

Ngcebo: "No, you won't cry because I will go buy what you want. And we are going home now. Where's your mother?"

"Their grandmother said you can come to her in the kitchen because she's busy." Thula told Ngcebo standing next to the couch he was seated on.

Ngcebo: "Okay, don't leave... And you, mama's rats, answer my question. Where's your mother?" he asked and tickled them simultaneously, the girls, giggles even those whom he hadn't reach that moment. They giggled.

Buhle: "Mama and uncle left."

Similo: "Yes, they went far away."

Ntokomalo: "Yes, where children don't go."

Thando: "Shikhulume nomama kuTV kagogo eyincantuntu." (We spoke to mama on granny's laptop) she said and showed by her hands that the laptop was smaller to the actual TV. Ngcebo chuckled at that gesture even though he couldn't really get what was going on.

Ngcebo: "I will go speak to grandma and I will come back to you, okay?"

Similo: "Shoya kothenga uma ubuya, baba?"

Ngcebo: "Yes." He promised and got up after they've stepped back for him. He got to the kitchen, Faith was pouring the blended fruit juice into the girls' cups. "Sawubona, mama." Ngcebo greeted her and he sat on the chair.

Faith: "Yebo."

Ngcebo: "How are you?"

Faith: "I am fine and how are you?" she asked and closed the cups one by one.

Ngcebo: "I am fine. I just spoke to the girls and they told me that their mother is not here. She left with their uncle."

Faith: "They left last night heading to Brittany."

Ngcebo: "INI?" He snapped and mistakenly banged the table... Faith didn't jump at that snapped but she just looked at Ngcebo with a relaxed mean face. Ngcebo drew a short breath. "I am sorry, it's just that she didn't tell me."

Faith: "She's not here, you can go now."

Ngcebo: "Hawu, you won't even explain why she left? I deserve to know why she left because right now I feel disrespected that she chose to up and leave without telling me that she was leaving. She left the kids here and didn't bother to tell me that she's leaving them."

Faith: "I am the one who organised the trip for her and took her phone. I didn't tell her on purpose that you need her back in KZN. She wanted to tell you she's leaving but I stopped her from doing it because I didn't want her to speak to you. And where was she supposed to leave the children?"

Ngcebo didn't answer her but he taunted his jaw and he got up from the chair. "I am taking my kids then." He said to Nandipha's mother before moving back.

Faith: "Where are you going with them as you are taking them?"

Ngcebo: "You can't ask me that question because the children are mine."

Faith: "Watch how you speak with me, young man. I am not your mate." She said to Ngcebo on a polite tone. She was deliberately keeping her cool because she'd seen that arguing with these people was a waste of time and energy.

Ngcebo: "I am sorry. My family is in the house. I came here to take them and their mother." He replied and Faith didn't say anything... She walked to the lounge with the girls' cups that had their juice...

"Thula, we are going home. Please, take their things they came here with." Ngcebo said to Thula while requesting a cab...

Thula: "Yebo, nkosana." She said and stood up to do as she'd been told.

Buhle: “Shiyahamba baba?” (We are leaving?)

Ngcebo: “Yes, we are going home.” he replied and kept his eyes on the phone... He couldn’t believe Nandipha!

S5 >> EPISODE 47

“Call my brother he’ll take these two. We didn’t even drive a long distance and they are already sleeping.” Ngcebo told Thula getting Buhle and Thando off the cab. Thula was out of the cab now. She’d taken the sleeping Nongcebo. Similo and Ntokomalo were sleeping inside the car.

Thula: “I will do that Nkosana.” She said and she moved to the house.

Ngcebo stayed behind. “Why are you two standing over there?” Ngcebo asked Buhle and Thando who were not moving to the house with Thula.

Buhle: “We are waiting for you, baba.”

Thando: “Ehe, no Mimi no Ntoko.”

“SHAWUBONA, BABA.” The girls greeted Dalingcebo as he walked out of the premises, approaching the cab that was parked on the driveway.

Dalingcebo: “Sanibona, ninjani?” he asked them and he placed his hands on their heads and he shook their heads. The girls laughed.

Ngcebo: “I can’t carry these two with a crutch.”

“Okay, Hawu, it’s just the six of you. Where’s the seventh member?” Dalingcebo asked and he took both the girls who were sleeping. Ngcebo didn’t answer Dalingcebo but he got off the car after he’d paid the driver. He pushed the two girls forward. “Are you ignoring me?”

Dalingcebo asked and looked back at Ngcebo as he wasn’t answering him.

Ngcebo: “No, I am not ignoring you but you can see that she’s not here. What are you doing in the house?” he asked and opened the door for Dalingcebo to step inside the house first.

Dalingcebo: “I don’t know what they’re doing.”

“Ha! Umkhulu, baba!” Buhle was the first to hear her grandfather’s voice. She pulled Thando by her wrist and they rushed to the lounge where she’d heard their grandfather’s voice...

Ngcebo: “You’ll go put them in their room. I want some water.” He said and limped to the kitchen while his brother climbed the stairs with his daughters. Ngcebo stepped inside the kitchen that had his mother and Nkosazana, they were cooking and having a conversation.

He limped to the sink.

Thembelihle: “You are back. Where are the children and their mother?”

Ngcebo: “Yes, I am back. I will go to my room.” he answered abruptly.

Thembelihle: “What’s wrong?” she looked at him as she could see that something wasn’t really adding up with him.

Ngcebo: “Nothing.” He replied and left the kitchen for his bedroom. He was angry and he wanted to be alone. He couldn’t believe Nandipha and her mother, they were treating him

like a non-factor in this marriage. Nandipha just left and she didn't even see the need to confirm if he was really cool with her leaving the country for another country. She just left the children and he wasn't told that she was leaving the children behind. He clicked his tongue as he climbed the stairs making his way to his room.

Dalingcebo: "What's wrong with you? Why are you clicking your tongue?"

Ngcebo: "It's nothing. Aunt Nomkhosi and grandpa left?"

Dalingcebo: "Yes, they drove back home. I wish to go out before my divorce on Thursday. Can you grant me my wish and let's go out somewhere?"

Ngcebo: "I am not good for going out today. I just want to be alone." He told him without looking at him and without stopping his journey to his room as Dalingcebo had stopped walking to speak to him.

Dalingcebo: "Sure." He proceeded with climbing down the stairs without asking anything further because he could see that he was off mood...

Ngcebo stepped inside his room and he clicked his tongue. He threw the crutch that was on his hand on the floor. He repeatedly clicked his tongue as he limped to his bed, he laid down and took his phone from his pocket. He logged in on all social media platforms to check if Nandipha had been using them. And it stated clear that she'd long last used them. He placed his phone aside and his mind ran wild thinking about, what she was doing where she was? Could he trust that her brother would watch over her? What if she doesn't come back? What would he do if she doesn't come back? But no, she wouldn't do that because she loved their children too much just to leave them and never come back. He believed she still loved him as equal!

But what if she does reckless things over there, decides to get drunk for the first time? Or she will see other men while she's over there? They weren't in a right shape when she left and what if she takes decisions that can end their lives together? What would he do then?

He sighed and he looked at the side of the bed, he grabbed Nandipha's framed picture that was placed on the top drawer that was on his side of the bed. He looked at the picture and he clicked his tongue before slamming it on the wall. The frame broke into pieces and landed on the floor. He then turned his body and he buried his face on the pillow...

"Your brother hasn't come down here since he arrived and we must have dinner just go and call him." Thembelihle told Dalingcebo who was seated on the high chair inside the kitchen he was eating a pocket of chips while busy on his phone... Thembelihle had called Thula and she asked her while seated with Dalisu, that what was the reason for Nandipha not to come back...

Dalingcebo: "He said he wanted to be alone, mama."

Thembelihle: "How can Nandipha leave the country without telling him?"

Dalingcebo: "How do you know that she didn't tell him?"

Thembelihle: "Thula told us that Ngcebo didn't know that Nandipha left the country. That's just disrespectful and now, my son is upset."

Dalingcebo: "I will go and wake him up." He said and got up to leave the kitchen without commenting on the issue of his brother being upset...

“Are you feeling a bit under the weather?” Dalisu asked Ngcebo as he sat down with Dalingcebo on the dining chair to join them for dinner.

Ngcebo: “No, I just needed to rest.”

Dalису: “Your children told me that their mother left with her brother. Your mother and I, asked Thula and she confirmed it that her mother sent her on a holiday. When is she coming back? I need her back home.”

Ngcebo: “I am not sure when she’ll come back. I didn’t ask her mother.”

Dalису: “Alright.”

Thembelihle: “Your wife left the country without telling you and you didn’t even ask when she’ll be coming back?”

Ngcebo: “Yes, I didn’t ask mama.”

Thembelihle: “I want to see her mother and she will tell me exactly how she thinks. How can she allow her daughter to leave without telling her husband? Who does she think she is?”

Mnotho: “Hawu, mama.”

Thembelihle: “No, don’t say ‘Hawu, mama’ She’s busy advocating Nandipha in a wrong direction just like she did when she was giving us court papers. She supported Nandipha, fully. And now, she’s doing this. It’s high time I tell her we paid ilobolo to MaNtombela not her. She has no right to do this. MaNtombela would have never tell Nandipha to leave without telling her husband. What kind of a mother is she? She can’t see her daughter when she’s wrong. Gha!” she vented out the words and everyone around the table kept quiet.

Dalису looked at Ngcebo and he was looking at his food. “We are all leaving tomorrow, MaSthole. Is that right, we are all leaving?” he looked at the family members who were seated around the table eating. The children were seated alone on the floor because there was Njabulo and Nonjabulo in the house.

Them: “Yes!”

Thembelihle: “I will go to her house before we leave, baba.”

Ngcebo: “I won’t be leaving with you. I will stay behind.”

Thembelihle: “Hawu! Why? I thought you said you will spend the week with us. Why are you changing your mind now?”

Ngcebo: “I received a call about a deal that I have just been given.”

Thembelihle: “You are going back to work already?”

Ngcebo: “I can’t turn this deal down mama because Nandipha organised it for me and if she can learn that I turned it down just to go back home. She won’t be happy, I will have to stay and finalise everything.”

Mnotho: “He can always come home to visit mom but work is important.”

Thembelihle: “But are you fit?”

Ngcebo: “I won’t start working right away I will finalise things only.”

Thembelihle: “And the children? What about them?”

Ngcebo: “They will go back to their grandmother.” He replied and lifted the glass of water, he drank it thinking he almost turned this deal down only because he was angry with

Nandipha. He'd told them he wasn't taking it but his mind reminded him that he wasn't doing the right thing and he was going to regret his actions and hurt Nandipha in the process because she had so much faith in him when she organised this for him. He then called them back immediately and negotiated that they can finalise the deal this week because he'd seen he could manage. They agreed to that with the manager who'd called him... Thembelihle didn't say anything after Ngcebo had said that. "I won't be there when you go for court Dalingcebo but I will call you after the hearing." He said to his brother.

Dalingcebo: "It's okay, I wasn't going to need anyone to be there because for now, we will have a discussion with our lawyers."

Daliso: "Ey, your wife, Dalingcebo! Ngiyabonga!" he commented and clapped his hands and he shook his head.

Thembelihle: "She's totally unbelievable. Hhaybo! It's like we didn't have a relationship with her. She has a child with us and she didn't even call."

Nkosazana: "I wasn't expecting that from her too."

Thembelihle: "Hawu! Yehheni! I have never seen such!"

Daliso: "Ngokwesintu nje abanye abantu besifazane ngisho bengaganile lapho kodwa uma kufiwe kubo kwezingane zabo bayawahambisa amazwi enduduzo. Abanye baza bembese nomufi, kodwa hhayi umfazi wakho!" (In tradition, other baby mamas sent their condolences to their children's family when someone died and they even give a blanket to the deceased but not your wife!) he exclaimed and looked at Dalingcebo.

Dalingcebo: "I have no comment."

Mnotho: "I wouldn't have a comment either. Tjo!" he said and they laughed.

Thembelihle: "And you must make sure that she doesn't get Qalokuhle's custody. All the children had their parents in the palace but Qalokuhle couldn't even see her mother. Why did she do that?"

Dalingcebo: "I don't know, mama."

Ngcebo: "But at least her mother did come."

"AT LEAST!" They agreed and moved from that topic to the other topic...

The maid opened the gate for Ngcebo and Thembelihle, Ngcebo was bringing the children back to Faith and Thembelihle wanted to talk to her.

Ngcebo: "Go and put your bags in your mother's room." he told the children and he sat down on the couch along with his mother. Thula walked away with the children to get to their mother's room.

"I am afraid Nandipha's mother is not in the house. She left for work." The maid told Ngcebo and his mother after they've told her that Thembelihle wanted to speak with Faith.

Thembelihle: "Call her and tell her that I am here I want to speak to her." she instructed the maid clearly. The maid nodded and she left the lounge.

"Yebo, mama, is there a problem?" Faith answered the maid's phone call.

Maid: "Cha, sis, but your son in-law and his mother, they are here and his mother wishes to speak to you. Ngcebo has brought the children back."

Faith: "I am working I can't come back."

Maid: "I should tell her that?"

Faith: "Yes, tell her that. She mustn't wait for me I am busy."

Maid: "Okay, sis, I will tell her."

Faith: "Ngiyabonga, please, help Thula watch over the children. You can stop doing what you are doing, I don't mind. I will come back immediately when I am done here because I didn't think he was going to bring them back."

Maid: "I will do that, sis."

Faith: "Alright. And check if they have everything, their milk and all that. I wouldn't want to drive back to the shops. You'll send a text to me if there's something I need to buy."

Maid: "Alright."

Faith: "Thank you." she said and she hang up the call...

The maid then walked back to the lounge. "I am sorry, but she said she can't come back because she's busy at work." She told them.

Thembelihle: "Aybo! Ngcebo who'll be with the children here, kanti? And would have been wrong if she came back?"

Maid: "Sorry, but I am here and their nanny is here and their grandmother left because she didn't think they were coming back. She'd taken leave for them."

Thembelihle: "Ayi! Imihlola yami le. Wonders never seem to end." She said and she stood up to leave the house... Ngcebo didn't say anything but he went to the children to tell them that he was leaving...

"Come, Nonjabulo." Mnotho said getting Nonjabulo off his car. His car was parked inside Mthimkhulu's residence the maid had been the one to open the gate for him... It was a Wednesday morning and he was bringing the children back to their mother. He was to drive back to KZN.

Njabulo: "You are not leaving, baba?" he asked his father as their father was leading them to the house. They were walking behind him slowly.

Mnotho: "I told you that I am going home and you'll stay here with your mother and grandfather, Njabulo."

Nonjabulo: "No, let's go home too and mom."

Mnotho: "You'll come home some other time."

"HOWU!" Njabulo exclaimed and he held Nonjabulo's hand stopping her from following their father because he didn't want him to leave without them and their mother... Mnotho proceeded to the house without realising that the children were not following him...

Nonjabulo: "Let's go back to daddy's car and he will come back with mom."

Njabulo: "Yes, let's go." He supported and they headed back to the car...

"Where are my children? You are coming here walking alone." Happiness asked Mnotho as she saw Mnotho entering the lounge with the children's backpacks but they were not behind him.

Mnotho looked back and he sighed. "Hhayi, Njabulo and his sister! They might have gone back to the car." He said and placed their bags on the couch. He then moved out of the house

and Happiness followed him...

“Why are you standing over there because I said you’re staying behind with your mother?” Mnotho asked Njabulo and Nonjabulo who were standing by Mnotho’s car waiting for him to come back.

Nonjabulo: “We are waiting for you and mom.”

Happiness: “Waiting for what reason?”

Njabulo: “We are going home with dad, mom and you’ll come with us.”

Happiness: “That will not happen, go back inside the house!”

Mnotho: “Don’t shout at them. They’re just children and all children act like this when someone is leaving.”

Happiness: “You are lecturing me on how to be a mother, now?”

Mnotho: “No, but I am telling you not to shout unnecessarily. Njabulo and Nonjabulo go to your mother because I am not going back home with you.” he told them firmly and he pulled them by their arms.

Njabulo: “Asifuni ukusala!” (We don’t want to stay behind.)

Mnotho: “I will come back and take you home but now, go to your mother.” He told the children and he lifted them off the ground. They cried as Mnotho was moving back to the house with them. Happiness followed after them. “I won’t come back if you keep crying.” He threatened them and he put them on the couch. They didn’t stop crying even after he’d threatened them.

Happiness: “We will go out tonight and you’ll call your father when you come back. You won’t sleep without talking to him.” she tried to sooth her children, seated next to them. She looked at Mnotho and she held them both closer to her. “You are not helping right but you are looking at us.” she added.

Mnotho sighed and he went down to their level after he’d taken out his wallet. He’d bought what they wanted him to buy and now, the only way to keep them quiet was to give them money. “I will give you money and you will buy airtime, give airtime to your mother and she will call me. You will get change and that change you will go hide it away from your mother so the she won’t steal your money.” He blackmailed the children giving R100 note each.

They stopped crying at the sight of money and they laughed when their father told them to hide their money because Happiness was going to steal it.

Happiness: “Why are you laughing? I won’t steal your money.”

Nonjabulo: “Yes, you will steal it!” she exclaimed and looked at Njabulo, they giggled and looked at their money that was on their hands.

Mnotho: “You’ll buy airtime, right?”

Children: “Yes!”

Mnotho: “Okay, now let’s walk your father to his car. Hold your money because your mother will take it while you are not aware.” He joked and the children laughed. Happiness laughed as well as she got up after the children. They walked out of the house. “You see that you need to come back home.” He tested the waters with Happiness and he looked at her shortly.

Happiness: “Don’t test me, Mnotho. Just go home and sleep.” She said holding the children’s hands as he was giving them to her.

Mnotho chuckled. “Bye, bye, we will talk on the phone.” He said waving his hand for the children and they waved back saying ‘bye, bye.’

“PRINCE DALINGCEBO BEING DIVORCED BY WIFE FOR INFIDELITY” Dalingcebo read the newspaper headlines. He clicked his tongue before proceeding with reading the entire article. He was seated in his kitchen having breakfast on a Sunday morning and the paper had just been delivered to him by the man who normally sells newspaper for villagers.

Dalingcebo: “How can she do this!” he exclaimed and read the article that went on about how Dalingcebo cheated on his wife but it didn’t include the name of the woman he cheated with. It highlighted that Dalingcebo had a child out of this affair. And it moved to talk about Dalingcebo being a man who cheated because of his wife’s absence. How he wanted to force his wife to come back home and stop working, be a housewife and bare children for him... He clicked his tongue as he couldn’t believe how the article went on to paint him as a bad man but his wife as a career woman who loved her family and did everything for them when she was needed home. She would deal with her family problems while she was also dealing with work stress... Dalingcebo lifted his phone and he called Nontobeko... They went on a discussion with their lawyers on Thursday and it didn’t end well because Dalingcebo didn’t want Nontobeko to have custody of their daughter. Dalingcebo was up to giving Nontobeko everything she wanted but that made her angry because he was just giving everything willingly. She changed her demands and wanted to take the house that Dalingcebo owned KwaNongoma letting Dalingcebo have the house that he had Empangeni. They argued through that but she didn’t get that wish as her lawyer advised her not to go that route. They couldn’t resolve the divorce settlement matters on Friday the second day with the mediator’s presence and it was said to be taken to court because there was a matter of the child’s custody. But it was decided that Qalokuhle should remain with her grandmother until the court decides who gets the custody of the child. They haven’t been told about their court date.

“What do you want because I said I will bring Qalokuhle in the afternoon.” Nontobeko answered Dalingcebo’s phone call.

Dalingcebo: “How could you do this, Nontobeko? Why did you go to the newspapers about our divorce because we said we wouldn’t include the media? How can you be so childish about this and even lie?”

Nontobeko: “What are you talking about?” she asked acting confused.

Dalingcebo: “Don’t fool me, Nontobeko!”

Nontobeko: “Don’t shout at me. I am no longer your wife that you can shout at me and tell me not to shout back at you.”

Dalingcebo: “You can’t expect me to smile while you lied.”

Nontobeko: “Why don’t you ask your lawyer? Maybe he’s the one who sold the story to the journalist. What would I gain by selling the story?”

Dalingcebo: “You want pity! That’s what you want, Nontobeko. You are painted as a good family woman while we both know that you are nothing like that. What are you hoping to achieve by doing this?” he asked and removed his phone as it signalled that there was a call coming through. He placed the phone back on his ear and he got up from his chair to leave the house. His father was calling him and he suspected that he wanted to talk about this divorce scandal that was on the newspapers.

Nontobeko: “I won’t answer to you I am way pass that time of answering to you Dalingcebo. Please, let me have peace.” She told him clearly and she dropped the call. Dalingcebo clicked his tongue and he started the engine ignoring his phone that was ringing...

“You are here. I was calling you telling you to come here. Look at this!” Dalisu exclaimed his anger and he placed the paper on the coffee table. Dalingcebo was looking at his phone trying to put it on silent mode because it didn’t stop ringing. “I am talking to you, Dalingcebo!” he shouted.

Dalingcebo: “Yes, baba, I can hear that but I didn’t sell this.”

Dalису: “It’s clear that you didn’t but how can you let your wife do this?”

Thembelihle: “Our son has been humiliated baba and you are shouting at him for something he didn’t do. What’s wrong with you?” she asked and sat on her chair next to Dalisu on the lounge. They were equally angry with Thembelihle when they read the article about Nontobeko and Dalingcebo’s divorce.

Dalису: “What should I think?”

Thembelihle: “You are must be telling him that he mustn’t be apologetic about being a man that he is because there’s nothing wrong when he wants his wife home. We all know that they lied on that article when they said he wanted Nontobeko to be a housewife. What this did girl is childish!” she told her husband, she was angry about this article but she didn’t support Dalису shouting at Dalingcebo as if he was the one who sold the story to the journalists. It was clear that Nontobeko was the one who sold the story.

Dalису: “What should we do? Should you say something?”

Dalingcebo: “I won’t say anything because if I say something I will give people more reason to talk about this.”

Thembelihle: “I am so angry that she painted you like a bad man after everything that we have done for her to be a better person that she is today. She went on and spat on us by doing this.”

Dalису: “Tsk! We will have to keep quiet and let them guess.”

Dalingcebo: “Yes, I won’t comment and now, I want to go see my son in the hospital. I last saw him on Wednesday.”

Dalису: “Let me accompany you.” he said and stood up to follow Dalingcebo. Thembelihle smiled feeling some peace as they followed each other. They haven’t sat down as a family and find solutions for on how to restore peace amongst themselves. Thembelihle had been stressed when she thought about this matter and she wanted to talk to Happiness because she believed she can come up with solutions as they have failed with Nkosazana. But she didn’t think that was a right thing to do as yet because she needed to mourn. She was hoping that

after the rituals between their ancestors and the Mthimkhulu ancestors, things would be better...

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“Can we just fly back?” Nandipha asked Randall and she turned her back on her mother’s house. She giggled as her brother was pulling her back to the premises after she’d told him they should fly back. “I can’t believe that you are holding me like this now but when you wanted to make that woman jealous you were the best brother, using your sister!” she reminded him what happened as Randall was dragging her to the premises... Randall laughed and he let go of his sister’s arm... It was a Saturday, night around 7pm and they have just landed back in South Africa from their trip.

Randall: “Don’t tell mom about that because we were just joking.”

Nandipha: “I am not a snitch and she could faint if I can tell her that the woman you were running after is older than I am.”

Randall: “We were supposed to have fun over there, Lauren and I am single. I wasn’t hurting anybody by fooling around.”

Nandipha: “We had so much fun, right?”

Randall: “Yes, and I wish we can have the holiday with the girls. Maybe take them to an island of some sort of. Did you see how children were having fun over there? It was so beautiful.”

Nandipha: “Yes, but I will have to plan perfectly if I want to take them because you’ll have to be there and their nanny. But I shouldn’t worry about you because your mother will pay for you.”

Randall: “Aw! Their father will pay for them too.”

Nandipha: “They will be very happy that I have brought more than a single gift for them and their uncle bought gifts for them.” She said opening the door brushing off what Randall had said about their father.

Randall: “Yes, they will be happy and your mother included.”

“Is that how you speak about me when I am not around?” Faith asked her children who were marching on the hallway now making their way to their rooms talking to each other without realising that their mother might be around the house. They opened the gate using Randall’s controller... Both Nandipha and Randall jumped lightly at the sound of their mother’s voice. “Why are you jumping? Just answer me.” she added.

Randall: “Hello, mum! Look at how beautiful you are even in your gowns!” he joked and smiled at his mother without answering her question. He let go of his bag, dropping it on the floor and he hugged his mother tightly. “How are you, mom? We missed you.”

Faith: “You don’t look like you have been missing me.”

Nandipha: “A child will always miss mommy.” She said with a smile as her mother hugged

her after hugging her brother. "I missed you and my children."

Faith: "Those five! You two, go put your bags away and come back." she said to them and they walked to their room to put their bags away...

Nandipha smiled and she looked at her daughters who were peacefully sleeping on their five cots. She fixed Thando and Ntokomalo's blankets as they were not covered. "You always look tired when you are sleeping but maybe that's because I know that you spend all your day running around. I am back now. Your mother had to go and clear her head just to have a sane mind and without your grandmother she wouldn't have done that. I missed you even though I was having a blast of fun but I missed you a lot." She spoke to her children as they were sleeping peacefully. She then moved out of the room as she heard her mother's voice calling her name. She rushed to the lounge.

Faith: "What's keeping you there now because they're sleeping? And you two lied to me and the girls. They cried this morning because told us you'll be coming back in the morning. Come sit here." She told Nandipha and pointed the space on the couch that was left for her. Randall was already seated next to their mother with a packet of chips in his hands.

Nandipha: "I was greeting them in their sleep."

Randall: "And we didn't lie to you but we thought we could manage to come back in the morning. But no, the devil refused."

Faith laughed and she playfully hit Randall's hand. "Why are you talking as if the devil is your commander?" She asked.

Randall: "But mum you know that the devil doesn't like other people to be happy and I am pretty sure that he didn't want you and the girls to be happy which is why he kept us from coming back early."

Faith: "Ridiculous! Did you two have fun?"

Randall and Nandipha looked at each other, Randall pointed his head to her as a sign that she must answer. Nandipha closed her eyes and shook her head with her lips folded. "Mama! Mama! How many times did I call your name?" She asked and she was the first one to laugh followed by Randall.

Faith: "Aysuka! Nandipha, man."

Nandipha: "The word fun is underrated. From exploring the beautiful places of Brittany, their attractions sites and Lord, that different food and their people. We had absolute fun, sis Nandipha. It was fun."

Faith laughed. "I am glad to hear that because that's all I wanted for you, my child. And your brother, he didn't bother you and you didn't bother him?"

Randall: "Mom, how can you even ask that question because you can see that we are not complaining about that?" he gave the packet of chips to Nandipha.

Faith: "I should ask because the two of you love bothering each other like Similo does to all her sisters. Nandipha, that grandchild of mine!" she exclaimed and shook her head with her eyes closed. Nandipha giggled and she laid her head on her mother's shoulder as she ate the chips.

Randall: "Similo behaves like her mother."

Nandipha: "That's a total lie!" she exclaimed and moved away from her mother's shoulder to look at her brother.

Randall: "Alright, mum, we had a good time and that woman we were renting to, she didn't want us to leave. She lives alone and she's old, poor thing."

Faith: "Ah! Life is like that sometimes."

Randall: "You could have seen your daughter acting like my mother in entertainment sites. I couldn't even breathe."

Nandipha: "Ha! He wanted to run away with older women, mom."

Randall: "How could you? You promised that you won't tell!"

Nandipha: "You shouldn't have said I was your mother. Ha! And don't forget how you deprived me of that gamble I wanted to do."

Randall: "You wanted us to lose money!"

Nandipha: "No, we were going to earn the money, child."

Randall: "Mum, she's calling me a child." he looked at his mother who was just turning her head with whomever was talking, she had her lips folded because she didn't want to tell them to stop. They were going to reveal their truths and she wanted to hear those truths.

Nandipha: "You are a child to me and ah! I can't believe you."

Randall: "I can't believe that you snitched!"

Faith: "Is this what you were doing over there?" she asked and looked at the both of them putting her hands on their shoulders to draw them both closer under her wing. "I am just glad that my children are back home safely and you had fun. I don't care how you fought over there, my cat and dog--"

Randall: "I am not the dog though, mom."

Nandipha: "Dogs are loyal and so, I don't mind."

Faith laughed. "Can we pray and thank the Lord that you two are back home?" She requested with a smile on her face. She removed her arms from them and told Nandipha to sing. She led the song and they joined in... They prayed...

Faith: "MaZondi, sit back we should talk. Let the cat go and have some milk." She teased Randall as he marched to the kitchen. Nandipha laughed and her brother was laughing as he walked away.

Nandipha: "What's wrong, mama?" Faith sent her hand in her gown's pocket and she came back with Nandipha's phone. She gave it to her. "Hawu! Mama, you played me." she exclaimed and took her phone.

Faith: "Yes, and you should know that your husband called me to tell me that his cleansing won't be done without your presence--"

Nandipha: "Mama! How--"

Faith: "You will let me talk and finish!"

Nandipha: "Sorry."

Faith: "I told him I will tell you but I didn't tell you. I didn't tell him that you went on a holiday but I only told him when he came here to take you and the children because his family was in the house."

Nandipha: “Mama, you lied to me and why didn’t you tell him?”

Faith: “Yes, I lied to you because I knew that if I didn’t lie you were going to run back to KZN for him to be cleansed. You were going to do that, right?” she looked at Nandipha and she didn’t answer her mother but she looked down. “I didn’t want you to do that because it reflected through your eyes that you were unhappy. Your brother told me that you left your room crying. Baby, there are challenges in marriage but marriage shouldn’t be a burden that could send you to your grave. You’ve been depressed before and that means you should always think about your health.” She advised her.

Nandipha: “I know mama but you were supposed to tell me.”

Faith: “I didn’t tell you because you were going to go back in KZN. The past weeks have been difficult for you and your husband isn’t supposed to make your life difficult now because you’ve had enough of that when he wasn’t alive with you. I don’t know what’s going on and you don’t have to tell me but don’t you dare think that being a wife means you must tolerate every injustice served out to you. If you need to stand your ground, stand your ground and if he thinks you are too much for him and he can’t handle you, that’s his problem not yours. Now, you have enlightened the pain you have been carrying, right?”

Nandipha: “Yes, I feel better than I was before even though there are things that he said to me that I still don’t think I will ever get over them.”

Faith: “It seems words have been shared between the two of you and going back to him was only going to escalate the anger and more words were going to be shared but now, you have a clear head. You’ll go back with the children and fix your problems not based on emotions of anger and hurt.”

Nandipha: “You think I can still fix it?”

Faith: “That will come within here.” She replied and held her head showing her she needed to use her brain. “Just go and eat, then go to bed and think. I won’t tell you what to decide. I just wanted you have a good time and offload the stress. And now, I can see you smile from within. And I told your husband that I am the one who did everything.” She told her.

Nandipha: “Thank you, mama. I love you so much!” she said to her mother delightedly and she held her tightly. Faith giggled and she turned to hug her fully because she wasn’t on the right position for a hug.

Faith: “I love you too, my brave daughter.” She said and kissed her cheek to force the giggle out of her. “How much did you dance over there?” she asked as they stood up to head to the kitchen.

Nandipha: “Ha! Mama, I had my feet hurting every time I went to bed. I had the time of my life and those black France men, we had them wishing they can come back and be around Africa more. We mingled with them most...” she went on to tell her mother about their time with her brother and Randall joined in. They were talking and laughing inside the kitchen until Nandipha had to go to her room because Buhle had woken up...

“Mama, phela unabe ushahamba kakhulu!” (Don’t leave again, mom) Similo told her mother as they were all seated on the backseat of their grandmother’s car with Randall driving them back to Ngcebo’s house on a Sunday morning. Thula was seated on the front seat of the car...

The girls were ecstatic when they saw that their mother was back and even more when she gave them the gifts that she brought for them. They demanded everything from her, from being fed, being bathed by her and dressed up by her. And Nandipha did everything they needed...

Nandipha: "Mom, left because she wasn't fine and now, she's back."

Buhlezi: "Akashaguli umama?" (Mama, is fine now?)

Nandipha: "Yes, Buhlezi. She's fine kaaakhuuuuu!" she told them and they giggled followed by clapping hands for their mother.

Nongcebo: "We want to plait our hair mom and we will wear our new dresses. Buhlezi, anithi?" she looked at Buhle.

Buhle: "Ehe, mama. Shoba bahle kakhulu mina nizogcoka nama qhokshi ami." (Yes, we will be beautiful and I will wear my heels.)

Nandipha: "Okay, soluka ke." (We will do that) she promised them and they gave her their famous chant and they giggled amongst themselves...

"Bye, bye, malume!" The children waved at Randall as they were standing by the driveway waiting for their grandmother's car to drive away...

Nandipha turned back to the house and she drew a long breath. "Go inside, my rats." She told the children as she'd opened the gates for them. They didn't walk but they ran to the house. Nandipha and Thula carried the bags inside the premises. Nandipha closed the door behind her and she moved into the house.

"Sawubona." She greeted Ngcebo who was seated on the couch inside the lounge. He was having cereals when the children entered the lounge and he had to put the cereal bowl down just to give them attention... He'd been alone in the house since his family left his house. He would go to Faith's house and check on them...

Ngcebo looked at Nandipha once and he didn't greet her back.

Buhle: "Baba, uyakubingelela umama." (Dad, mom is greeting you) she told her father as she'd heard her mother greet him but he didn't respond.

Ngcebo: "Yebo." He greeted back looking at her shortly.

Nandipha: "How are you? I don't see a crutch around. You can walk on your own now?" she asked looking at him.

Ngcebo: "Yes."

Nandipha then turned to climb the stairs making her way to his bedroom... She charged her phone and marched to the bed where she placed her bag on it to have it cleared and pack new clothes because she was going to have to go with him back to KZN. She marched to the closet with her clothes and when she came back with new clothes. Ngcebo was seated on the bed.

Ngcebo: "You are leaving again without telling me?"

Nandipha: "I didn't know that mom didn't tell you and no, I am not going somewhere else but I am going back to KZN that way we will do the cleansing since I am needed."

Ngcebo: "Why did you leave without telling me, Nandipha? Why did you have to disrespect me and just leave without telling me? You just left the children with your mother and didn't

care to call me.”

Nandipha: “Mom said she called you and she told you that.”

Ngcebo: “That’s no excuse!”

Nandipha: “I left on Monday and mom told me after the photoshoot that I will be leaving in hours. I had no time to call you in those hours because according to my understanding you’ve already been told that I am leaving.”

Ngcebo: “That is just an excuse! Why don’t you tell me you didn’t see the need to call me? You didn’t care if I knew about this or if I didn’t?” he shouted at her and stood on his feet feeling that he was angered by her excuses. Nandipha didn’t answer him but she checked if her bag had everything she needed. “You just keep quiet! You had fun where you were and you forgot the life you left behind? And now, you are back you can’t talk. What did they say to you? They told you not to speak to me?”

Nandipha: “I would like to believe your bag that we went down with is still in KZN. Or you came back with it? I can pack something for you if it’s here.”

Ngcebo looked at her and he clicked his tongue as she was acting smart with him. Ngcebo was on his feet still looking at her.

“You are not on your periods? We won’t have to leave if you are.” He asked and didn’t answer her question about his bag...

Nandipha: “No, I am not.”

Ngcebo: “Sharp, we will go now.”

Nandipha: “The viano is back here or you left it home?” she asked placing her bag on her shoulder and she marched to her phone that was on the charger.

Ngcebo: “It’s here now. You are ignoring the fact that you did something wrong? You didn’t even have the decency of calling me where you were but whenever I am away from you I call you.”

Nandipha: “Let’s go then because I have to come back here on Tuesday my book will be published. I should be here. I will go to the girls’ room, please take them to the car. I will ask Thula to help you.” She said leaving the door ignoring everything he was saying about her trip on purpose. She wanted him to argue with himself until he realise he was making a joke out of himself... Ngcebo clicked his tongue and he left the room to get their children inside the vehicle...

“Why are you ignoring me when I am talking to you about this trip that you took without informing me?” Ngcebo asked and looked at the food that Nandipha had placed before him... Their children had long fallen asleep after being forced to have their food. They arrived in the house by 6:30 pm and the children were sleeping but Nandipha woke them up to bath and eat... She’d cook dinner for herself, Ngcebo and Thula.

Nandipha: “I am quiet because I don’t want to talk to you about it. I am tired of you throwing every punch you have just to make me feel bad for whatever reasons that you have. So, I don’t want to talk just know that.” She replied and sat down to eat the food that was meant for her.

Ngcebo: “So, you won’t talk about this until when?”

Nandipha: “Until you are cleansed and if you keep on talking such things with me as you have before I will keep quiet until you know how to speak to me.” she told him clearly and Ngcebo didn’t raise a single word for a while.

“I will have a wife I won’t talk to, that’s very nice. I am not hungry.” He said and stood up to leave the food that Nandipha had cooked... Nandipha sighed and she shook her head, she ate her food while checking her emails and they have sent her the sample of how her magazine cover was going to look like. She smiled and let go of her spoon. She began posting the picture and sent the other pictures to Palesa and Duma. “I am really hoping they buy it even more.” She hoped out loud pressing her teeth together... She read the notifications on Twitter about the cover and more people retweeted while other congratulated her. She was smiling from ear to ear as she read the responses from people... She could see that time was flying and it was 10pm now since she’d been busy on her phone from 9pm but she was having a good time interacting with people on social media.

She gave out a short groan that was followed by a smile as Ngcebo had tweeted about the cover. “If someone could tell me I married an ugly, lazy woman I swear I can stop doing music. I don’t know your definition of ugly though... Fellas buy the May issue for your women and sisters, mothers included and beautiful ladies buy for yourselves. You’ll be equipped.” She read Ngcebo’s tweet. She giggled and laughed lastly.

Nandipha: “I wonder what falls over him because he can still be sane. And he’d just announced that he’s married. This man!” She spoke alone as Ngcebo’s tweet stated they were married. They’ve never informed the public about it nor posted pictures about their wedding.

She saw an opportunity to test the waters. >> “Why did you steal my picture and tweeted it?” She sent the text on WhatsApp and she waited for a response. She changed her WhatsApp profile picture as he’d done.

>> “I had to steal because you are not talking to me.” >> He replied and added the sad emoji at the end of his reply.

>> “You don’t talk with me but you fight with me and it would be better that we speak after the cleansing tomorrow.” << Nandipha texted back.

>> “I am angry and you don’t understand that.” He texted her.

>> “I understand and I have seen it I have been angry too. And why in the hell did you announce that we are married?” >> She asked.

>> “Lol, I didn’t notice but it’s no biggy because some people had asked me about the ring since I was in Jozi this week.” >> He replied.

>> “Nosy people! Who will I send to buy chickens?” >> She asked.

>> “Just come to bed, nana. We won’t speak about anything as you’ve said we will speak after the cleansing.” >> He replied what she didn’t ask.

>> “I don’t really trust you for now. I will come when you are sleeping.” >>

Ngcebo: >> “I know I came back a monster and you gotta sleep with your monster. I don’t like sleeping since I came back but I will sleep if you are here. Please, I swear I won’t talk.”

>> he pleaded with her.

Nandipha sighed closing her eyes. She covered both their plates of food and she walked to the bedroom feeling uneasy as if he was going to begin yelling the minute she enters the door... Ngcebo looked at her as she entered through the door. He had logged in on Twitter hoping reading tweets would calm his anger and seeing the magazine cover calm him instantly...

He was looking at her every move until she was done changing into her pyjamas. Ngcebo removed the blankets on her side for her to hop in.

Ngcebo: "I will hold you and we will sleep." He told her seeing that she wasn't saying anything. Nandipha nodded and laid down on the bed. Ngcebo held her closer to him. "We will-"

Nandipha: "Don't talk, please." She begged in a whisper and Ngcebo nodded his head, he stamped his forehead on hers... They fell asleep...

"Be careful you haven't healed properly." Nandipha said to Ngcebo as they've reached the river with running waters at dawn of Monday. They've walked from their house with Langalibalele down to the river. Nandipha was holding Ngcebo because he was limping and the gravel roads did no justice for him.

Ngcebo: "You were supposed to tell to bring the crutch, Nandipha. Agh!"

Nandipha: "Please, don't start with the shouting." She pleaded with him and she made him sit on the blanket that she'd laid down for him.

Langalibalele: "Start the fire MaZondi." He instructed her abruptly. He'd been walking down before them with a wheelbarrow that everything they needed... Nandipha left Ngcebo's side and she used the torch to help her see what she was doing. Langalibalele was singing softly while busy with other things that were needed for the cleansing...

He'd sent the ashes of their clothes down the river of running water and Nandipha had killed all the chickens, Langalibalele came with the chickens and Nandipha paid for them. She had taken out what was needed. There were fire woods, a pot of herbs cooking for the cleansing and the incense was burning on its broken clay pot. Langalibalele would sing and tap his feet around the fire and around them, groaning and speaking to the ancestors while they were by the river...

"You'll go down by the river and wash him, MaZondi and when you are done. The two of you will come back here. Take the blanket." He gave Nandipha instructions and he placed the basin that had the liquid she was going to use to have him washed... Nandipha got up...

Nandipha: "I won't need to be cleansed as well with-"

Langalibalele: "No, that's for him. Go, time is not waiting but it's running along." He instructed her and they both went away to do what he'd said... When they came back Nandipha was given a razor ukugcaba uNgcebo. (Cut his skin) She did everything as she was told to do it and when she was done, Langalibalele applied 'insizi' on the cuts. Ngcebo would groan silently because it was painfully itchy... When they were done Nandipha was given muthi for her to lick and spit then it was down to talking...

Langalibalele: "I wish to speak with your husband alone. Please, excuse us." he told Nandipha after she'd finished getting the fire back on. She clapped hands once and twice and she left

them to talk.

Langalibalele: "I hope you've seen that this is not a game."

Ngcebo: "My gift?"

Langalibalele: "Yes, the ancestors are not playing a game with you as they're not playing a game with any of us. If you don't want to accept this gift and take it seriously don't think you'll lose your life but you'll lose the six important people in your life and you won't know peace."

Ngcebo looked at him and his heart skipped a beat as heard the unexpected news that didn't please him one bit. "I won't be playing games." He admitted.

Langalibalele: "There are men who are born and made to stand alone in almost everything, like myself, I will never wed, our forefather, your Zulu ancestor, the great Shaka Zulu, he had no wife behind him and many other more men but you are not that man. You're not made to stand alone."

Ngcebo: "Thokoza!" he clapped hands in response the he could hear what he was telling him and he was accepting the message.

Langalibalele: "The only person you can trust with your life and to share your burdens that comes with your gift and your troubles is the one you've chosen to share your life with. You are not to discuss everything with everyone. A man's job is to protect and by your actions and response to the gift you'll also be protecting. If you want negotiations with your ancestors you can but if they insist on that thing don't play games with them. You can always come to me for a third opinion or if things are not clear. We will work together."

Ngcebo: "Thokoza!"

Langalibalele: "That's all I was supposed to tell you and I would like to speak with your wife now. We will then leave."

Ngcebo: "Thokoza, mkhulu!" he clapped his hands and he got up...

"I don't have much to say to you but you'll have to give your husband food when you get home and let him sleep, don't let the children disturb him because he must sleep. And when he wakes up, you'll give him food then let him drink this. He mustn't bath today but he must do it tomorrow morning." Langalibalele gave Nandipha instructions and he placed the mixture down that Ngcebo was supposed to drink.

Nandipha: "Thokoza, but will he be the same again? He came back with great anger that he'd never had before. What caused that? Is it death?"

Langalibalele: "Don't worry. He didn't die because if he had, he wouldn't be here and he wasn't going to be hot for such a long time if he was dead. It's like what happened with your daughter, the Doctors seeing nothing wrong with her while she was sick. It wasn't medical but spiritual. And he'd been alone in the dark without even communicating with his ancestors. He was never going to come back as a man that you knew him to be and which is why we were cleansing him today. These things won't make sense if you don't believe in them. And you must believe in him but not even when you can see he's going the wrong way about things. You'll have to proceed doing what you've been doing pushing him in a right direction to carry out his responsibilities."

Nandipha: “Oh! Ngiyezwa. I went to see a different healer I don’t know if that will cause problems for us in future.”

Langalibalele: “His brother told me about that Wednesday and you don’t have to worry because it won’t cause problems. But from now you won’t do that.”

Nandipha: “Thokoza!” she clapped hands... Langalibalele got up to gather his things together for them to leave the river...

S5 >> EPISODE 49

“What will we do if we can find a person who killed our son?” Dalisu asked and looked at Thembelihle. He was the driving the car down to Langalibalele and Thembelihle was seated on the passenger seat... It was on a Monday during the day as they were driving down.

Thembelihle: “I don’t even know what can we do.”

Dalisu: “We have tried our best to raise them but they don’t seem to be men who take decision that enriches their lives.”

Thembelihle: “They’ve done great for themselves baba and we can never expect them to be perfect. But I have to agree that some of the decisions they take are not really good decisions.”

Dalisu: “We will have to listen to Langalibalele and maybe there’s something that he will tell us. And we will talk after that.”

Thembelihle: “What bothers me now is Dalingcebo and this divorce thing.”

Dalisu: “We will not comment about it, MaSthole.”

Thembelihle: “I couldn’t even talk to Qalokuhle’s mother when she brought her back. They told me she has arrived to bring Qalokuhle back but I didn’t go out to speak to her.”

Dalisu: “What were you going to say to her?”

Thembelihle: “I don’t know but she’s the mother of our grandchild it’s appropriate that I see her when she comes by the house for Qalokuhle.”

Dalisu: “I think we will have to let her do what she wants to do. If she thinks tarnishing our son’s name is a good thing. Let her do it.”

Thembelihle: “But Dalingcebo’s reputation, Ndabezitha. We will just let her play with our son’s reputation like this?”

Dalisu: “MaSthole, no newspaper articles can change who Dalingcebo is and what Dalingcebo wants. If he’s not meant to find the kind of woman that he wants, then his God and his ancestors would have allowed that not the article. It won’t take away a single thing from him because he didn’t commit a crime. That’s why I am saying if Qalokuhle’s mother wants to play like this. We will not stoop to her level.”

Thembelihle: “You are right, Ndabezitha.”

Dalisu: “Yes and we are here now.” He said and Dalisu stopped the car before the driveway of the premises... They stepped out of the car and Thembelihle followed Dalisu as they

walked inside the premises.

“How can I help you?” Langalibalele asked Thembelihle and Dalisu who were seated before him... He’d welcomed them in the hut and they’ve greeted each other and had small talks before getting to the actual reason of the visit.

Dalisu: “We have buried our son and the other son has been brought back to us. But we are not at peace about the people who killed him.”

Thembelihle: “Yes, I think that we will know peace after we have learnt who killed him and we will decide from there what we can do.”

Langalibalele nodded and he turned to take his bag of bones and the incense... Thembelihle looked at Dalisu and he nodded his head once giving her hope with his eyes that they were going to learn the truth today.

Thembelihle and Dalisu had their heads looking down, as Langalibalele groaned and shook his shoulders as he read the bones before him...

Dalisu: “What do you see, mkhulu?”

Langalibalele: “An eye for eye that was the mother’s intentions.”

Dalisu: “Whose mother?”

“Ndabezitha? Who else could it be?” Thembelihle looked at her husband and she ignored Langalibalele completely as he was groaning responding to the spirits that were with him. She figured it out immediately the minute Langalibalele mentioned a mother. But the question was, how did she find out because it was impossible that she could find out.

Dalisu: “Can you tell me?”

Thembelihle: “Elena’s mother-”

Langalibalele: “Prince Mnotho has a dark could upon his life because of the blood that he has on his hand. And the ritual to appease Mthimkhulu ancestors shouldn’t be delayed. We will take it from there...” He told them bringing their attention back to his eyes because they were having a discussion alone now.

Thembelihle: “Thokoza mkhulu!” she clapped hands and looked at her husband who wasn’t voicing out not even a single word after she’d told him that Elena’s mother might be and she was certain that she was the one who killed their son... They left Langalibalele’s hut in silence and Thembelihle saw that Dalisu was angry about this news of Elena’s mother killing their son.

Thembelihle: “Baba, we can’t blame this woman for trying to kill our son even though we don’t know how she find out about this.”

Dalisu: “Can you hear yourself?” he shouted and looked at her as they marched to their car. Thembelihle was walking side by side to her husband.

Thembelihle: “Yes, I can hear myself and the truth is that we didn’t do anything about Mnotho killing Elena. And what if she’d learnt what happened or even if she didn’t learn that Mnotho killed her. She would obviously blame our son for not protecting her daughter enough.”

Dalisu: “That’s ridiculous if she wanted to kill him because she was blaming him. And he killed our boy, the wrong son who was innocent in this.”

Thembelihle: “I know but what can we do now? Should we hunt her down and kill her? We won’t have peace if we keep fighting hate with hate.”

Daliso drew a long breath and he didn’t raise a comment. They drove back to the palace in silence and Daliso’s mind was building and erasing...

“Mom is right. We can’t find Elena’s mother to have a war with her but if we want to find her. We will have to make peace.” Mlamuli supported his mother, they were seated inside the lounge, Mnotho, Dalingcebo and Mlamuli along with their parents. They’ve called Ngcebo but they were told he was sleeping... Thembelihle and Daliso had just told their sons that they’ve guessed that Elena’s mother was the one who was trying to kill Mnotho but she killed Ndabezihle instead... Daliso was still angry...

Mnotho: “But who might have told her?”

Mlamuli: “We don’t know and we are not sure of the reasons she would even think of killing you but what we are sure about, is that it’s her.”

Daliso: “And if we find her and she wants to kill you?”

Dalingcebo: “I think it’s best we let this matter of Elena’s mother go because what if she really comes back here and sees she killed the wrong person?”

Thembelihle: “We will try and make peace.”

Daliso: “Peace? Peace with a racist white woman? Dalingcebo is right, MaSthole, what we need to do is let this go.”

Dalingcebo: “I understand what you are saying mama but let’s not gamble by bringing her back here because it might cause more problems for us. We have lost Ndabezihle and we shouldn’t lose anyone now.”

Daliso: “Yes, we are not going to try and find her. And this is evident that she was angry and planning war because she didn’t even come to her funeral. They were no longer angry with each other, Mnotho, right?”

Mnotho: “Yes. She even went to visited her.”

Daliso: “We are not reaching out to Elena’s mother!” he stamped and got up to leave them. Daliso walked to the kitchen and he saw no maid around, he walked out of the house to look for a maid...

“Ndabezitha.” The maid stood before Daliso and sent her head down.

Daliso: “Take this money and buy all the ingredients to make a milk tart. You’ll then give them to Ngcebo’s wife and tell her I will come tomorrow to have it.” He gave the instructions to the maid giving her the money. The maid took the money and she left to do what she’d been told to do...

“How are you, boy?” Mnotho asked Siphosami who was seated on his bed colouring the picture that he’d been told to colour as his homework.

Siphosami: “I am fine, daddy and how are you?”

Mnotho: “I am fine and I can see that you are colouring here.”

Siphosami: “Yes, it’s my homework. Baba, mom taught me how to colour and I don’t want this homework because it’s easy.”

Mnotho chuckled. “You’ll have to do it, boy, because you’ve been given by your teacher as

homework. Okay?”

Siphosami: “I am a good boy, baba. I am doing it.”

Mnotho: “How’s living with your grandparents?” He asked the question that he’d come to ask because it been a while since living with his grandparents.

Siphosami: “I miss my mother. Baba, why can’t Njabulo and Nonjabulo come back with their mother and we will live together?”

Mnotho sighed and he looked at him. “Things are not well between your father and Njabulo’s mother that means they won’t come back for us to live together. Don’t you like living with your grandparents and Qalokuhle?” He asked. He didn’t want to give him promises that Happiness and his siblings were going to come back. He didn’t want that because he didn’t know if Happiness was really going to come back to him when he tries winning her over.

Siphosami: “I like it.”

Mnotho: “Okay, let’s go watch a movie together.” He said getting up from the bed and he lifted Siphosami off the bed making him laugh...

Nandipha marched to her kitchen slowly after she’d been given a plastic bag with the ingredients that she was supposed to use to make a milk tart for Dalisu. She wasn’t feeling so great about this. What if she makes it bad and burns it? And why did he request this from her. It’d been years and after throwing her out of his palace, he’d never asked that she makes it. He’d never asked even when they would rock up in Ngcebo’s house in Johannesburg, he had never! And now, he that he was requesting it. Nandipha was feeling nervous... And this meant that she wasn’t leaving KZN for her book!

Ntokomalo: “Mama, uvuka nini ubaba? Uthe shodlala!” (Mom, when will daddy wake up? He said we will play together.) she asked her mother, she came to the kitchen to have water but she didn’t find her mother. She was in the kitchen waiting for her. The rest of her sisters were inside their nurse playing. And Ngcebo was still sleeping.

Nandipha: “He’ll wake up late and please, don’t wake him up!” she repeated what she’d been preaching all day pointing her with her forefinger.

Ntokomalo nodded. “Mama, nomile.” (I am thirsty)

Nandipha: “Okay, you’ll go play with your sisters and don’t come here because I am cooking. I don’t want you to disturb me.” she told Ntokomalo and she gave her a glass of water after she’d promised they were not going to come to the kitchen to disturb their mother. “Go then.” She encouraged and Ntokomalo left the kitchen... Nandipha then turned to the plastic she’d placed on top of the counter. She opened it and began...

Nandipha marched to the bedroom with a tray of food. It was after 8pm and Ngcebo had just woken up. She’d put the girls to sleep and she’d finished making the tart and had it on the fridge. All she wanted was to sleep.

“You’ll have to eat and you’ll drink that mixture Langalibalele gave to us. I am tired and I want to sleep.” Nandipha told Ngcebo who was seated on the bed. Ngcebo stretched his arms and yawned before taking the tray.

Ngcebo: "You can't sleep while I am not sleeping."

Nandipha: "I wasn't sleeping all day and you know what? Your father sent the palace maid here to give me ingredients to make milk tart for him."

Ngcebo chuckled. "You are lying. Is that your way of telling me that you've made some for me? It's been a while and not even a while you haven't been making some for me for a long time." He asked and looked at her shortly.

Nandipha removed her clothes from her body and marched to the wardrobe. "I am not lying but I am telling you the honest truth and please, Rasta don't eat it because he said he will come here tomorrow to eat it." She told her.

Ngcebo: "My father and his wonders! Why don't you eat with me?" he looked at her as she hopped in under the bed covers.

Nandipha: "No, I am not hungry."

Ngcebo: "Eat with me, that way we will have a smooth talk about everything that has been going on between us. Eat but with your hand not with the spoon like me." He insisted and Nandipha laughed.

Nandipha: "Alright but let's share the spoon or else I will eat all the meat and you'll only eat the cabbage and beetroot."

Ngcebo: "We rather share the spoon." He said and he gave her the spoon, he looked at her and he saw a short smile that he hadn't been seeing. "I have been unreasonable with you." he told her truthfully.

Nandipha: "Why were you that angry with me, Ngcebo? What is it that you would have wanted me to do in that situation I was in?"

He looked down. "I would have given your mother reasons to why I am keeping your body but you didn't. I was angry at the way you treated my mother." He replied to her question.

Nandipha: "Reasons? You think I didn't give your family, reason? I gave them a reason

Ngcebo and my reason was, your body is still hot. Can they give me a chance to keep it?

They didn't want to grant me that wish but they fought me. You know me, I wasn't going to sit back. They were feeling grieve and I wanted to hold on because I didn't want to let go. Or that reason wasn't enough?" she deliberately phrasing out from his mother but focused on the entire family because it was the family she was fighting against not just his mother.

Ngcebo didn't answer her. "Did she really curse the day we met?" He asked and looked into her eyes and Nandipha nodded. "I was wrong not to listen to you and by doing that I put my life in danger and the way I handled you when I left the house, it wasn't right. And a part of me was angry because of that when I came back. I was also angry with myself and I didn't want to admit that my actions almost made you a widow. And the girls without a father. I didn't act right, Nandipha and I am sorry."

Nandipha: "I was angry too and I was angry the most that you didn't want to admit your wrong but instead were blaming me and fighting me every chance you got. But I also didn't say the right things to you and I am sorry for that."

Ngcebo: "I won't act the same way as I did before and going forward I will need your support because you are my life partner."

Nandipha: “Can we forgive each other?” She requested and looked at him, she was willing to forgive everything and leave it behind her because she understood Ngcebo wasn’t really himself. Maybe if he was himself and he was treating her that way she was going to turn her back on their relationship because those words were abusive. But through forgiving it all, she wasn’t going to forget that he told her this house wasn’t hers but his. She wasn’t going to forget that he told her that she contributed no cent in building this house. And forgiving him, loving him and staying in their marriage wasn’t going to make her forget that she had nothing and he always reminded her that. She wasn’t going to forget because he’d said something like this before...

Ngcebo: “Yes, let’s move on from it. And thank you for holding-”

Nandipha: “Don’t say ‘thank you’” she said and got off the bed taking the tray that was on his lap. They’ve eaten all the food. “I will come back.” She said and she left the room to make her way to the kitchen to put the dishes away...

“I also don’t like the smell of my skin, gha!” Ngcebo clicked his tongue as Nandipha had backed away from his chest because he didn’t have great odour.

Nandipha: “You won’t sleep without your pyjamas. They have a fabric softener smell on them and that will allow us to sleep.” She said marching to the wardrobe to get the pyjamas for him to wear... Ngcebo sat up straight and he took the pyjamas Nandipha was giving to him. He wore them.

Nandipha: “We will sleep but I have been thinking.”

Ngcebo: “About?”

Nandipha: “Is it possible that we can change being married under ‘in community of property’ to being married ‘out’. If we can’t change it, we can get our marriage annulled and get married again but ‘out of community of property’ We can even sign a PRENUP.” She requested looking at Ngcebo in the eye, they were laying on the bed facing each other.

Ngcebo: “Hhaybo! Where’s that coming from now?” he asked her raising his voice signalling that he was shocked to hear this. He sat up straight and Nandipha sat up after him...

Nandipha: “I got nothing in this marriage and it’s only fair that we do this.”

Ngcebo closed his eyes and he dropped his head recalling what he’d said. It was clear that Nandipha was requesting this because of what he’d said to her.

Ngcebo: “Nandipha, I didn’t mean what I said and you know that my father told me to build this house for you. I was just angry.”

Nandipha: “It wasn’t the first time that you’ve said something like that Ngcebo and this time around, you made me feel that I really have nothing. And it’s the truth because I don’t have much but just my savings.”

Ngcebo: “I won’t do what you want me to do. If you want to go to court you can go alone but I won’t do that. Angeke ngidlale wena.”

Nandipha: “Ngcebo, I am being serious about this and-”

Ngcebo: “Don’t tell me about it because I don’t care what you’ll say concerning what you’ve just spoke about. I won’t do it and it’s best that you sleep because you told me that you want to sleep. Sleep.” He said lastly and he pointed the pillow.

Nandipha taunted her teeth. “So, you are just going to dismiss me like I am your assistant. You don’t even want to hear me out, Ngcebo?” She asked him without sleeping as Ngcebo had said.

Ngcebo: “Yes, I am dismissing you and I don’t know about the assistant part but I am not going to hear you out. Just get that through your head and sleep.”

Nandipha didn’t say anything further but she laid down. She decided she wasn’t going to stop buying herself a house and she was hoping that she was going to find a direct seller not the agent. She was going to love him with her heart and think with her head, that was the best thing she was going to do...

“MAMA, INKOMO!” Similo screamed pointing the cows that were at the driving down passing by their premises. It was two vehicles carrying them.

Nandipha: “Hawu, bazolobola ingane nje. Bazolobola uMimi, usuzoshada.” (They are here to pay ilobolo for Mimi, you are getting married.) She joked with Similo and tickled her. Similo laughed and laid her head on her mother’s chest... She giggled...

Similo: “Ini, mama, ilobolo?” (What’s ilobolo?)

Nandipha: “It’s those cows that your father gave your grandmother so that your parents can live together and raise you, Buhlezi, Ntokomalo, Thando and Nongcebo. Okay?” she explained it to her even though she was just too young to understand. She lifted her foot... They were seated on the wooden benches outside the house. Nandipha was cutting Similo’s nails. Her sisters were inside the house with their father.

Similo: “Ha! Inkomo, zima ekhaya!” she screamed and kicked her feet disturbing her mother. Nandipha laughed and she let her be.

Nandipha: “Put still, Mimi.” She said and Similo failed to put still as she saw her grandfather and Mlamuli walk through the gate. Nandipha put her sandals on her feet and she placed her down seeing that she’d lost concentration. Similo ran to her grandfather and great uncle...

Nandipha got up from the bench and she followed them to the house. Similo was high up in Mlamuli’s arms now and she was talking up a storm with both of them...

Nandipha lifted the tray of food that she’d cooked in the morning because her father in-law was coming to the house. She marched to the lounge where they were seated with the children and Ngcebo... She kneeled on the floor and placed the tray on the coffee table while greeting them and they greeted back. She then marched back to the kitchen to take the second tray... She left the children with them because she knew he was going to tell her to leave them. They also had their food because it was almost lunchtime...

Nandipha took out her phone from her pocket and she called Nontobeko. She’d read the newspaper article on Monday and she wanted to call her just to check on her because when she called after reading the article she was unreachable. She waited as her phone luckily, it rang...

“Nandipha?” Nontobeko answered Nandipha’s phone call.

Nandipha: “There’s noise over there, are you busy?”

Nontobeko: “Yes, I am busy for now, please call me later. No, I will call you when I get time, okay?”

Nandipha: “Alright.” She said and removed the phone from her ear. She placed the phone down and ate the food that was before her. She’d never sat down with them whenever Dalisu was in the house...

Most homes in rural areas had kraals even if they don’t have cows but they had kraals because kraals served a certain purpose for traditional people. Nandipha and Ngcebo had theirs at the back of the house and that was mainly because they never planned of having cows in their home but they had it because it was necessary that they have one...

Nandipha, Ngcebo and their children they were standing by the gate. Dalisu had asked them to come out of the house.

Dalisu: “MaZondi, my father used to tell me that it’s unnecessary to show gratitude to someone for doing their responsibility and duty. But as people we normally see it as a necessity because it’s humanly to show gratitude. As you are sharing a life with my son and have children together, it’s your duty and responsibility to look after them and their wellbeing. I can’t really thank you for that but there are things that we can’t just say a ‘thank you’ that comes from the heart accompanied by nothing. The faith and strength you’ve shown is something that I didn’t want to thank by words. Do you hear that?”

Nandipha: “Yebo, baba.” She said without looking at him. She was looking at the heads of her children.

Dalisu: “I was wrong to come here and try force you to marry my son but I was worried about the future of my grandchildren without a father. And I didn’t have trust in what you were saying until I saw Ngcebo. I didn’t even trust you but I promise you that in future as a father in-law I won’t dismiss you as a non-factor because even if you are not always amongst us for reasons we know but you are still part of the family. As an elder I give out my words of saying ‘sorry’ for words shared and actions of coming to the house to give Dalingcebo to you even before your husband was buried. I am a traditional man and our most treasured possession is our cows, livestock as a whole and our land. Phela, we are land owners in rural areas.” He joked and they all laughed.

Dalisu: “I am giving you these cows not you, Ngcebo.”

Nandipha and Ngcebo laughed along with Mlamuli. “She will keep the cows here, baba? We don’t live here.” Ngcebo made his father aware.

Dalisu: “She has cows for ilobolo, right? Unless if you have slaughtered them all, MaZondi.”

Nandipha chuckled. “No, we haven’t slaughtered them. They’re still with Mam’ uMaNtombela back at Empangeni.” She told him.

Mlamuli: “That means you’ll have to go with these cows now to your mother’s house. And add on the ones you already have. It’s three males and three females, one of them is pregnant and that one calf. Your father in-law wanted seven cows and they’re seven and added is the calf on the stomach.”

Nandipha: “I don’t know what to say.” She said politely, she was cold on the toe as she wasn’t expecting that Dalisu would do such a thing for HER! There was entirely no need for him to thank her as he’d said that she was doing her duty as a wife to Ngcebo but he still went on to give such priced gratitude. She was grateful from within. “I wasn’t expecting anything but

thank you and I will accept the gifts because I would be insane if I can refuse walking meat.” She automatically joked on the last phrase and the three men laughed.

Daliso: “Ay, that’s all I wanted to say and give, now, I can go have the milk tart and I will leave so that you’ll drive to Empangeni with your husband.”

Ngcebo: “Syabonga, baba.” He said to his father giving him a hand and they shared a handshake and a hug.

Similo: “NATHI MKHULU!” she requested the handshake as well giving out her tiny hand to her grandfather. Daliso chuckled and he gave all the children a handshake, Mlamuli following as they requested.

Nandipha sighed and looked at Ngcebo. “What are you going to do?” He asked and they followed Daliso and Mlamuli behind going back to the house.

Nandipha: “I will sell them, ha!” she replied seeing an opportunity to add money on her savings.

Ngcebo: “Awu. But cows are a good investment. Why would you sell them? Do you desperately need money?”

Nandipha: “No, okay, I won’t sell them all but I will.”

Ngcebo: “Okay, my fohloza.” He said looking at her and Nandipha stopped herself from screaming at him... The children laughed...

“Sdudla mafehlefehle, mama!” Nongcebo teased her mother and they laughed along with their father while Nandipha wasn’t laughing...

S5 >> EPISODE 50

“Mom, let’s go now.” Pearl pressured her mother who was standing by the wardrobe getting dressed. Pearl was seated on top of the bed playing with her mother’s phone... Danielle was holding on to the wardrobe doors when her daughter pressured her that they needed to go. She was feeling dizzy and she didn’t trust walking away from the wardrobe... Mnotho had been living with them daily and she was happy that he was home always with them. She’d felt the need to let everything go and enjoy these moments with Mnotho being her husband alone. But Nkosazana didn’t support that Danielle wanted to die. It was everyone’s wish to die happy, die knowing that you’ve lived and achieved everything but Nkosazana didn’t want that for Danielle. She wanted her to live and she threatened her that she was going to tell her husband that she was dying if she didn’t want to go for treatment. She didn’t want her to lose all hope because her tumour was only on Grade I and that meant there was a chance for her to live if she was positive. Danielle agreed that she was going to take treatment... It was Thursday morning and they were heading to Durban with Nkosazana. She’d decided that she was going to tell her mother that she was sick... Mnotho hadn’t suspect that something was wrong with her because she’d been better than the days of grieve...

Danielle: "We won't go without the queen, baby."

Pearl: "Mommy, we will come back late! Dad said my brother is coming. Do you remember that he's coming?"

Danielle: "Yes, and we will come back early. Your father knows that we are leaving and we will come back late." She said and turned back to her daughter with her handbag on her hands... She wasn't going to spend the whole day at the hospital but her first session was going to last 4 hours. "Get off!" she lifted her daughter off the bed and she placed her down.

Pearl: "We are leaving now, mommy?"

Danielle: "No, we will wait for the queen to come here and we will leave together." She told her as they walked to the lounge...

"I am here and I hope I haven't kept you waiting for too long." Nkosazana announced and she lifted Pearl off the couch. She was already standing on the couch waiting for her to carry her into her arms.

Danielle: "It's okay, I have just gotten off the phone with mom. I think she will have to come to the hospital because driving home will hinder us. Siphosami is coming here to visit us."

Nkosazana: "That's a good thing. Why don't he live with you?"

Danielle: "His father doesn't trust that I will treat him right because his mother and I didn't get along." She replied and stepped inside the car after Nkosazana.

Nkosazana: "Hawu! Why would he think that because you've been raised by a woman who isn't your biological mother?"

Danielle: "I don't know and that really hurt me. I don't have a problem with Siphosami and I would love for him to live with us. He's Pearl's brother and it would be very nice to have two children in the house. And I don't like the fact that his son can't live where he lives. That's not right."

Nkosazana: "You have to talk to him if you really wish Siphosami to live with you. And you are right, it's not right that his child doesn't live with him while you don't have a problem with it."

Danielle: "I will speak to him." she nodded strongly feeling that it was the right thing to do. She was certain that it was going to be nice if they live together...

"Why didn't you tell me, Ntandokazi? From the beginning you were supposed to tell me. Or you wanted to do things like your father. You wanted to tell me when you were on the last grade of the tumour." Sheila shouted at Danielle as she was getting ready for treatment.

Nkosazana had driven Pearl to Danielle's home. She was going to leave her with Danielle's sisters.

Danielle: "Mom, please don't shout because I believed that I was going to die. And I am still nervous. What if I won't respond well to the treatment."

Sheila: "Please, don't be negative." She said and held her hands as Danielle was seated on the hospital bed. She sighed feeling that her pressure was high because she was nervous that she might lose her like she lost her husband. But she didn't need to show her she was scared.

"We will beat this, my child."

Danielle: "Thank you, mama." She smiled...

“I am tired my friend I have put the children to sleep and now, I have to sleep.” Nandipha told Palesa on the phone. She was seated on the couch rubbing her feet... It was Tuesday night, they returned from Empangeni before 6pm. They’ve left the cows in MaNtombela’s premises and they didn’t leave right away but they spend some hours with MaNtombela... Nandipha was alone inside the lounge and Ngcebo was taking a shower.

Palesa: “Are you sure that you are coming back tomorrow?”

Nandipha: “I don’t know but he must go back to work now. Mama, told me that they published the book. She was there on my behalf.” she replied and laid her head back on the couch, she closed her eyes.

Palesa: “You need to come back, really. We haven’t celebrated the cover and I want to know everything that went down on your holiday.”

Nandipha: “Hmm!” she opened her eyes as she felt Ngcebo’s hands touch her feet. She smiled looking at him, he was seated on the carpet taking her feet into his hands he rubbed the left foot.

Palesa: “What’s going on now?”

Nandipha: “Nothing my friend. I will come back soon and I will tell you everything about the holiday. I won’t leave out any details...” She held her breath as Ngcebo ran his hands on her legs plodding them up to her thighs. Nandipha felt the chills down her spine and she pressed her lips.

Palesa: “Alright, I spoke to someone I know at the bank and she promised me that she’ll sniff around for the deal that you want for the house.”

Nandipha: “Thank you, babe-”

Ngcebo: “Babe? Who’s that you are talking to kanti?” he stopped rubbing his hands on her skin and she looked at her.

Nandipha: “I am talking to Palesa you know I call her babe. Are you actually jealous that I am calling her, babe?” she asked looking at him and on the line Palesa was laughing at how sudden was Ngcebo’s voice as he asked that.

Ngcebo: “No, why should I be jealous?”

Nandipha: “Palesa?”

Palesa: “Let’s talk tomorrow, neh?”

Nandipha: “Okay, friend. Goodnight to you and Melo.”

Palesa: “Goodnight to you and the fam.”

Nandipha removed her phone from her ear and she looked at Ngcebo. “Are you actually massaging my feet or you are here searching for other things?” She fished his intentions with a smile on her face.

Ngcebo: “I just wanted to check on you because I have been waiting hoping you’ll come back to bed, my eyes have been fixed on the door but no, this woman didn’t show up.” He said to Nandipha placing his hands on her thighs, he parted them slightly and he rested his lips on her inner thighs. Nandipha closed her eyes and held Ngcebo’s head as his tongue tingled her soft inner flesh of her thighs. She would giggle as Ngcebo went up.

Nandipha: “Do you know that you still have wounds and they haven’t fully healed? Maybe you have forgotten that.”

Ngcebo: “My penis doesn’t have wounds and you know I hardly think about everything else when I want you.”

Nandipha giggled as his sent shocks down her vital organ and she closed her thighs on his cheeks as she felt the pressure. “You have been sleeping. Why don’t you let me do-” she was cut off.

Ngcebo: “You have been working hard and let me-”

Nandipha: “No, I want you-”

Ngcebo: “I am the hen and you are the chicken-”

Nandipha laughed and pulled his head off her thighs. She crept her face down to his face and she kissed him, her lips sucked on to his full lower lip and Ngcebo held her waist tighter as he felt the pressure on his nature as it enlarged beneath his pyjama pants. He’d long anticipated this feeling, the minute he stepped on that shower he knew that tonight he was definitely supposed to get some. It’d been hell!

Nandipha shifted to the edge of the couch holding on to his cheeks as their lips smashed into an intense kiss. “I still want to do what I was doing don’t fool me with a kiss.” Ngcebo told Nandipha in between the kiss and his, ‘she’ giggled.

Ngcebo sneaked his hand into her thighs where his heart was and he rubbed his finger on her clit. He heard the deepest cry as Nandipha kept shifting her lower body closer to him, that was what he wanted... She was feeling the intense pleasure as he insisted on rubbing his fingers on her. Ngcebo was ecstatic about the moist he was feeling with his two fingers.

Nandipha: “Why are you stopping?”

Ngcebo: “I miss your inner thighs so please, take off your night dress.” He requested and Nandipha didn’t hesitate but she took off the night dress. He kneeled facing her and he gave her a teasing smile.

Nandipha: “Don’t keep me waiting, Rasta.”

Ngcebo held her thighs and he started afresh with teasing her with his tongue. He felt it was enough and he placed her legs on his shoulders, he then disappeared into her thighs. He sent his hands beneath her bums and he tormented her with his tongue licking her, moving his tongue in circles that made Nandipha lose all control and she couldn’t control how loud she responded to the pleasure he was giving her. Nandipha crossed her legs on his back feeling her heart harden, she knew her body was preparing for her cum and Ngcebo went harder on her... She released it thick and sharp. She smiled as Ngcebo pinned her lower body to the couch because it was shaking.

Ngcebo: “Open your eyes then because it’s your turn now.” he told Nandipha and she opened her eyes and looked at Ngcebo with a smile.

Nandipha: “Let me serve you.” she said getting up from the couch and Ngcebo sat on the other couch that wasn’t wet. He removed his pyjama pants... Nandipha kneeled before him. She laid her hands on his base and she covered him with her mouth... Up and down, her mouth moved along with her hands, she pressed on the tip of him to give him intense

pressure and she twirled her tongue around his tip. She felt marvellous as she heard him groan and when Ngcebo pulled her locks tight she knew that it was time to go harder and fast. She went on faster until her mouth was filled with the warm thick fluid that he'd released... Ngcebo smiled looking down at her.

Ngcebo: "Come, nana." He requested softly holding her hand and Nandipha got up. She looked at him and shook her head. "What's wrong?"

Nandipha: "Your thigh is injured and you won't enjoy what we will be doing if you will be feeling pain."

Ngcebo: "You won't neglect your bums on my thigh. Yini, you don't know how it's done now. Or you want to injure my thigh?"

Nandipha: "No."

Ngcebo: "Come, then." He pulled her to him and Nandipha sat on him carefully. Ngcebo held her neck and kissed her...

"Siphosami! Pearl! Stop doing that! Siphosami you are older and you shouldn't lead your sister to do such naughty things." Mnotho shouted at Siphosami and Pearl who were inside the kitchen thinking they're doing a good thing washing the dishes. They were standing on the bench. Siphosami was washing and Pearl was rinsing according to their understanding but they were actually messing up. And the floor was damp.

Siphosami: "Baba, aunt said she's not feeling well and we are helping her." he replied telling him about the maid that had told them she was going to the loo.

Pearl: "Yes, she has been running to the bathroom, dad."

Siphosami: "She told mama that she ate the goat meat at grandmas last night."

Pearl: "And we are helping her." they told their father without looking at him and without stopping doing a mess that they were causing.

Mnotho sighed. "We are going to see Njabulo and Nonjabulo in their mother's house. Come." He told the Siphosami first and he lifted him off the bench.

Pearl: "Let us finish!" she screamed and kicked her feet as her father had her in his arms to put her down. "We will go!" She screamed further.

Mnotho: "Follow me, Siphosami." He commanded and walked away with Pearl in his arms. He didn't want to put Pearl down because she was being crazy and now, she was crying because her father didn't want to put her down.

Siphosami: "Baba, your car is inside the house?"

Mnotho: "Don't be smart with me, Siphosami because you know that my car is outside the house. You need to change your clothes and we will go."

Mnotho was alone inside the house with the children. It was JUNE, the 26th which was a Thursday morning. Danielle had gone to the palace because the following day, the Mthimkhulu family was going to come to do the ritual of appeasing the ancestors... The Zulu family had done it for the Mthimkhulu ancestors. They performed the ritual on the 17th of May and it was a success. The whole family was present for the ritual... After the ritual Mnotho had to be cleansed and he consulted his ancestors to lift the dark could that was said

to be following his life because of the blood that he had on his hands...

Mnotho, Pearl and Siphosami had been living alone at the beginning of June for two weeks because Danielle was away because of 'business' She told Mnotho that there were things she needed to fix in her fashion house and Mnotho allowed her to go. According to Mnotho she wasn't in Durban...

Mnotho gave the children to the maid for her to change them into warm clothes and he walked out of the house. He looked at his phone and the time was just after 10am. He needed to speak to his mother about Siphosami moving in with them because Danielle wanted that but he wanted to see Happiness and the children first. She'd called him to tell him that they've just arrived in the house... She called because Mnotho was the one who requested that she must call him when they arrive because he wanted to see the children before they go to the palace...

Mnotho closed the door of his car and he followed after his children who were running up to the door of Happiness's house. He shook his head looking at Pearl running faster as if she wasn't crying earlier for her to finish up washing the dishes. She'd forgotten about the dishes now.

Mnotho: "Children!" he looked at them as they didn't give him attention but they followed each other. "Njabulo no Nonjabulo, I am here!" He raised his voice for the children but they ignored him completely. They were focused on following each other to Njabulo's room... He clicked his tongue and he went to the master bedroom. He knocked twice and he was told to come in.

"Sawubona?" Mnotho greeted Happiness who was laying on her back on the bed. She had her eyes closed. She'd left the children in the lounge to lay down.

Happiness: "The children are not here but they're in the lounge that you might have passed." She told Mnotho without greeting him back. She'd never entertained him whenever Mnotho tried his best to recite his plead for forgiveness speeches. She'd always made everything about the children.

Mnotho: "How are you?" he asked and sat down ignoring the fact that she was brushing him off. And that meant she didn't want to hear him speak, she'd been doing that but that never stopped Mnotho from speaking.

Happiness: "Mnotho, please."

"Sit up straight I want us to talk before the ritual tomorrow." Mnotho commanded Happiness calmly because today, he was in no mood to play the game of begging her to listen but he wanted to talk.

Happiness: "There's nothing to talk about."

Mnotho: "There's everything to talk about. I have been asking you to forgive me for a long time now. And you don't want to forgive but I have a request."

Happiness: "You can't force forgiveness."

Mnotho: "I know and I won't ask for forgiveness. But I want you to hear me out and I want you to think about this all the time you'll spend here until you go back to Johannesburg. You and I were brought together, but I messed up by bringing the third person to come between

what was slowly turning into affection. The truth is, I was actually happy after our wedding because we have accepted our fate. I enjoyed teasing you the most because you would sulk and laugh sometimes just to spite me. And it's now that I have messed up that I can recall every small thing that happened."

Happiness: "I am not in the mood for this speech."

Mnotho: "You'll listen to it Happiness because if you try and leave I will follow you like a teenage boy following a girl. And you'll feel even more annoyed. All I am asking for is another chance for us to be together. This time around it's not arranged but it's coming from my heart not because we have children together. But because I want to be with you. I will un-break your heart and I will make you happy. I want you back in my life."

Happiness looked at him and she saw that Mnotho was never going to stop nagging her. And the only way to back him off, was if she gives him a term that she knows he would never do or carry out. Yes, this was the only way because he was so persistent and he didn't want to take 'No!' She couldn't possibly forgive for everything that he'd done to her. Never!

Happiness: "Divorce Danielle and send her back to her mother's house. I will come back to be with you. We will live together with our children."

Mnotho's jaw dropped. "Huh?" He looked at her as he couldn't believe what Happiness was saying to him. "You are joking, right?" he asked.

Happiness: "No, I am not joking. You want me so bad, right? Divorce her then and send her back where she's coming from. She slept with you knowing that you are married to me and that was the greatest disrespect from her and your late baby mama. You were my husband and she slipped into our lives. If you want me back, you'll leave her for me. You'll tell her that she must give the man back where she took him. And that was from me. By that I mean you'll tell her that you are leaving her for me. You won't make up a lie. I will ask her if you have told her to leave you for other reasons not the ones I told you. I won't come back to you." She gave clear instructions with a firm face that she wanted Mnotho to believe. She didn't want him to see that she was only trying to make him back off because she knew that Mnotho loved that woman too much that he could leave her just to be with her... She saw Mnotho was in absolute astonishment and so, she left him...

THE END OF SEASON 5!